

## The Korean War Veterans Memorial



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South Korean kindergartners wait to take their memorial pictures around the monument in remembrance of the Korean War at Korea War Memorial Museum in Seoul, South Korea, Tuesday, June 24, 2008. South Korea will mark the 58th anniversary of the Korean Memorial day on June 25 for those killed in the 1950-53 Korean war.

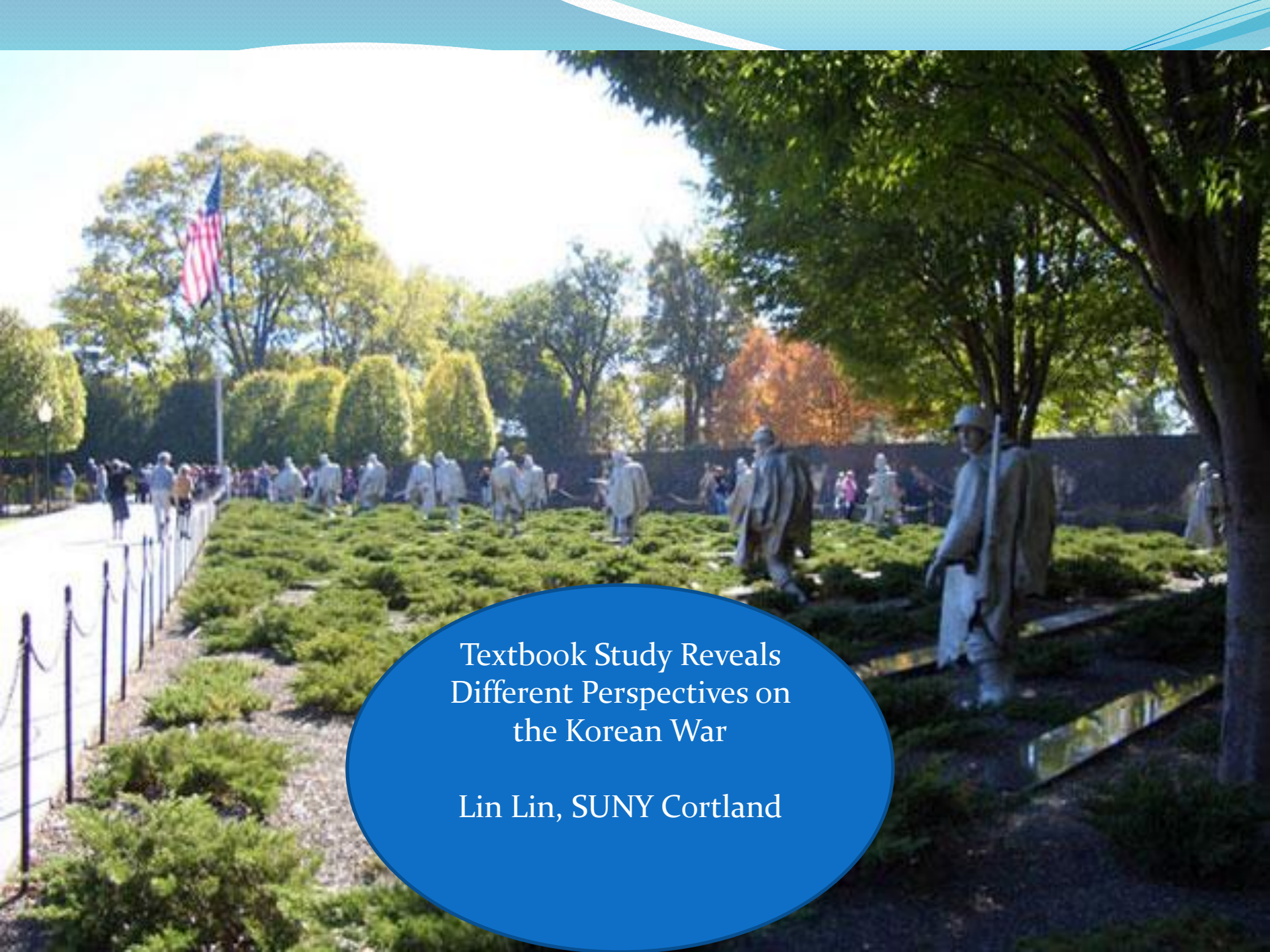


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[http://www.ccnpic.com/English/magnify.php?userid=030&img\\_id=030-0527&id=1911&sort=10&chn=1&orb=1#1](http://www.ccnpic.com/English/magnify.php?userid=030&img_id=030-0527&id=1911&sort=10&chn=1&orb=1#1)

