HH3020: Introduction to Korean History  
SEM 2 AY 2018-2019  

Assoc. Prof Park Hyung Wook

Time and Venue:  
Wednesday 3:30 to 6:30PM / TR+108

Office Hour:  
Thursday 11:30AM to 1:30PM

Contact:  
Phone: 6592 3565 / Office: HSS 05-14 / Email: hwpark@ntu.edu.sg

I. Course Description:  
This is a seminar course in the history of Korea, focusing on its modern part. Students will be able to study the major issues in the creation of the Korean nation, the national identity, the growth of its unique social and political structure, and the technological and industrial growth in the modern period. The primary subjects in the seminar include premodern development of the Korean nation and culture, the Japanese colonial era, the liberation after World War II, the Korean War, and the period after the mid-twentieth century when Koreans experienced the shock of their rapid industrialization and urbanization. Students will learn the dynamics of Korean history which placed the country in the changing global landscape in the contemporary world.

II. Course Design:  
There will be a three-hour seminar each week. For the first 40 minutes, the professor will introduce the day’s main subjects with certain points for further thinking. Then, some students will present their analysis of movies relevant to the week’s theme. The following hours will be used for group discussion based on the selected pre-class questions. Each group, before the end of the seminar, will present their discussion in front of other students. The result of the discussion should be uploaded in NTULearn.

III. Course Schedule and Readings:
The Course Readings:

There are two kinds of readings, the required and the optional. The required readings are the articles or book chapters that you must finish before coming to the class. The optional readings are those you are encouraged to read if you are particularly interested in a subject. These readings can be selectively used for writing your first essay. All the book chapters or journal articles in the required list are available for downloading in the courseweb in NTULearn. Most of the books or book chapters in the optional list are stored in the NTU (HSS) or NIE libraries’ reserve collection. Some articles among them can be downloaded from the courseweb in NTULearn. Any missing ones are available in the professor’s office.

The Historical Films for the Course:

South Korea has developed a strong movie industry, which is now internationally renowned. One crucial product of this prospering industry is its historical films. Although some of these films have been criticized for their misleading interpretations, there are a number of more serious movies that have been acclaimed for their novel perspectives and deep historical insight. I think that watching these films can be a good way to learn history and its varied standpoints, especially in relation to Korea’s contemporary problems. Moreover, many of the historical films, with good acting, realistic costume, and nuanced narrative, are quite fun to watch! These movies can be used for your weekly presentation. For other classic movies produced from the 1940s to the 1990s, visit the Korean Film Archive’s Youtube page: https://www.youtube.com/user/KoreanFilm/videos

1. Introduction & Major Questions

Required Readings:

2. Late Chosŏn Korea and the Mirage of Modernity

Required Readings:


3. Civil Society in Chosŏn Dynasty?

Required Readings:
4. Problems on Colonial Modernity

Required Readings:


5. War, Manchuria, and the Bitter Memories of Modernity

Required Reading:
- Robinson, *Korea’s Twentieth Century Odyssey*, pp. 82-87, 97-99.

Movies: *Dongju: The Portrait of a Poet* (2016) [in the professor’s DVD collection]

6. Liberation and Conflicts

Required Readings:
- Cumings, *Korea’s Place in the Sun*, pp. 185-236.


7. Shaping Culture and Politics in the North

Required Readings:


8. Park Chung Hee and His Contested Legacy

Required Readings:
- Robinson, *Korea’s Twentieth Century Odyssey*, pp. 121-140.
- Seungsook Moon, *Militarized Modernity and Gendered Citizenship in South Korea* (Durham:

Required Readings:


Movies: Whistle Blower (2014), The Rose of Sharon Blooms Again (1995) [both in the professor’s collection, no English sub]

10. Making Korean Democracy

Required Readings:

Robinson, Korea’s Twentieth Century Odyssey, pp. 140-145, 167-178

Brazinsky, Nation Building in South Korea, 41-70, 223-250.


Movies: Peppermint Candy (1999), Oraedŏn Chŏngwŏn (Old Garden, 2007)

11. Historical Memories and Their Reinvention

Required Readings:


12. Religion and Religious Culture in Contemporary Society

Required Readings:


13. Gender, Sexuality, and the Troubled Nation


VI. Evaluation:

1. Assignment 1: An Essay (30%)
   Students should write an essay about a topic they choose using at least three research papers or book chapters (excluding newspaper articles) in the optional reading list. The word number should be about 1,800 (excluding bibliography and footnotes). Although it is recommended that students select one among the weekly discussion topics, they can create a new subject after perusing their papers. The format of the paper can be a review, but it should still have a strong and clear argument based on each student’s diligent reading and analysis of the resources. The essay should be submitted to the course’s NTULearn website in the form of the MS word file (a pdf file is not recommended).

