

Course: Modern Korean History

Credit 6 points

Unit Coordinator: Dr David William Kim

Content

This unit examines major social, political and economic developments that have taken place in twentieth-century Korea, and the challenges and opportunities that these have created for the two Koreas. Students evaluate how the combination of indigenous philosophical traditions, the legacy of Japanese colonialism and the presence of US military forces on the peninsula, the civil war and the influx of competing Cold War ideologies have shaped contemporary South and North Korean societies. The unit also investigates national identity discourses and ideas of ethnic 'Koreanness' in a divided (and increasingly multi-ethnic) country.

Special attention is also given to conceptualisation of gender, body and sexuality that draw on both 'traditional' and more recent neo-liberal discourses of the same, and how these inform such increasingly commonplace bodily practices such as cosmetic surgery, as well as cultural representations of gender and subjectivity in popular culture. By providing students with a variety of contemporary cultural theories as a 'thinking apparatus', the unit encourages students to engage with theory when examining contemporary Korean society in order to evaluate and explain why many of these issues and phenomena cannot be explained simply in terms of Western epistemologies. Throughout the unit, students are encouraged to actively engage in class through seminar discussions, symposia simulations, presentations and interactive classroom exercises and design a short in-depth research project on a relevant topic of their choice. The unit is taught entirely in English, and no prior knowledge of Korean language is assumed.

Outcomes

Students are able to (1) compare South Korea's development of 'compressed modernity' with the modernisation and industrialisation processes in Western post-industrial societies, and apply this critical understanding to their own societies, thereby demonstrating 'ethical sensitivity towards our diverse and globalised world'; (2) describe key events and ideologies that informed the development of the two Koreas in the post-war period, identify and explain how gendered discourses of power and class interpellate individuals within society, as well as apply relevant theoretical frameworks to analyse these in the context of a research project assignment; (3) devise a research topic, identify a research topic and develop an effective line of argument and present it in a convincing manner; (4) use evidence appropriately in support of an argument, analyse and synthesise relevant data from different sources, and critique consulted literature; (5) with some guidance, deploy established techniques of analysis, practical investigation and enquiry used within social sciences and prioritise conclusions they reach from an analysis of variety sources, giving reasons; (6) apply knowledge of Korean society acquired through the unit to their Korean language study (where applicable); (7) utilise and apply digital fluency gained through preparing for assessment of the unit; (8) use a

self-reflective approach to devising, developing and delivering an enquiry-based research project, present their findings orally and in academic English, and work collaboratively within a group with an ability to deal with disagreement and conflict to reach consensus (social-emotional learning); and (9) acknowledge used sources styles accurately, within the text for all sources used.

Assessment

Presentation 5%

Participation in class 15%

Mid-term Essay 40% (up to 2,000 words)

Final Essay 40% (up to 3,000 words)

Contact hours workshops:

2 hrs per week (over 10 weeks from week 1, see unit outline for further details)

Course Outline

Part I: Moments out of Time: The Memory of Traditional Korea

September 3: Welcome — Course content and expectations

September 5: Korea: A land, a people, a history (initial thoughts/confronting stereotypes). Michael Breen, *The Koreans*, Preface (pp. ix-xii) and Chs. 1-3, pp. 1-40 (of Part 1: “Society and Values”).

September 8: Traditional values and beliefs (presentation)

James Huntley Grayson, *Korea: A Religious History* (revised edition), “Appendix A: Foundation Myths of the Ancient States,” pp. 239-48.

James Huntley Grayson, *Early Buddhism and Christianity in Korea*, Ch. 2 (“The Advent of Buddhism in Korea”), pp. 16-43 and 59-62.

September 10: Rulers and subjects, wealth and power (**DISCUSSION**)

Ja-Hyun Kim Haboush, *The Confucian Kingship in Korea*, “Introduction,” pp. 1-5, Ch. 1 (“Confucian Kingship and Royal Authority in the Yi Monarchy”), pp. 7-28, and Ch. 2 (“Yǒngjo’s Reign: Images of Sagehood”), pp. 29-82.

Carter J. Eckert et al., *Korea Old and New*, Ch. 9 (pp. 107-31).

