

## CHANGING ROLES OF SOUTH KOREAN WOMEN

**GRADES:** 9- 12

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**SUBJECT:** World History, Chosŏn Korea, Contemporary Korea, Gender Roles

### **OBJECTIVES:**

1. Use a variety of primary and secondary sources in order to analyze any changes and continuities in the status of South Korean women over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries.
2. Classify evidence from the documents as examples of change or continuity, as well as political, social or economic themes.
3. Analyze the sources of the documents in order to determine the author's point of view or bias.
4. Analyze the way in which an ancient ideology, such as Confucianism, can influence the modern lives of women. They will also be able to suggest areas where change has been slow to occur.
5. Justify the need for an additional document. This may be a document that they believe provides a missing voice that would strengthen a particular argument in their essay.
6. Identify that documents can serve more than one purpose. Several documents produce evidence of change as well as continuity, or contain items that belong to several themes.
7. Write a document based essay that contains a relevant thesis that answers the question and supports that thesis with evidence from the documents. They may also include any relevant historical information they may know from outside sources.

### **STANDARDS:**

Common Core

W1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

W2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas

W4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.

RH1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources

RH2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source

RI 6. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text

## **MATERIALS REQUIRED:**

- One copy of the document-based question for each student
- Graphic organizer (or appropriate thinking map guidance) for a change and continuity analysis
- Copies of the rubric for the essay
- Optional materials for cooperative group activity: Newsprint, glue-sticks, scissors, different colored markers and additional copies of the DBQ (copied on the front side of the paper only) for group classification of the evidence and thesis statement practice.

## **BACKGROUND:**

This lesson can be used late in a World History course when the class is learning about late 20<sup>th</sup> Century developments, such as the economic development of Asia after World War II in areas such as Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and South Korea. Many textbooks refer to these regions as “Asian Tigers” and briefly discuss the conditions that helped them to prosper, as well economic, political and social effects of their development. Teachers could use this DBQ to help students refine their ability to classify the changes and continuities which occur by examining its effect upon women in South Korea.

This document-based question assumes that students recall what they have learned early in their history course about Confucianism as a ethical and philosophical system that was developed in China during 5<sup>th</sup> BCE, eventually spreading to other Asian areas (such as Korea) by means of cultural diffusion. Teachers may wish to have students brainstorm or review some of the key concepts of Confucianism, especially the emphasis on ritual, filial piety, education and relationships. At the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, what would a Confucian society look like? How would men and women be expected to behave?

Although the philosophy was present within Korea as early as the Koryō Dynasty (918 – 1392), it was Neo-Confucianism (introduced to Korean scholars during China’s years under Mongol rule) that became a full-fledged ideology centralizing the power of the king and ordering the lives of Korean people. In her book *The Confucian Transformation of Korea: A Study of Society and Ideology* (Harvard University Press, 1992), Martina Deuchler argues that this transformation occurs during early Chosŏn Dynasty and is firmly entrenched by the seventeenth century. Since Chosŏn lasted from 1392 until the annexation of Korea by Japan in 1910, we can limit our discussion of its effects on women over a century.

The use of document-based questions with students addresses many critical thinking and writing skills. Students do not necessarily have to write full-length essays in order to practice many of these skills, a topic addressed in my NCSS presentation “[Why Use Document-Based Questions?](#)” See also this [matrix of world history DBQs](#) for more ideas of how to integrate these valuable teaching tools.

## PROCEDURE:

1. Assign students a reading for homework in which they familiarize themselves with political and economic developments in several nations and city-states on Asia's Pacific Rim after World War 2.
2. Have students brainstorm the changes that might take place in an Asian society that had seen such rapid transformations.
3. Pass out copies of the **DBQ: Changing Roles of South Korean Women** (*included below*) and go over the instruction page with the students, highlighting what you are actually going to have the students do for the lesson.
4. As students read the documents, they could use a variety of colors to highlight evidence of change, continuity and/or whether evidence can be classified as belonging to a political, social or economic theme. If students are new to this process, you may wish to provide more support in the way of a graphic organizer or thinking map to complete while reading.
5. Group essay writing activity: After students have finished examining the documents, place them into smaller groups and have them compare their charts and/or findings. Using newsprint, assign different groups parts of the DBQ essay to write. One group could be responsible for the introduction paragraph which includes the thesis statement that answers the question, provides the organizational categories for the DBQ and takes a position with regards to changes and continuities. One group could write a paragraph that deals with changes and continuities in Korean women's political participation over the course of the century. Another group could be given another theme, such as changes in their role in society or the economy. One group could just focus on what has stayed basically the same and try to analyze why certain changes have been slow to take place. Each of the body paragraph groups need to practice analyzing one document's bias as well as the need for an additional document.
6. As a whole group, review the results of the different groups. Ask students to assess the extent to which they use the documents as evidence and do not simply re-tell the documents. Are they answering all parts of the question? Do they try to explain why there are changes or why there are continuities? Do the requests for additional documents seem reasonable? What biases did they detect in some of the documents?