The War to Resist US Aggression and Aid North Korea





Textbook Study Reveals  
Different Perspectives on  
the Korean War

Lin Lin, SUNY Cortland

# Map Activity

**Would you mind sharing your knowledge and experiences  
about the Korean War?**

## Grade 7 and 8

### **UNIT 10**

The United States Assumes  
Worldwide Responsibilities

### **UNIT 11**

The Changing Nature of the  
American People from  
World War II  
to the Present

Source: *7 & 8 Social Studies: United States and New York State History*. The New York State Education Department, Albany, NY.

# Objectives

- To understand the relative importance of United States domestic and foreign policies over time
- To analyze the role played by the United States in international politics, past and present
- To describe historic events through the eyes and experiences of those who were there

# Content Connections

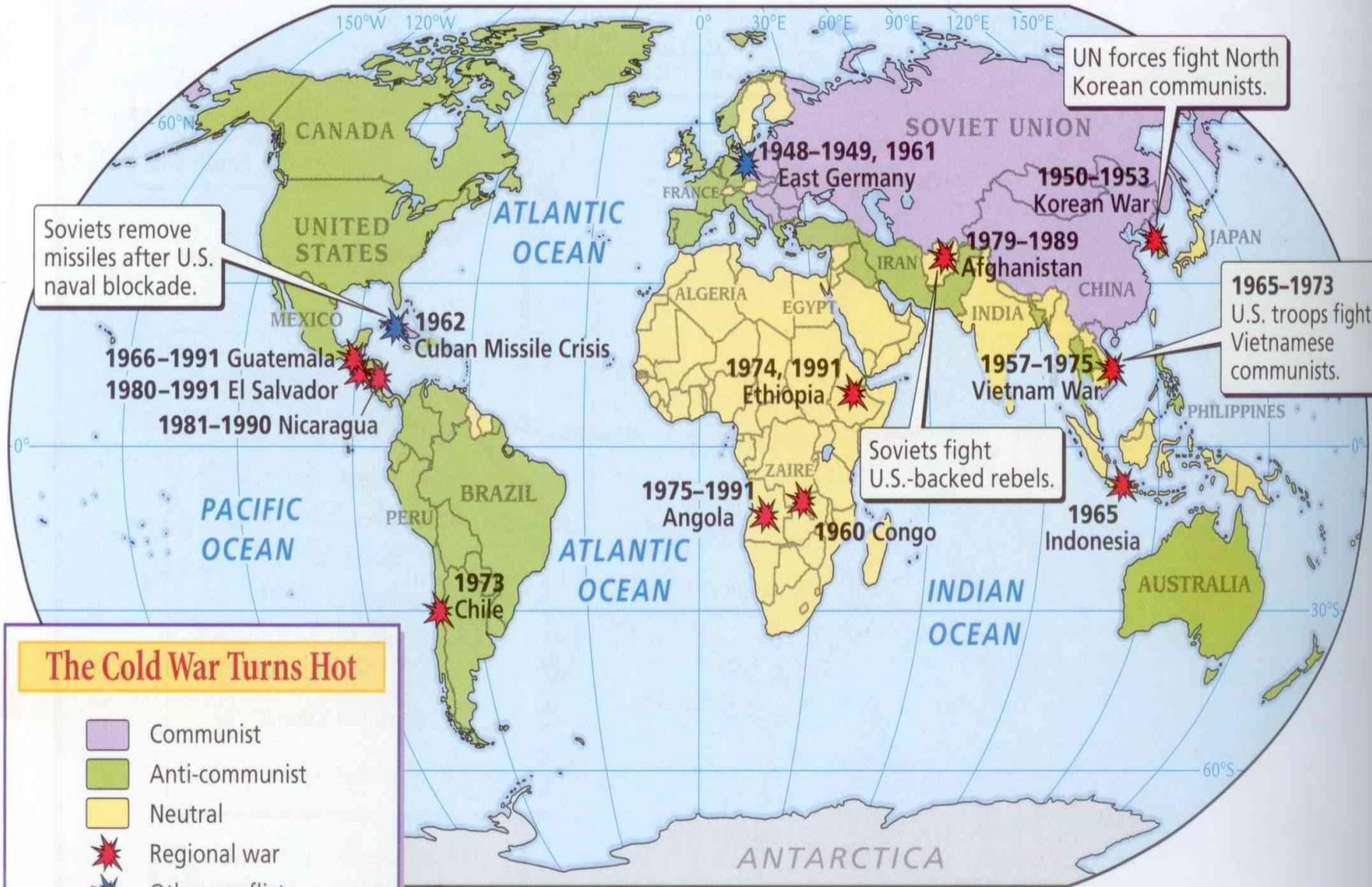
Communist expansion leads to United States policy of containment

