

országot, mintegy 1300 éven keresztül a nemzeti határok változatlanok maradtak. Ez egyedülálló jellegzetessége a koreai történelemnek.

Történelme során Koreát harciasan hazafiaskodó és háborúra szomjas népek vették körül, aminek következtében az országot kívülről nemcsak kulturális hatások érték, de szinte állandó katonai nyomásnak is ki volt téve Kína, Japán és a tőle északra levő területek felől. Korea földjét nemegyszer teljesen lerombolták. A nép azonban öntudatra ébredve ellenállt az ismétlődő invázióknak. A nemzeti tragédiák során Korea népe bizonyos értelemben megerősödött, s identitásának tudatában már korán sikerült felülkerekednie minden megpróbáltatáson és nehézségen.

## FORMATION OF THE KOREAN PEOPLE AND NATION

During the middle of the nineteenth century, those Europeans who traveled through East Asia could not possibly imagine that the secluded „Kingdom of Chosun”, which was then known as „the Land of Morning Calm”, turning into a thriving modern country one hundred years later. To the Westerners, the nineteenth century Korea was a poverty stricken agrarian country that had rejected the Western approach and thus remained as a hermit kingdom. It was, however, during the last part of the nineteenth century that Korea finally opened its country to the Westerners, and that Korea also established diplomatic relation with Hungary.

The bi-lateral relations thus established between Korea and Hungary got nowhere because the triumphant Japan in 1905 took over the Korean diplomacy as a result of its victory over Russia and its subsequent demand of severance of the diplomatic relations with other nations. Being stripped of sovereignty, the Korean government at that time was powerless to resist the overwhelming forces of Japan, and consequently it was compelled to sign „the Treaty of Protection”. Ito Hirobumi, the Japanese Resident General in Korea, reported to the king of Korea that the state of Protectorate should make the relationship between Korea and Japan comparable to that relationship between Hungary and Austria within the framework of dual monarchy of your great nation. Such was proved to be a diplomatic chicanery, and the Empire of Japan annexed Korea outrightly in 1910.

Korea was liberated from the Japanese colonial rule, which lasted for 35 years, as a result of the allied victory over the Fascist powers in World War II. While there reached a national consensus that the people should united together and build a new independent state, the country was divided into north and south, and then the nation was involved in an internecine war which turned the country into ruins. Korea as a nation, thereby, came a long way through a series of trials and misfortunes, and it, however, presently ranks as a newly industrialized nation in the world.

In terms of race, the Korean belongs to the Mongolian stock and linguistically speaking Korean is part of the Ural Altai language family. The ancestors of Korean drifted from Sungari River basin into Korea across its northern land frontier, and although the early Korean tribes may have been of diverse origins, North Asian strains were predominant, and that the southward movement of the northern people from Manchuria continued into historic times. By the first millenium B. C., the Korean peninsula entered the period of the bronze age, and the remains show connections with the prehistoric wares of that south of Lake Baikal, Siberia, wich was different from that Shang China's.

It was during this bronze age that there sprang up many political units throughout southern Manchuria as well as Korean peninsula and among those social and political organizations, there emerged a strong and long lasting state was known as „Ko-chosun” whose territory extended from southern Manchuria to north Korea. Ko-chosun had allied with once powerful Hsiung-nu tribes in the north, and then successfully defended its territorial integrity against the state of Yen, a feudal state in the northeast China as well as the great Chinese empire, Han dynasty.

Since 1945, there has been a series of archaeological excavations in Korea, and interestingly enough certain findings at various excavation sites were the vestiges of Scythian and Sarmatian cultures, which were transmitted to Ordos region, Outer Mongolia. Going through the steppe route these cultures transferred to Korean peninsula by certain nomadic tribes. The Hermitage Museum, Leningrad, held an exhibition of its holdings on the Scythian culture at Seoul on 1991, the interested people in Korea were deeply impressed by its similarity to those ancient relics in Korea and also the exhibition widened the visions of Korean people at large.

Ko-chosun remained powerful until about the second century B. C., and on the ruins of Ko-chosun, a number of petty states came into being. In 108 B. C. the Chinese invaded Korean peninsula and installed the Lo-lang Commandery in the northwestern part of Korea which, thenceforth, served as a center of cultural transmission from China to Korea. It was during this period that there were constant warfares among numerous states and also occurred great migrations of people into the peninsula, and actually the fourth century was recorded in which the greatest migrations of people had ever taken place throughout the northeast Asia.

The simultaneous developments that the decline of Chinese power and the growing power of nomadic tribes opened up huge gaping holes through the impregnable great wall and thus enabled the nomadic tribes to sweep across the northern plain of China. Meanwhile, in southern Manchuria and Korean peninsula the numbers of tribal leagues, that had been engaged in life and death struggles against one another, were reduced to three major kingdoms.

The Kingdom of Koguryo was the first to mature into a state. Based upon the Yalu River basin, it destroyed the Lo-lang Commandery and conquered the neighboring tribes one after another, Koguryo was firmly established over the extended territory in southern Manchuria and north Korea. In Southern part of Korea, on the other hand, the Kingdom of Paekche was founded in the southwestern part of Korea, and the growing state of Silla was established itself in the southeastern part of the peninsula. The formation of three kingdoms side by side stimulated cultural development and also brought about severe rivalry among themselves. It was the Kingdom of Silla which eventually conquered two other rival states and then unified the country for the first time in the Korean history.

The unification of Korea under the Silla in the late seventh century had far reaching influences on the development of Korean people. Going back to the three-Kingdom period, the making up of Korean racial stock was quite complex indeed. For example, the people of Koguryo was consisted of Maek and Ye stocks, while the the people of Paekche and Silla were made up mostly with Han race. Although all of these races were considered part of the Mongolian stock and spoke languages which derived from Altai linguistic family, they still maintained regional characteristics and preserved local variations. However, under the firm control and supervision of the unified authorities of the Silla, the people who resided in the peninsula had gradually learned to share common custom and culture, and then became one people within an integrated territory.

Korea is a country which has developed within the state boundary of the Korean peninsula. Since prehistoric times, there have been periodic waves of migration of the far ranging Altaic speaking nomads from Manchuria. Upon reaching Korea, they were locked up inside the geographic confines of the peninsula and were rapidly integrated into the Korean culture and people. Therefore, the geographic factor had contributed to the prompt formation of a unified people of Korea.

The Silla dynasty was replaced by the Koryo dynasty in the beginning of the tenth century, and the Yi dynasty took over the rein of power from the Koryo in 1392. Although there have been a series of turn over of power as well as change of ruling classes, the people as a whole remain the same and the national boundary stayed unchanged for about 1,300 years since the unification of the country by the Silla. This is a unique feature of the Korean history.

Throughout the history Korea has been surrounded by jingoistic and war like people, and that it has not only served as crossroad of cultural influences but also military pressures from China, Japan and the areas to the north. While the foreign aggressions have wreaked havoc upon the land and people of Korea from time to time, the people became fully conscientious of the national identity as they resisting to such repeated invasions. In a way, Korea has thrived in the national adversities and it developed the national distinctiveness and firm identity early while overcoming all kinds of national trials and hardships.