## EVALUATION:

In order to assess attainment of the outcomes, students could write the essay individually or turn in their graphic organizers with a completed thesis statement.

For the assessment of a completed DBQ essay, an example of an Advanced Placement World History generic DBQ rubric is included below. You can adapt this rubric to the needs of your class.

For assessing the DBQ thesis and graphic organizers as separate tasks, a rubric could be constructed which awards points for the thesis based on three tasks: answering the DBQ question, taking a position with regards to the question and introducing the main categories that are used to answer the question. For the graphic organizer, how well did the students interpret the various documents? Is there an attempt to interpret or simply re-tell the document?

## **RESOURCES:**

Collison, K. B.. "South korea's economy: What do you do when you reach the top?." *Economist*. N.p., 2011. Web. 15 Aug 2012. <<http://www.economist.com/node/21538104>>.

"Constitution of the Republic of Korea." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, 15 Aug. 2012. Web. 15 Aug. 2012. <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitution\\_of\\_the\\_Republic\\_of\\_Korea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitution_of_the_Republic_of_Korea)>.

Deuchler, Martina. *The Confucian Transformation of Korea: A Study of Society and Ideology*. Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1992. Print.

Harden, Blaine. "With pressures high, South Korean women put off marriage and childbirth." *The Washington Post*. The Washington Post Company, 2010. Web. 17 Jul 2012. <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/02/28/AR2010022803287.html>>.

Kim-Renaud, Young-Key. *Creative Women of Korea: The Fifteenth through the Twentieth Centuries*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2004. Print.

McCurry, Justin. "Park Geun-hye aims to become South Korea's first female president." . July 10, 2012. Web. 17 Jul 2012. <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/jul/10/park-geun-hye-korean-president>>.

"NATIONAL MUSEUM OF KOREA." *NATIONAL MUSEUM OF KOREA*. N.p., n.d. Web. 15 Aug. 2012. <<http://www.museum.go.kr/main/index/index002.jsp>>.

Park, Young-Joo. "Women's Development and Information on Women in Korea." *IFLANET*. IFLA, International Federation of Library Association, 1998. Web. 17 Jul 2012. <<http://archive.ifla.org/IV/ifla64/112-122e.htm>>.

Sample Questions and Scoring Guidelines. *CollegeBoard*. N.p., n.d. Web. 15 Aug. 2012. <[http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/history\\_world/samp.html?worldhist](http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/history_world/samp.html?worldhist)>.

Sang-Hun, Choe . "Korean Women Flock to Government." *The New York Times*. March 1, 2010. Web. 17 Jul 2012. <<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/02/world/asia/02iht-women.html>>.

## Change Analysis Chart

**Topic:**

<b>Characteristics at the beginning of the period</b>	<b><u>Key Changes</u></b>	<b>Characteristics at the end of the period</b>	<b>Analysis of changes</b>
	<b><u>Key Continuities</u></b>		<b>Analysis of continuities</b>

**Thesis statement:**

*AP World Generic DBQ Rubric*

<b>Basic Core</b>		<b>Expanded Core</b>	
<i>Historical skills and knowledge required to show competence.</i>		<i>Historical skills and knowledge required to show excellence.</i>	
1. Has acceptable thesis.	1 Point	Expands beyond basic core of 1-7 Points. The basic core of a score of <b>7</b> must be achieved before a student can earn expanded core points.  Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a clear, analytical, and comprehensive thesis.</li> <li>• Shows careful and insightful analysis of the documents.</li> <li>• Uses documents persuasively as evidence.</li> <li>• Analyzes point of view in most or all documents.</li> <li>• Analyzes the documents in additional ways – groupings, comparisons, syntheses.</li> <li>• Explains why additional types of document(s) or sources are needed.</li> </ul>	0 – 2 Points
2. Understands the basic meaning of all documents.  <i>(may misinterpret one document)</i>	1 Point		
3. Supports thesis with appropriate evidence from all documents.  <i>(Supports thesis with appropriate evidence from all but 1 document)</i>	2 Points  <i>(1 Point)</i>		
4. Analyzes point of view in at least three documents.	1 Point		
5. Analyzes documents by grouping them in at least 3 ways, depending on the question.	1 Point		
6. Identifies and explains the need for one type of appropriate additional document or source.	1 Point		
Subtotal	<b>7 Points</b>	Subtotal	<b>2 Points</b>