1. In Europe: Berlin airlift, Berlin Wall
2. In Asia: Communist China, Korean War
3. In Latin America: Cuban missile crisis
4. In Southeast Asia: Vietnam War



**What was the Cold War? How was it different from previous wars?**





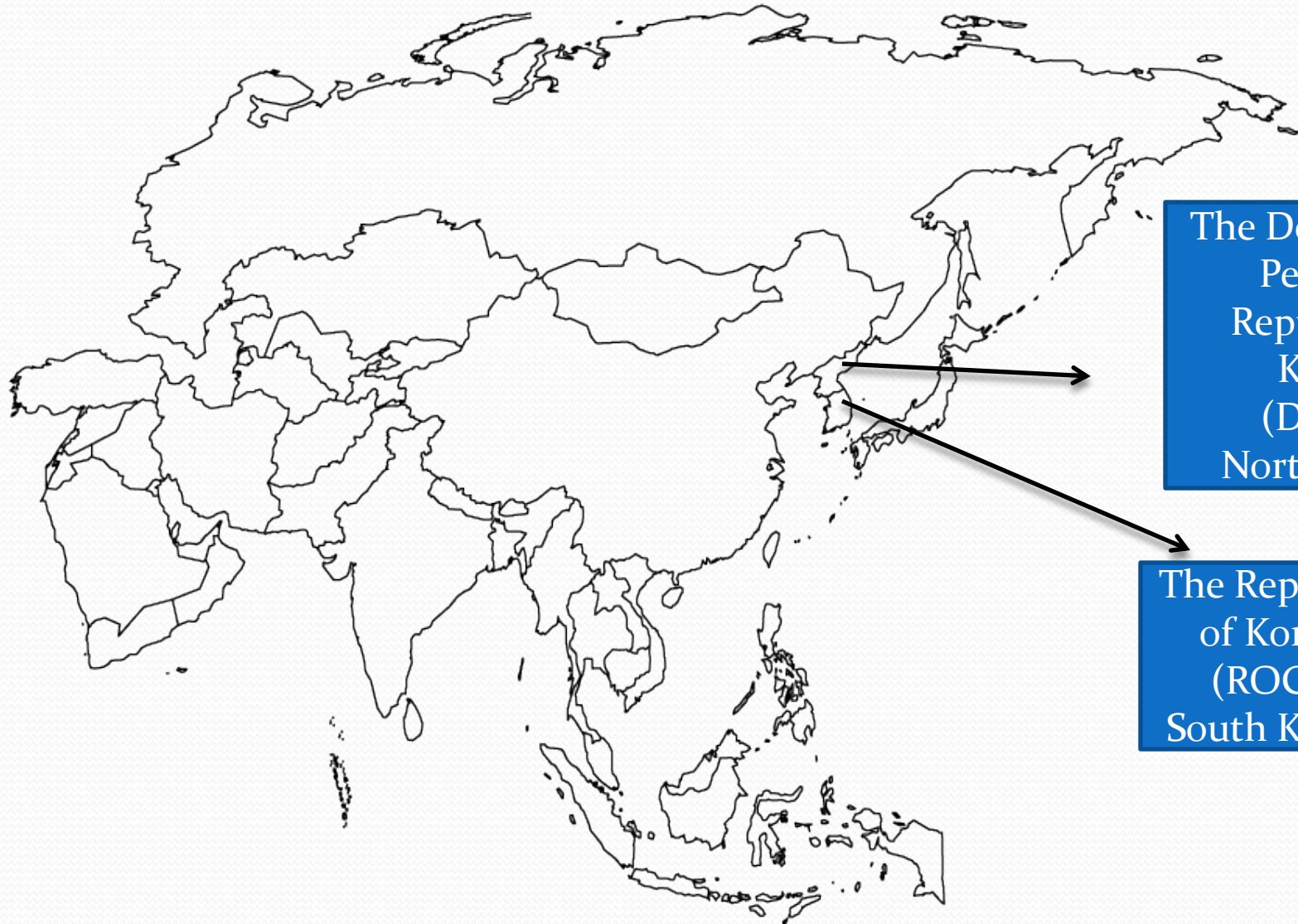
**The Cold War Turns Hot**

- Communist
- Anti-communist
- Neutral
- Regional war
- Other conflict

Map shows boundaries of 1975.


**C** The superpowers competed to control key areas of the world. Sometimes U.S. or Soviet troops fought in regional wars, such as Vietnam and Afghanistan, or supplied weapons to opposing sides, as in Angola.

Please identify North Korea and South Korea on  
the Asian Outline Map



The Democratic  
People's  
Republic of  
Korea  
(DPRK):  
North Korea

The Republic  
of Korea  
(ROC):  
South Korea



*“The Korean War is an unattractive task which most Americans are more than happy to have slip through the cracks of history.”*

- Joseph Goulden, 1982

*The Untold Story of the War*



*“Technically, the Korean War continues today, as only an armistice agreement halted the fighting in 1953. The Korean peninsula remains one of the world's most dangerous flash points, and the West knows less about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) than about any other nation on earth. The intentions and behavior of its leaders remain shrouded in mystery. To maintain the uneasy armistice, some 37,000 U.S. troops remain in the Republic of Korea. A solution to the Korean problem seems as far off as ever.”*

- Spencer Tucker, 2000

# The Korean War in American Academic Community

- The Untold Story of the War Joseph Goulden 1982
- The Wrong War Rosemary Foot, 1985
- The First War Americans Lost Bevin Alexander, 1986
- The Unknown War Jon Halliday, 1988
- The Cold and Limited War Allen Guttman, 1972

# Korean War in World Language

- The Korean War
- The War to Resist US Aggression and Aid North Korea
- The Fatherland Liberation War



# No longer a Forgotten War

- The Cold War turned hot during the Korean War.
- After the Korean War, North Korea remained isolated until.....
- Rocket Launch or Missile Test?
- North Korea in the Limelight
- North Korea withdrew from the Six-Party Talks (April 24, 2009)