September 12: Korea and Japan: From formative cultural exchanges to Hideyoshi and the Imjin War (presentation)

William Wayne Farris, “Ancient Japan’s Korean Connection,” *Korean Studies* 20 (1996): 1-22.

September 15: Chosŏn society: Individual, family, lineage (presentation)

Martina Deuchler, *The Confucian Transformation of Korea*, “Introduction: Society and Ideology,” pp. 3-27 and pp. 129-34 of Ch. 3 (“Agnation and Ancestor

Worship”). The following selections from *Sources of Korean Tradition*, v. 2: *From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Centuries*, ed. Yŏng-ho Ch’oe, Peter H. Lee, and Wm. Theodore de Bary, pp. 46-52 (specifically, “Queen Sohye: Instructions for the Inner Quarters” and “Song Siyŏl: Instructions to My Daughter”), pp. 54-57 (“Chŏng Yagyong: Letters to His Sons”), pp. 60-67 (“Yi Tŏngmu: *Small Manners for Scholars (Sasojŏl)*”), and pp. 168-71 (editors comments; “Kim Myŏngyŏl: Favoring Sons”; “Kim Pŏn: Disinheriting Daughters”; and “Kim Sujong: To a Daughter-in-Law”). [Note: This reading is available on OCRA and *Canvas*.]

September 17: Hallmarks of tradition (**DISCUSSION**)

Hyung Il Pai, *Constructing “Korean” Origins*, Ch. 1 (“The Formation of Korean Identity”), pp. 1-21.

Jonna Elfving-Hwang, “Cosmetic Surgery and Embodying the Moral Self in South Korean Popular Makeover Culture,” *Asia-Pacific Journal*, vol. 11, issue 24, no. 2 (June 17, 2013), pp. 1-9.

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James L. McClain, “Cultural Chauvinism and the Olympiads of East Asia.” *Journal of the International History of Sport* (December 1990), pp. 388-404.

Part II: The Challenges of a New Age (1850s-1910)

September 19: Korea on the eve of modernity (presentation)

Carter J. Eckert et al., *Korea Old and New*, pp. 155-77.

Dong-Il Cho, “Oral Literature and the Growth of Popular Consciousness,” in Chun Shin-Yong, ed., *Folk Culture of Korea*, pp. 43-57.

Sources of Korean Tradition, v. 2, (a) pp. 27-30, which is a piece by Yi Chungwan on moral character and geography, (b) pp. 70-73 and 81-88, which includes editors’ comments and selections by Yi Ik and Chŏng Yagyong on agricultural reform, (c) pp. 104-106, an essay by Pak Chega on sericulture that compares living conditions in Korea and China, (d) pp. 117-24, which includes editors’ comments and selections by Kim Yuk and Yi Ik on astronomy, (e) pp. 157-61, which contains editor’s comments and a selection by Yu Hyŏngwŏn on slavery, and (g) pp. 171-73, a piece by Chŏng Yagyong on “wicked petty officials.” [Note: This reading is available on OCRA and *Canvas*.]

September 22: The Taewŏn’gun confronts Western imperialists and the Korean past (presentation) (presentation)

Carter J. Eckert et al., *Korea Old and New*, pp. 192-98.

Sources of Korean Tradition, v. 2, pp. 222-25 (Pak Chehyŏng, “Conflicts with the West”). [Note: This reading is available on OCRA and *Canvas*.]

Bruce Cumings, *Korea’s Place in the Sun*, pp. 107-15. [Note: This reading is available only on *Canvas*.]

September 24: Early Reform Movements (presentation)

Carter J. Eckert et al., *Korea Old and New*, pp. 199-214.

In K. Hwang, *The Korean Reform Movement of the 1880s*, pp. 78-96 and 115-29.

Sources of Korean Tradition, v. 2, ed. Yŏng-ho Ch’oe, Peter H. Lee, and Wm.

Theodore de Bary: pp. 254-60, which includes background comments by the editors, two selections by Kim Ok-kyun, and a memorial by Pak Yŏng-hyo. [Note: This reading is available on OCRA and *Canvas*.]