**TOTAL 9 Points**

## **DBQ: Changing Roles of South Korean Women**

**Directions:** The following is a document-based question that is based on the accompanying Documents 1-10. The question is designed to test your ability to work with and understand historical documents.

Write an essay that:

- Has a relevant thesis and supports that thesis with evidence from the documents.
- Uses all of the documents.
- Analyzes the documents by grouping them in as many appropriate ways as possible. Does not simply summarize the documents individually.
- Takes into account the sources of the documents and analyzes the authors' points of view.
- Identifies and explains the need for at least one additional type of document.
- You may refer to relevant historical information not mentioned in the documents.

**DBQ Question:** Using the following documents, analyze the changes and continuities in the roles of South Korean women living within a predominantly Confucian society from 1900 to the present. Identify and explain one additional type of document and explain how it would help your analysis of women's roles.

**Historical Background:** The Chosŏn Dynasty in Korea which lasted from 1392 to 1910 resulted in a highly patriarchal and stratified society entrenched in Confucian values, especially after 1600. The annexation of Korea by the Japanese in 1910 brought an end to the dynasty, and after World War II, Korea was split into North and South along the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel. The South Korean "economic miracle" of the 1960's through the 1990's have resulted in many modern changes within their society, however many Confucian traditions still persist.

## Document 1

Source: Chosŏn Queen Sohye's *Naehun* ("Instructions for Women", 1475) as published in *Creative Women of Korea: The Fifteenth Through the Twentieth Centuries* (Young-Key Kim-Renaud, editor).

A wife should generally focus on the work of preparing food. She should devote herself only to the arts of liquor, food, and clothing and should not involve herself in political affairs, nor should she dispose of family affairs. Even though she might be bright, talented and knowledgeable and versed in affairs both old and new, she should only assist her husband and advise him of his deficiencies. She should never be like the hen that crows at dawn and brings disaster.

## Document 2

Source: Daejojeon Area of Changdeok Palace (main palace of the Chosŏn Dynasty for about 270 years). The Daejojeon is the separate residence for the Queen.





### Document 3

**Source:** Sarangbang (Scholar's Studio) on display at the National Museum of Korea



**Description from the Museum's web site:** Neo-Confucianism exerted a strong influence upon the entire gamut of the Korean society in the Chosŏn Period (1392-1897), and even the layout of a house was designed according to its teaching that men and women as members of a family should have separate living spaces. For the grown male members, *sarangbang* was a room where they spent most of the day, reading and meeting friends. The room was typically designed to create a serene atmosphere with little decoration or furniture, although only wealthy, noble aristocratic families could afford such a room.

## **Document 4**

**Source:** Constitution of the Republic of Korea, 1948. (Excerpts that pertain to the rights of women were taken from CHAPTER II. RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF CITIZENS)

### **Article 10 (Dignity, Pursuit of Happiness)**

All citizens shall be assured of human dignity and worth and have the right to pursue happiness. It is the duty of the State to confirm and guarantee the fundamental and inviolable human rights of individuals.

### **Article 11 (Equality)**

1. All citizens shall be equal before the law, and there shall be no discrimination in political, economic, social or cultural life on account of sex, religion or social status.
2. No privileged caste shall be recognized or ever established in any form.
3. Awarding of decorations or distinctions of honor in any form shall be effective only for recipients, and no privileges shall ensue therefrom.

### **Article 15 (Occupation)**

All citizens shall enjoy freedom of occupation.

### **Article 23 (Property, Public Welfare, Expropriation)**

1. Right of property shall be guaranteed for any citizen. Contents and limitations thereof shall be determined by Act.

### **Article 24 (Right to Vote)**

All citizens shall have the right to vote under the conditions as prescribed by Act.

### **Article 25 (Right to Public Office)**

All citizens shall have the right to hold public office under the conditions as prescribed by Act.