July 10, 2008 in Beijing, China



**U.S.  
Assistant  
Secretary of  
State  
Christopher  
Hill**

**North  
Korean  
envoy  
Kim Kye  
Gwan**

**Russian  
envoy Alexei  
Borodavkin**

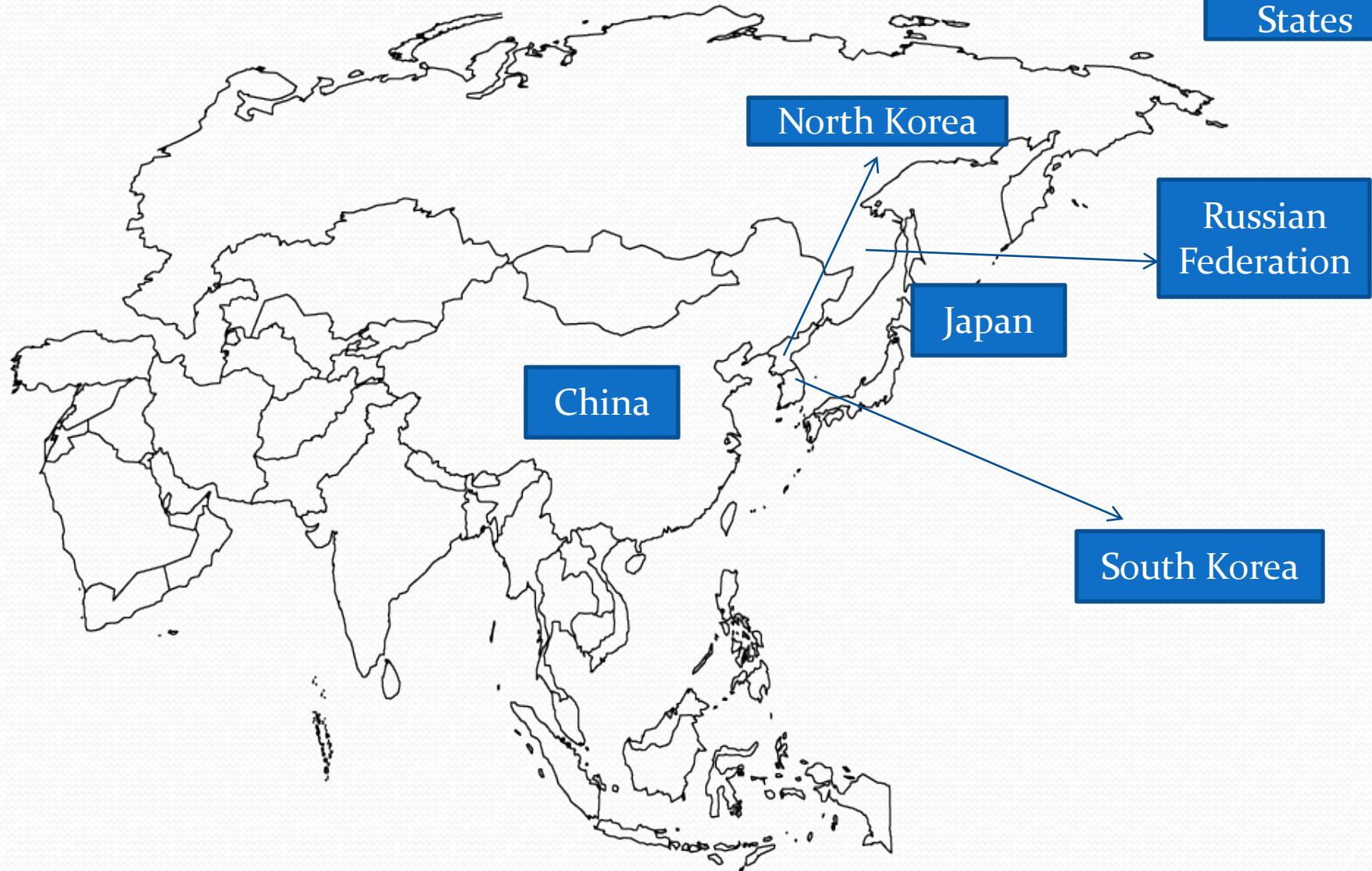
**Chinese  
Vice  
Foreign  
Minister  
Wu Dawei**

**South  
Korean  
envoy  
Kim Sook**

**Japanese  
envoy  
Akitaka  
Saiki**

Please identify China, Japan, and Russia on this Asian Outline Map

The  
United  
States



North Korea

Russian  
Federation

Japan

China

South Korea







# Motivational Activity

# Significance

- The Korean War as the turning point in 20<sup>th</sup> century
- First shooting confrontation of the Cold War
- First limited war in the nuclear age
- Only time since WWII that US and China fought one another
- Bringing current issues and historical event together
- Alternative peaceful solutions to resolve conflicts



# Central Research Questions

- What are the consistent and conflicting views and statements among various history textbook excerpts about the Korean War?
- How does the analysis of these views inform teachers of teaching North Korea in the social studies classroom?

# Sub-Questions

- How did these countries get involved in the Korean War?
- What roles did each country play in the war?
- How did the war end? What impact did it have on the nations involved?

