



A History of Korea: From "Land of the Morning Calm" to States in Conflict

Jinwung Kim

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Contemporary North and South Korea are nations of radical contrasts: one a bellicose totalitarian state with a failing economy; the other a peaceful democracy with a strong economy. Yet their people share a common history that extends back more than 3,000 years. In this comprehensive new history of Korea from the prehistoric era to the present day, Jinwung Kim recounts the rich and fascinating story of the political, social, cultural, economic, and diplomatic developments in Korea's long march to the present. He provides a detailed account of the origins of the Korean people and language and the founding of the first walled-town states, along with the advanced civilization that existed in the ancient land of "Unified Silla." Clarifying the often complex history of the Three Kingdoms Period, Kim chronicles the five-century long history of the Choson dynasty, which left a deep impression on Korean culture. From the beginning, China has loomed large in the history of Korea, from the earliest times when the tribes that would eventually make up the Korean nation roamed the vast plains of Manchuria and against whom Korea would soon define itself. Japan, too, has played an important role in Korean history, particularly in the 20th century; Kim tells this story as well, including the conflicts that led to the current divided state. The first detailed overview of Korean history in nearly a quarter century, this volume will enlighten a new generation of students eager to understand this contested region of Asia.

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