Donald N. Clark, *Living Dangerously in Korea*, Preface (pp. ix-xiv) and Chs. 1 and 2 (pp. 5-41).

September 26: Japan and Korea: From Hideyoshi to Itō Hirobumi (presentation)

Carter J. Eckert et al., *Korea Old and New*, pp. 222-30.

“Treaty of Amity and Friendship with Korea, February 26, 1876” in *Meiji Japan through Contemporary Sources*, v. 2, pp. 2-5.

Review “Kim Okkyun: Kapsin Reform Edict” in *Sources of Korean Tradition*, v. 2: *From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Centuries*, ed. Yŏng-ho Ch’oe, Peter H. Lee, *Modern Korea*, p. 4

and Wm. Theodore de Bary, pp. 255-56. [Note: This reading is available on OCRA and Canvas.]

Sources of Korean Tradition, v. 2, pp. 272-76, which includes the editors’ comments and two documents: “Kabo Reform Edicts” and “The King’s Fourteen-Article Oath.” [Note: This reading is available on OCRA and Canvas.]

Donghyun Huh (Vladimir Tikhonov, tr.), “The Korean Courtiers’ Observation Mission’s Views on Meiji Japan and Projects of Modern State Building,” *Korean Studies* 29 (2005), pp. 30-54.

September 29: The Tonghak Rebellion (**DISCUSSION**)

Bruce Cumings, *Korea’s Place in the Sun*, pp. 115-20. [Note: This reading is available only on Canvas.]

Sources of Korean Tradition, v. 2, five documents on pp. 262-72, including (a) “A Call to Arms Issued at Paeksan,” (b) “The Tonghak Peasant Army Manifesto at Mujang,” (c) “Twelve Reforms Proclaimed by the Tonghak Overseer’s Office,” (d) “The Tonghak Proclamation to Soldiers and Civilians,” and (e) “Interrogation of Chŏn Pongjun, First Session (9 February 1895).” [Note: This reading is available on OCRA and Canvas.]

Young-Ick Lew, “The Conservative Character of the 1894 Tonghak Peasant Uprising,” *Journal of Korean Studies* 7 (1990), pp. 149-180.

Jong-Sun Noh, *Religion and Just Revolution*, pp. 41-76.

October 1: Seoul Modern: Part 1 (presentation)

Bruce Cumings, *Korea’s Place in the Sun*, pp. 127-38. [Note: This reading is available only on Canvas.]

The YMCA Baseball Team (film)

October 3: Seoul Modern: Part 2 (presentation and review discussion)

Presentation and questions about the course material to date

October 6: Essay exam due (no class)

Part III: Japanese Occupation and Korean Modernity (1910-1945)

October 8: *Amhŭkki*: “The Dark Years,” 1910-1919 (presentation)

Bruce Cumings, *Korea’s Place in the Sun*, pp. 139-54. [Note: This reading is available only on Canvas.]

Nitobe Inazō, “Japanese Colonization,” *Asiatic Review* 16:45 (January 1920), pp. 113-21.

Yi Kwangsu, “Is this Love?,” manuscript translated by Janet Poole, pp. 1-9.

Na To-hyang, “The Lady Barber,” in Kim Chong-un and Bruce Fulton, trs. and eds., *A Ready-Made Life*, pp. 17-22.

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October 10: *Manse!* (presentation)

Bruce Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun*, pp. 154-62. [Note: This reading is available only on *Canvas*.]

Sources of Korean Tradition, v. 2, pp. 334-39, which includes the editors' comments about the March First Movement and the Declaration of Independence. [Note: This reading is available on OCRA and *Canvas*.]

October 13: University holiday (no class)

October 15: The era of "Cultural Rule"; 1919-1930s (presentation)

Jun Uchida, "Brokers of Empire: Japanese and Korean Business Elites in Colonial Korea," in Caroline Elkins and Susan Pedersen, eds., *Settler Colonialism in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 153-70.

Theodore Jun Yoo, *The Politics of Gender in Colonial Korea*, Ch. 2 ("The 'New Woman' and the Politics of Love, Marriage, and Divorce in Colonial Korea"), pp. 58-94 and Ch. 5 ("The Colonized Body: Korean Women's Sexuality and Health"), pp. 161-92.