# Textbook Content Analysis

- Middle/junior high school history textbooks used in the United States, Japan, South Korea, and China.
- Middle/junior high school history textbooks used in Russia and North Korea

# Four Steps of Analysis

Textbook  
Collection and  
Identification

Translation  
Analysis of  
Coverage and  
Format

Analysis of  
Excerpts to  
Respond to the  
Research  
Questions

Identification  
of Recurring  
Themes



# Selection of Textbooks: A Challenge

- US, Japan
- South Korea, China
- North Korea, and Russia

# Thematic Analysis

- 1) How do textbooks mention the causes of the Korean War?
- 2) How do textbooks portray reasons of the U.S. involvement?
- 3) How do textbooks discuss reasons of the Chinese involvement?
- 4) How do textbooks describe how the war ceased in 1953 and who “won” the war?

Cause

US Involvement



Chinese  
Involvement

End of the War

# Outbreak of the Korean War





# Cause of the Korean War :

## The United States

- The Cold War as background
- The Korean War broke out in 1950 when North Korea, a communist country, invaded South Korea, a noncommunist country.
- North Korea was aided by the Soviet Union, which was at odds with the United States in the so-called Cold War.
- Therefore the United States supported South Korea in the United Nations-led forces in the Korean War.

# Translated from Japanese Textbooks

- *Korea was freed as a Japanese colony, but it was subsequently occupied by the Soviet Union to the north of the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel and by the United States to the south. In 1948, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) was established in the north and the Republic of Korea (South Korea) in the south. (Tokyo Shoseki's New Social Studies: History 2007, 207)*

# Cause of the Korean War: Japan

- Japanese occupation of the Korean Peninsula
- Cold War Era witnessed the tension between North and South Korea
- During WWII, US and Soviet Union: Division of Korea at the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel
- In 1950, North Korea invaded South Korea by crossing the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel. This marks the start of the Korean War.

# Cause of the Korean War: China


- Military conflicts between the two Koreas along the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel
- The Korean War as a civil war
- United States invaded North Korea by force and threatened the safety of China



# Cause of the Korean War:

## South Korea

- Background information about the Korean War
- North Korean provincial government backed by the Soviet Union
- North Korea built up its military power after WWII while South Korea was undergoing political instability
- North Korea attacked South Korea by crossing the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel on June 25, 1950
- The South Korean troops had to respond to defend their freedom.

- 
- *“Young South Korean voluntary student soldiers bravely fought against the communist soldiers along with the South Korean forces, carrying guns instead of textbooks to protect their freedom and many youths volunteered to join the South Korean Army to protect their mother country” (Korean History 2006, 306).*



# Handout III

# US Involvement: the U.S.

- After WWII, anti-communist ideology
- Anti-Soviet policy: Containment
- North Korean aggressive military action as a communists expansion backed by the Soviet Union
- So, the US backed South Korea
- UN forces led by US, General D. MacArthur drove North Koreans out of the South and back into North Korea, which is the north of 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel



# U.S. Involvement: Japan

- Didn't mention detailed reasons for the US involvement
- After WWII, the U.S. made Japan a key part of its defensive strategy for the East Asia
- US didn't consider South Korea of vital interest
- US forces withdrew from South Korea in the late 1940s
- When North Korea attacked South Korea in 1950, the US military returned with UN's authorization

# US Involvement: China

- Two Koreas after WWII
- US used forces to invade North Korea
- UN Army, composed of American soldiers and backed by US crossed 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel and approached the borderline between North Korea and China

- *In June 1950, the war between North Korea and South Korea broke out. The United States undauntedly invaded North Korea by force. The so-called “United Nation’s Forces” with the U.S. troops as its mainstay crossed the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel and charged towards Yalu River at the Chinese border. American military airplanes invaded Chinese territory, bombing and shooting the bordering cities in Northeast China. The U.S. 7<sup>th</sup> Fleet invaded the Taiwan Straits of China to prevent the Chinese People’s Liberation Army from liberating Taiwan. The invasion of the United States gravely threatened the security of China. (History of China 2002, 7)*

# US Involvement: South Korea

- South Korea was politically instable and weak in military power
- UN and the US had to get involved
- South Korea had to seek aid from others.
- South Koreans and UN forces recaptured the capital city of Seoul on September 28, 1950 after a successful landing in Incheon.
- To reunite both Koreas, the South Korean and US army advanced into North Korea, all the way to the Yalu River, borderline between China and North Korea, forced to retreat due to the Chinese intervention

# How the US Got Involved?

- Weakened South Korea solicited US military assistance when facing North Korean attack.
- U.S troops stepped in mainly because they wanted to prevent the expansion of communist countries led by the Soviet Union.
- Involvement of the UN was mainly made up by the U.S. troops.