### **Article 31 (Education)**

1. All citizens shall have an equal right to receive education corresponding to their abilities.
2. All citizens who have children to support shall be responsible at least for their elementary education and other education as provided by Act.

### **Article 32 (Work)**

1. All citizens shall have the right to work. The State shall endeavor to promote employment of workers and to guarantee optimum wages through social and economic means and shall enforce a minimum wage system under the conditions as prescribed by Act.
2. All citizens shall have the duty to work. The State shall prescribe by Act the extent and conditions of the duty to work in conformity with democratic principles.
4. Special protection shall be accorded to working women, and they shall not be subjected to unjust discrimination in terms of employment, wages and working conditions.

## Document 5

**Source:** Park, Young-Joo. "Women's Development and Information on Women in Korea." *IFLANET*. IFLA, International Federation of Library Association, 1998. Web. 17 Jul 2012. <<http://archive.ifla.org/IV/ifla64/112-122e.htm>>.

The Korean War (1950-1953) proved how strong and self-reliant women could be under the most adverse conditions. Many women had to support their families and themselves while their husbands or sons were away fighting the communists. Many even lost husbands and sons in the war. As a result of their war experiences women realized the importance of the development of their capabilities not only to be able to survive but also to prosper economically. They also cared for war orphans, widows, and wounded soldiers and made truly remarkable contributions to the reconstruction of Korea after the tragic war. Following the signing of the ceasefire the government returned to Seoul in 1953, women's social participation expanded remarkably in scope and nature.

## Document 6

**Source:** South Korea's Economy: What Do You Do When You Reach the Top? *The Economist*, November 12, 2011.

One way to boost the skilled labour force might be to have rather more people working rather fewer hours. The extra people would be women, often highly educated ones. Quite a lot of Korean women stay at home—the participation rate for women aged 25-54 is only 62%, the fourth-lowest in the \*OECD—even though they are usually better educated than men. In almost all rich countries, the best-educated women are more likely to work than their less-educated sisters. Not in South Korea.

Shorter hours might encourage some of these skilled women into the workforce. So might a change in attitudes to schooling. The job of supervising a child's education falls to women, which is one of the reasons why relatively few women have jobs.

\*OECD – Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development is an international economic organization of 34 countries founded in 1961 to stimulate economic progress and world trade.

## Document 7

**Source:** Sang-Hun, Choe . "Korean Women Flock to Government." *The New York Times*. March 1, 2010. Web. 17 Jul 2012. <<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/02/world/asia/02iht-women.html>>.

The recent surge of women in the public sector is an outcome of government efforts to expand democracy after decades of military rule, to combat economic stagnation by bringing more well-educated women into the paid work force and to check the country's plummeting birthrate, attributed in part to the difficulties South Korean women face trying to combine careers and motherhood.

But it also reflects the daunting obstacles women continue to face in the private sector.

In South Korea, the four largest conglomerates — Samsung, Hyundai, LG and SK — dominate the economy. Women hold less than 2 percent of seats on their boards. There are almost no female executives at South Korean banks.

Despite having the world's 13th-largest economy, South Korea ranked 115th out of 134 countries in the World Economic Forum's 2009 index of gender equality.

Compared with other industrialized countries, highly educated women are poorly represented in the paid work force in South Korea, where Confucian-influenced tradition continues to give married women overriding responsibility for managing the household and raising children.

In 2007, only 60.9 percent of women with college or graduate degrees were employed, the lowest rate among the 30 countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. (The O.E.C.D. average was 79.9 percent.)

Women who do work outside the home tend to be clustered in low-level service and manufacturing jobs — a fact that had consequences in the recent recession. In the United States and Europe, more men than women lost their jobs. But in South Korea, a whopping 90 percent of those made jobless were women, partly because they made up so many of the part-time and contract workers who have proved easy targets when it comes to cutting costs.

In January, just over 45 percent of working-age women were employed, compared with almost 70 percent of men. Women bring in only 52 percent of what men get in wages, according to the U.N. Development Program's gender empowerment measure, which last year ranked South Korea 62nd out of 109 countries in terms of income and of political and economic participation and decision-making.

Faced with all this, it has been the government that has led the way to expand women's rights. Since the mid-1990s, it has enacted laws addressing issues like sexual and domestic violence. It has also revised more than 300 existing laws to eliminate gender bias since 2005, the year the Constitutional Court threw out provisions in the Civil Code that said that only men could be the legal head of household and that children must take their father's surname, thus toppling centuries-old tenets of Korean society. Women's rights advocates still mention this ruling as one of their greatest coups.