October 17: Being modern in colonial Korea (**DISCUSSION**)

Sweet Dream (film, 1936)

"Notes on Sweet Dream" in the *The Past Unearthed: Collection of Chosun Films in the 1930s*.

Kim Tong-in, "The Photograph and the Letter," in Kim Chong-un and Bruce Fulton, trs. and eds., *A Ready-Made Life*, pp. 81-88.

Kim Yu-jöng, "Wife," in Kim Chong-un and Bruce Fulton, trs. and eds., *A Ready-Made Life*, pp. 121-32.

October 20: "Korea and the Homeland, Together as One" (presentation)

Bruce Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun*, pp. 162-84. [Note: This reading is available only on *Canvas*.]

Kiriyama Keiichi, "A 1944 Korean Rebellion within the Japanese Army: The Testimony of Lieutenant Cheon Sanghwa," *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, vol 21-4-09 (May 25, 2009), pp. 1-7.

October 22: Comfort Women (imaged introduction and general discussion)

Bonnie B. C. Oh, "The Japanese Imperial System and the Korean 'Comfort Women' of World War II," in Margaret Stetz and Oh, eds., *Legacies of the Comfort Women of World War II*, pp. 3-25.

Habitual Sadness (documentary; the first segment of a trilogy entitled *The Murmuring*).

Okano Yayo, "Toward Resolution of the Comfort Woman Issue — The 1000th Wednesday Protest in Seoul and Japanese Intransigence," *Asia-Pacific Journal*, vol 10, issue 50, no 2 (December 10, 2012), pp.1-5.

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October 24: Surviving a decade of fear (**DISCUSSION**)

Hildi Kang, *Under the Black Umbrella*, Appendix C ("Historical Overview, 1850-1945"), pp. 153-55, and Part II ("Change by Coercion"), pp. 85-147.

"Straits of Chosun" production notes in Korean Film Archives, ed., *The Past*

Unearthed: Collection of Feature Films in the Japanese Colonial Period.
Straits of Chosun (film, 1943).

Donald MacIntyre, "A Legacy Lost," *Time Asia* (January 28, 2002), pp. 1-7.

October 27: "buried history": Collaborators and Resisters (presentation)

Alan Riding, "France's Troubled Liberation," *New York Times*, August 24, 2014, pp. 1-4.

Kasayama Yoshikichi, "Korean Guard," in Haruko Taya Cook and Theodore Cook F, eds., *Japan at War: An Oral History*, pp. 113-20.

October 29: Review session (Reflections on the significance of occupation)

October 31: Essay exam due (no class)

Part IV: Contemporary Korea (1945-present)

November 3: The "Forgotten War" (presentation)

Bruce Cumings, *The Korean War: A History*, Ch. 1 ("The Course of the War") pp. 1-35 and Ch. 9 ("Requiem History in the Temper of Reconciliation"), pp. 223-43.

Kobayashi Akira, "The Unknown Korean War" (tr. Nobuko Adachi), *Asia-Pacific Journal* (February 10, 2010), pp. 1-5.

November 5: The path to democracy in the ROK/Republic of Korea, part I (presentation)

Michael E. Robinson, *Korea's Twentieth-century Odyssey*, Ch. 6 ("Political and Economic Development in South Korea"), pp. 121-45.

Park Chung Hee, *Our Nation's Path*, the sections "From Ruin to Reconstruction," pp. 110-18; "For Modernization of Korea," pp. 118-22; "Crisis of Modern Backward Democratic Country," pp. 190-93; and "Nature of Crisis," pp. 193-97.

Seungsook Moon, "The Cultural Politics of Remembering Park Chung Hee," *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, vol. 19-5-09 (May 9, 2009), pp. 1-16.

November 7: The quest for political legitimacy in the DPRK/Democratic People's Republic of Korea (**DISCUSSION**)

Bruce Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun*, Ch. 8 ("Nation of the Sun King: North Korea, 1953-Present"), pp. 404-29 only. [Note: This reading is available only on *Canvas*.]

Han S. Park, "The Advent and Evolution of Juche Ideology," in his *North Korea: The Politics of Unconventional Wisdom*, pp. 7-16.