# Chinese Involvement: The U.S.

- The UN forces, backed by the US under the command of General MacArthur, pushed the invaders out of South Korea. This moved China into action, and Chinese were sent to help the North Koreans.

*Communist China saw the movement of UN forces into North Korea as a threat to China's security. Chinese leaders warned that a further advance would force them to enter the war. Ignoring this warning, UN forces pushed on toward the Yalu River. On November 25, 1950, hundreds of thousands of Chinese Communist troops attacked in human waves across the Yalu River into North Korea. They drove UN troops back to South Korea.*

*(Creating America: A history of the United States 2002, 796.)*

# Chinese Involvement: Japan

- *When the UN forces approached the Chinese border, China sent volunteer soldiers into North Korea*
- *(Nihon Bunkyo Shuppan's Middle School Social Studies: History Japan's Path and the World 2007, 202).*

# Chinese Involvement: South Korea

- The South Korean textbook described that the Chinese government assembled an army of volunteer troops and drove down into South Korea. The textbook continued with an account of how South Korea, with the help of regrouped allied forces recovered the capital city of Seoul after they lost it to the North Korean and Chinese troops. The textbook made a point that the combined U.S. and South Korean troops succeeded in pushing the North Korean and Chinese army back up to near the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel.

- *Expecting the reunification of both Koreas, the allied forces drove up to the Yalu River. However, they were forced to retreat due to the Chinese intervention. Employing human wave tactics, the Chinese army assembled a number of troops and drove down into South Korea. As a result, South Korea was forced to give up Seoul again. However, the regrouped allied forces recovered the capital city once again and drove the communist forces back up to near the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel. In the middle of severe attacks and counterattacks between North and UN-South Korean forces, the UN made a truce with North Korea in July, 1953. (Korean History 2006, 305)*

# Chinese Involvement: China

- UN's allied troops, mainly composed of US soldiers, crossed the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel and charged toward Yalu River at the Chinese border despite Chinese government's warnings
- U.S -led army threatened China's border and even invaded China's territorial integrity, and forced China to take action to at once assist North Korea and defend China's own security



*American military airplanes invaded the Chinese territory, bombing and shooting the bordering cities in Northeast China. The U.S. 7<sup>th</sup> Fleet invaded the Taiwan Straits of China to prevent the Chinese People's Liberation Army from liberating Taiwan. The invasion of the United States gravely threatened the security of China. On October 25, 1950, China sent an army of volunteers to assist the Koreans who were resisting America and to defend North Korea (Chinese History 2002, 7).*

- All three Chinese textbooks mentioned explicitly the second reason for Chinese involvement, that is, the North Korea government asked for Chinese military assistance.

*To fight against the United States, to respond to North Korea's assistance request as well as defend and protect homeland from invasion, in October 1950, the Chinese People's Volunteer Troops, under the leadership of Peng Dehuai as the Commander-in-chief, arrived in the frontlines of North Korea and fought against the U.S. aggressors with people and army from North Korea. (Chinese History 2002, 7).*

- 
- UN forces approached Chinese border, which was considered a security threat by the Chinese Government
  - China sent voluntary troops to join North Korean army
  - China: got involved to defend its homeland (territorial invasion of UN troops) and North Korean asked for military aid from Chinese government while South Korea asked US for help

# *How the War Ceased in 1953 and Who Won the War: The United States*

- Little talk of valor or glory in the US textbooks
- Thin description of the war through first hand accounts
- War ended in stalemate
- US agreed to a compromise to end the war through truce talks with North Korea and China

Another version confirmed that the national boundaries of the two Koreas had changed very little. But the tone of this textbook implies that the United States had shown that the free world had fought against and would continue to fight Communist aggression. Therefore the temporary ending of the Korean War fanned the flames of the “red scare” in the United States in the 1950s.