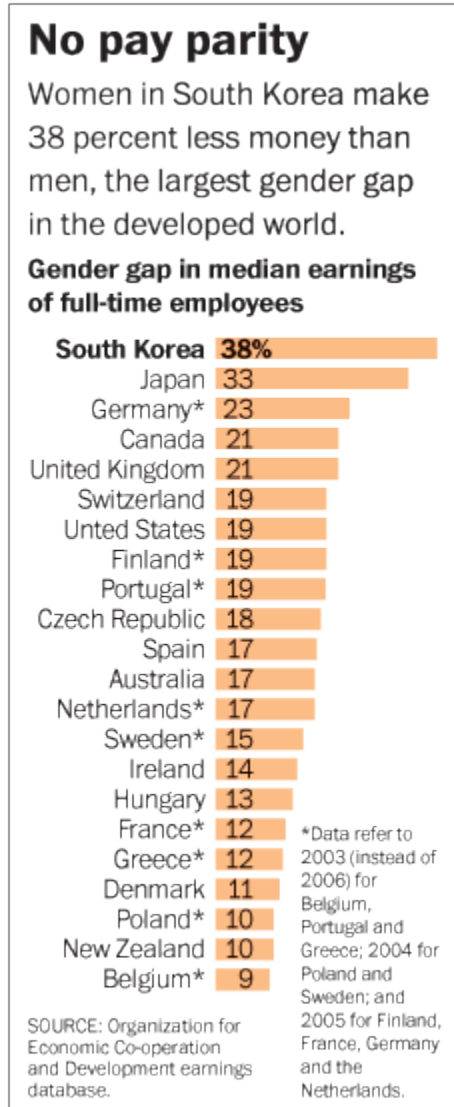
## Document 8

**Source:** Harden, Blaine. "With pressures high, South Korean women put off marriage and childbirth." *The Washington Post*. The Washington Post Company, 2010. Web. 17 Jul 2012. <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/02/28/AR2010022803287.html>>.

To lower stress as they climb corporate ladders, women in South Korea are postponing marriage and motherhood. The number of unmarried women in their 20s and 30s is surging. For three years running, South Korea has had the world's lowest birthrate, according to the U.N. World Health Organization.

The no-husband, no-baby trend has become a demographic epidemic in East Asia. Among the 10 countries or territories with the world's lowest fertility rates, six are in the Asia-Pacific region, according to a 2008 CIA ranking. From Japan to Singapore, the percentage of women who remain single into their mid-30s is rising at historically unprecedented rates. In South Korea, the percentage of unmarried women ages 30 to 34 nearly doubled in the past five years, rising to 19 percent from 10.5 percent.

*(Excerpt includes image on the right)*



The Washington Post

## Document 9

**Source:** McCurry, Justin. "Park Geun-hye aims to become South Korea's first female president." . July 10, 2012. Web. 17 Jul 2012. <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/jul/10/park-geun-hye-korean-president>>.

The daughter of a former South Korean dictator who was assassinated more than 30 years ago has announced a campaign to become the country's first female president with promises to tackle inequality and improve ties with North Korea.

Declaring her candidacy for the ruling New Frontier party at a rally in Seoul, Park Geun-hye, who once described her politics as "Korean Thatcherism", promised to "create a country where no one is left behind" and break the "vicious cycle of mistrust" between North and South Korea.



Opinion polls suggest that conservative South Korea is ready to send a woman to the Blue House, the president's official residence, in December's election. A recent survey gave her a 38% approval rating, 20 points ahead of her nearest rival.

But Park, 60, and other women occupy only 10% of seats in South Korea's parliament and the proportion of working women, at just over 50%, has remained static for the past two decades.

## Document 10

**Source:** Notes from an interview between the Confucian lineage heir (“*chongson*”) and Dr. Mark Peterson, while visiting Yangdong Folk Village (a UNESCO World Heritage site and agricultural village near Gyeongju, South Korea) in July 2012.



(Men and women) need to understand the role each plays in the family. The husband performs manly tasks and the woman – womanly. The two together make a harmonious pair. They are equal but each has their own role and this creates harmony. The blending of their roles leads to fighting, but love and respect for each other’s role leads to harmony in the family.

(When asked about the participation of women in village affairs) Women’s points of view should be expressed through their husbands who represent their ideas to the (village) elders.