

Brothers at War: The Unending Conflict in Korea

By Sheila Miyoshi Jager

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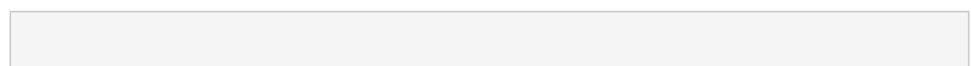
“The most balanced and comprehensive account of the Korean War.”*The Economist*

Sixty years after North Korean troops crossed the 38th parallel into South Korea, the Korean War has not yet ended. Sheila Miyoshi Jager presents the first comprehensive history of this misunderstood war, one that risks involving the world’s superpowers again. Her sweeping narrative ranges from the middle of the Second World War when Korean independence was fiercely debated between Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill to the present day, as North Korea, with China’s aid, stockpiles nuclear weapons while starving its people. At the center of this conflict is an ongoing struggle between North and South Korea for the mantle of Korean legitimacy, a “brother’s war,” which continues to fuel tensions on the Korean peninsula and the region.

Drawing from newly available diplomatic archives in China, South Korea, and the former Soviet Union, Jager analyzes top-level military strategy. She brings to life the bitter struggles of the postwar period and shows how the conflict between the two Koreas has continued to evolve to the present, with important and tragic consequences for the region and the world. Her portraits of the many fascinating characters that populate this history—Truman, MacArthur, Kim Il Sung, Mao, Stalin, and Park Chung Hee—reveal the complexities of the Korean War and the repercussions this conflict has had on lives of many individuals, statesmen, soldiers, and ordinary people, including the millions of hungry North Koreans for whom daily existence continues to be a nightmarish struggle.

The most accessible, up-to date, and balanced account yet written, illustrated with dozens of astonishing photographs and maps, *Brothers at War* will become the definitive chronicle of the struggle’s origins and aftermath and its global impact for years to come.

95 illustrations; 16 maps



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Editorial Review

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After visiting the heavily fortified DMZ separating North and South Korea, Bill Clinton called it the “scariest place on earth.” As the current crisis with North Korea illustrates, that description remains apt. Jager writes an ambitious, engrossing, and often disturbing history of the conflict, including its origins and its continuation since, technically, the war has never ended. As Jager indicates, Korea, which had a national identity as far back as the seventh century, was dominated by foreign powers for a century before WWII. The postwar division of the peninsula was inherently unstable, and there was considerable violence in the south even before the North Korean invasion in 1950. In analyzing the war, Jager provides multiple perspectives, including Korean, American, and Chinese. The war turned a civil conflict into a battleground of the Cold War. She now views the war as, however, a struggle for legitimacy between the two Koreas. This is a struggle that the North cannot win, and Jager sees that regime as dying but extremely dangerous. This is a superbly researched work that should be an essential tool in understanding the current crisis on the peninsula.

--Jay Freeman

Review

“Ms Jager has written the most balanced and comprehensive account of the Korean war. Perhaps by chronicling the brutal deeds of this “forgotten war”, this book will help lay them to rest.”

- ***The Economist***

“*Brothers at War* does an exceptionally good job of bringing the conflict to life, and in ways not always comfortable for today’s reader.”

- **Eliot A. Cohen, *The Wall Street Journal***

“[A] magisterial history of the Korean War.”

- **Andrew Nathan, *Foreign Affairs***

“Superb... Elegant and balanced.”

- **Mark Atwood Lawrence, *New York Times Book Review***

“This gripping narrative is a superb study of how the battle fought between two nations, and the world’s three major superpowers, over the 38th parallel?on the Korean Peninsula?molded the zeitgeist for global politics in the latter half of the 20th century.”

- **J.P. O’Malley, *Toronto Star***

“Compelling [and] wonderfully researched.”

- ***New Internationalist***

“An important contribution to Cold War scholarship.”

- **Paul French, *Literary Review***

“A stark reminder that... the Korean War is far from over... This gripping book at last gives the big picture and the full story of a tragic and terrible conflict.”

- **Aidan Foster-Carter, Honorary Senior Research Fellow in Sociology & Modern Korea, Leeds University, UK**

“Essential reading for all students of recent North and South Korean history. Though scholarly and meticulously researched, the book is written in prose that is accessible to experts and novices alike.”

- ***Library Journal***

“An important contribution to the literature on this conflict... highly recommended.”

- **William Donnelly, *Military History Quarterly***

“Jager has produced an excellent, lucid and original contribution to the literature on the Korean peninsula based on extensive research in international archives and reference to a vast body of secondary literature. It is a must read for all who are interested in the topic.”

- **Zhihua Shen, East China Normal University, *China Quarterly***

“An authoritative record of the divided Korean peninsula.”

- ***Kirkus Reviews***

“An ambitious, engrossing, and often disturbing history of the conflict... Superbly researched... an essential tool in understanding the current crisis.”

- **Jay Freeman, *Booklist***

“Insightful, in-depth, and much needed, this book is required reading for anyone who hopes to understand the situation in Korea.”

- ***Publishers Weekly***

“This is a magnificent book?deeply researched and written with real feeling and insight into the complex internal and external conditions that produced a brutal war and perpetuated Korea’s division to the present day.”

- **William W. Stueck, professor emeritus, University of Georgia**

“The best single volume on the Korean War...If one has any curiosity about the Korean War as a formidable event in modern Asian history... *Brothers at War* is the book to read.”

- **Allan R. Millet, U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings***

“Sheila Miyoshi Jager has managed an astounding feat?an extremely readable yet rigorously objective and brilliantly researched history of the Korean War from all sides.”

- **Rana Mitter, professor of the history and politics of modern China, Oxford University**

“Jager . . . skillfully covers international affairs, politics, and society in a first-rate comprehensive presentation of all the big issues facing North and South Korea.”

- **Ezra F. Vogel, Henry Ford II Professor of the Social Sciences Emeritus, Harvard University**

“This book is the best one-volume study of the war in all its cultural, political, and military aspects.”

- **Allan R. Millett, University Research Professor and Ambrose Professor of History, University of New Orleans, and Raymond E. Mason Jr. Professor Emeritus of History, The Ohio State University**

“Written in lucid narrative prose with an eye for the telling detail and compelling human story.”

- **Carter J. Eckert, Yoon Se Young Professor of Korean History, Harvard University**

About the Author

Sheila Miyoshi Jager earned her PhD in anthropology from the University of Chicago. She has written

extensively on modern and contemporary Korean politics and history and is the author and coeditor of two previous books on Korea and East Asia. She is an associate professor and director of the East Asian program at Oberlin College in Ohio, where she lives with her husband and children.

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