# *How the War Ceased in 1953 and Who Won the War: Japan*

- War continued with regional battles from 1951 until July 1953 when a ceaseo-fire agreement was reached
- Armistice
- None of these textbooks declared a side that actually won the war, but from an economic perspective the war was very good for Japan.
- In fact, Japan experienced an economic boom and its post-World War II reconstruction speeded up during the Korean War.



*When the Korean War started in 1950, the U.S. used its military bases in the Japanese mainland and Okinawa and procured massive amount of military supplies from Japan. The Japanese economy enjoyed an economic boom from the special demand (the special procurement boom), and economic reconstruction accelerated.*

*(Tokyo Shoseki's New Social Studies: History, 2007, 208)*

# *How the War Ceased in 1953 and Who Won the War: China*

- Victory in the war of defending China and North Korea against the US
- Chinese army' bravery against US army
- Signing of Cease-fire as the result of joint efforts and patriotic spirits of Chinese People's Volunteer Army and North Korean Army
- China and North Korea won the war against the aggressors
- The Chinese People's Volunteer Army returned to their homeland in victory.

*The Chinese People's Volunteer Troops were known as "most beloved persons" thanks to their selfless patriotism and revolutionary heroism in the war against the United States to aid North Korea. The undaunted fights by the Chinese People's Volunteers and the North Korean army and civilians led to an armistice signed by the United States in July 1953. The Chinese and North Korean people celebrated their victory in their war against aggressors. The Chinese People's Volunteer Army took turns to return to their homelands in victory. (Chinese History 2002, 9-10).*

- the War of Defending North Korea against the United States
- Maintained the peace of Asian countries and the world, improved international reputation of new China
- Won a relatively stable and peaceful environment
- Only China stressed its victory in this war
- The other countries indicated the war ceased due to an armistice agreement

# *How the War Ceased in 1953 and Who Won the War: South Korea*

- The war ended with a truce signed by UN-South Korean forces and North Korea in July 1953.
- The war, caused by North Korea, was a tragedy and a challenge to freedom and peace
- Only textbook that talked about the war casualties and damage

*The war brought about countless deaths and property damage. The total number of casualties suffered by South Korea alone amounted to about 1,500,000 causing a great number of war orphans and displaced families. Both North and South Korea were wasted by the war. Their economic facilities, such as factories, power plants, buildings, bridges, and railroads were severely damaged or destroyed. The war caused not only heavy casualties but also huge mental damage. Hatred between North and South Korea escalated due to the war. That has resulted in the national tragedy of confrontation rather than peaceful reunification.*

*(Korean History 2006, 305)*



# Discussion

- Relationship between Japan and the Korean War
- Japan: US ally in America's global containment structure

# Discussion Continues

- Perspective-taking
- Avoidance of horrors of the war
- Worsened relationship between US and China

# Discussion: Whose History?

- Bias in representation and interpretation (Loewen, 1995; Zinn & Macedo, 2005)
- Presenting the historical account of the Korean War as a Controversy

# Discussion Continues

- History textbooks in most countries tend to present their past for nationalist ideologies and patriotic sentiments (Foner 2002).
- The analysis of textbook treatments of the Korean War in these countries supported Zinn's argument that history is always taught from the perspective of the victor and national history is always taught "to keep the citizenry docile, domesticated, and historically ignorant, even though this ignorance is never innocent." (Zinn and Macedo 2005, 11). In fact, such historical amnesia should not add to the national pride and citizenship. We resonate with what the ex-premier Helmut Schmidt of Germany said, "Our national integrity is not damaged even though we admit our past misbehavior."

# The Nature of School History

*"Knowledge acquired in school or anywhere, for that matter - is never neutral or objective but is ordered and structured in particular ways"*

- McLaren, 1989, 169

# Keep the Faith.....

- Multiple historical perspectives
- Comparative approach
- Changes in history teaching and history knowledge
- Review, reflection, and evaluation of the perspectives or the information
- The value of using conflicting accounts
- Development of students critical thinking and reasoning skills



# Teaching About the Korean War

- Infusing historical events and contemporary issues into school curriculum
- Global perspectives
- Multiple perspectives
- Conflicting perspectives
- Relevance
- Issue-centered curriculum



# Handout II

FREEDOM IS NOT FREE

WOMEN  
FOR THE  
FUTURE