2. Assignment 2: A Comic (25%)
   Students should submit a piece of a comic strip on Korean history. Students can choose any topic addressed during the course, and should depict a comic that can be included in an A0 paper. The quality of the drawing and coloring does not count, but the content and narrative (and conversation, if necessary) does. The content and narrative should deal with a problem analyzed from the students’ own perspective, using at least 3 papers from the syllabus. The comic should analytically discuss two or more distinct perspectives on a historical incident/subject/problem/figure. Each student must submit 2 files. The first is the comic itself, including all conversation imbedded within the images. The second file is a word file that has only the text included in the comic. At the end of this file, all references ought to be listed. The best works will be exhibited at NTU’s HSS library. The two final products are to be submitted to the course’s NTULearn website. Although there is no restriction on the file format of the main submission, the text file must be created with the MS word program.

3. Pre-Class Questions: (15%)
   After finishing the required readings for each week, every student must submit a question for discussion during the seminar. The question is to be uploaded in the courseweb in NTULearn before each Saturday evening. These questions will be graded according to their relevance, novelty, and ingenuity.
4. Group Discussion Reports in NTULearn: (10%)  
After the seminar, each group—which students can create by themselves but cannot be changed after the add/drop period—should submit a short report of discussion to NTULearn after the end of the class. This report reflects the outcome of the class members’ conversation about the discussion question assigned to them. The professor’s evaluation will be added as a comment, about which students can ask further questions. In each report, there must be a list of participating members.

5. Participation and Attendance in the Seminar: (10%)  
Each student’s activity and attendance is monitored in every seminar and will be used in the final evaluation. Please try to attend every class and be sure to be proactive during the discussion.

6. Cinema Analysis: (10%)  
Students should watch a movie on Korea and present their findings in front of the class audience. The movie should be chosen among those listed in the syllabus. (Students may choose one in the Korean Film Archive’s collection). Many of them are found in the NTU libraries and NTULearn. If you cannot find any copy there, the professor has one, or can be found in youtube. (If the student wants to choose a different movie, she or he must get prior permission from the professor.) The presentation must not be a summary of the movie’s story or plot, although the relevant part in the story should be very briefly explained. It ought to include how the movie pertains to the week’s themes, such as colonial modernity, ideological confrontation, or gender problems in contemporary society. It is also possible that students investigate the time when the movie was filmed rather than the time it aimed to depict. The context of the time of its production might let us know much more than the historical situation it attempts to describe. The presentation should not be more than 10 minutes, and students can show a short clip of the movie. If there is an agreement, two students can present their view of a single movie.

V. Late Submission:  
There will be a penalty to a paper submitted after the deadline. The extent of penalty will be decided depending on the general distribution of students’ marks in the entire class. But late submission can be excused according to the professor’s understanding of the student’s circumstances.

VI. Plagiarism:  
Plagiarism is a serious academic misconduct and may endanger a student’s career in a highly severe way. It is done intentionally or unintentionally by using another person’s ideas and writings without any proper citation and/or quotation marks. Paraphrasing is an act of rewriting other people’s ideas or arguments using your own words. While this is an acceptable practice in most cases, it can be an issue if you do not indicate that the ideas have come from another person’s work. If you are not sure about how you should do regarding these issues, please do cite the referred sources in footnotes/endnotes and use the quotation marks around the terms you did not invent. Even if a student cited a source, direct quotation without quotation marks may be a problem, too. If any plagiarized sentence or paragraph is detected, the grade will be reduced to zero and the student’s name will be reported to the school.

VII. Policy on Missing Classes:  
In general, students are encouraged to attend all seminars. However, they may miss a few, if there is a good reason, such as illness, required university activity, or family emergency. In such
cases, students can claim for the credit of class attendance, only if they submit a summary of the week’s readings along with the documentary evidence on the reasons of absence.

VIII. List of Optional Readings:

**General:**


Bruce Cumings, *Korea’s Place in the Sun: A Modern History* (New York: Norton, 2005) [Read the other chapters].


**Chosŏn Korea:**


**Nation and Social Darwinism in the Age of Crisis:**


**Colonial Korea:**


Gi-Wook Shin and Michael Robinson (eds.), *Colonial Modernity in Korea* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999) [Read the other chapters; chapter 5 by Park is uploaded].
Korean War:

North Korea:

Park Chung Hee Era:
“South Koreans Feel Like Chicken Tonight after President’s Removal,” *The Guardian* (10 March 2017).

Science and Technology:


Democracy, Liberalization, and Civil Society:


Richard P. Cincotta, “How Democracies Grow Up: Countries with too many young people may not have a fighting chance at freedom,” *Foreign Policy* (9 October 2009).


Religions and Their Cultures:


**Questions on Women and Gender:**


**Contemporary Culture:**


Kyung Hyun Kim and Younglim Choe (eds.), *The Korean Popular Culture Reader* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014) [Chapter 15 by Federenko is uploaded].


Shannon Schweitzer, “‘Game of Thrones,’ Pokémon, and Dabbing: The Crazy Ways South Koreans Watched the Election” *Foreign Policy* (9 May 2017).