



Korea: Where the American Century Began

Michael Pembroke

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The aftermath of the bloodbath that was World War II did not leave any of the victorious states much reason to be jubilant. Scarred and wary of each other, Russia, China, and the United States all maneuvered geopolitically to advance their interests, and several regions in Europe and Asia gradually emerged as flashpoints of contention between the great powers.

Korea stands out for pitting Stalin and Truman against each other (just days after the atomic bombs were dropped on Japan) when the United States abruptly chose to create an artificial division of Korea at the thirty-eighth parallel, and then to occupy the country on the south side of the line. That decision directly led to the disastrous Korean War (involving China) and sixty-plus years of sky-high tension on the Korean Peninsula.

Michael Pembroke's *Korea: Where the American Century Began* is unremitting in detailing the politics at play in Korea's recent history, as well as in previous centuries when the Korean people distinguished themselves as one of the great cultures of Asia, but this project will be remembered for showcasing how America's militarism has its roots in the recent Korean conflicts.

MATT SUTHERLAND (September/October 2018)

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