Inside North Korea (documentary by National Geographic, 2007).

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November 10: The struggle for democracy in the ROK/Republic of Korea, part II (presentation)

Michael E. Robinson, *Korea's Twentieth-century Odyssey*, Ch. 8 ("Democratization in South Korea: 1987-2000"), pp. 167-81.

Sunhyuk Kim, "Civil Society and Democratization," in *Korean Society: Civil Society, Democracy, and the State*, ed. Charles K. Armstrong (Routledge, 2002), pp. 92-108.

November 12: A trip to Pyongyang and the DPRK (presentation)

A State of Mind (documentary directed by Daniel Gordon, 2007)

November 14: Governments and the people, north and south (**DISCUSSION**)

November 17: Seeking Utopia: Economy and society in the DPRK (presentation)

North Korea: A Day in the Life (documentary directed by Pieter Fleury, 2004).
 November 19: Seeking Utopia: Economic prosperity and social problems in the ROK (presentation)
 Seung-Ho Kwon and Chung-Sok Suh, "Transformations in Korean Capitalism: A Case Study of the Hyundai Business Group," in Chang Yun-Shik and Steven Hugh Lee, eds., *Transformations in Twentieth Century Korea*, pp. 106-37.
 John Lie, "What Makes Us Great: Chaeböl Development, Labor Practices, and Managerial Ideology," in Chang Yun-Shik and Steven Hugh Lee, eds., *Transformations in Twentieth Century Korea*, pp. 138-52.
 Andrew Eungi Kim, "Demography, Migration, and Multiculturalism in South Korea," *Asia Pacific Journal* (February 9, 2009), pp. 1-19.
 Timothy Lim, "Who Is Korean? Migration, Immigration, and the Challenge of Multiculturalism in Homogenous Societies," *Asia Pacific Journal* (July 27, 2009), pp. 1-19.
 Choe Sang-Hun, "Demographic Shifts Redefine What It Means to Be Korean," *New York Times*, November 29, 2012.

November 21: DPRK refugees (**DISCUSSION**)

Michael E. Robinson, *Korea's Twentieth-century Odyssey*, pp. 161-66 only in Ch. 5 ("Going It Alone: The DPRK 1953-present").
Seoul Train (documentary directed by Lisa Sleeth and Jim Butterworth, 2005).
 John Everard, *Only Beautiful, Please*, ch. 1 ("Daily Life in the DPRK"), pp. 1-51.
 Andrei Lankov, *North of the DMZ*, pp. 291-97 (that is, the essays "A New Life: Fully Furnished" and "The Fate of Defectors").
 Martin Fackler, "Serving a Father by Bringing Long-lost Koreans Home," *New York Times* (January 1, 2010), pp. 1-3.
 Martin Fackler, "Young North Korean Defectors Struggle in the South," *New York Times* (July 12, 2012), pp. 1-3.
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November 24: Human rights in North Korea (presentation)

United Nations Human Rights Council, "Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (February 7, 2014)," pp. 1-36.

November 26: No class; instead, enjoy a day at the movies, soaking up images of "romance" and family obligations in two very different societies

The Girls in My Hometown (directed by S. Pak, Pyongyang, 1991).
Re-birth of the Classics: The Housemaid, compiled by Korean Film Archive, "Production Notes" (pp. 22-23), "Creation and Evolution over 50 Years" by Lee Yeon-ho (pp. 28-33), and "Temptation of 'The Housemaid' Will Be Continued: Present Situation and Task of Digital Restoration" by Kim Ki-ho (pp. 34-39).
Housemaid (directed by Kim Ki-young, Seoul, 1960).

November 28: Thanksgiving vacation

December 1: Kim Jong Un and the future of the DPRK (**DISCUSSION**)

Brookings Institute, "North Korea's Military-First Policy: A Curse or a Blessing?" (March 31, 2009), pp. 1-2.
 Ruediger Frank, "Ideological Risk versus Economic Necessity: The Future of Reform in North Korea," *The Asia Pacific Journal* (July 27, 2009), pp. 1-7.

Bruce Cumings, "North Korea's Dynastic Succession," *Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus*, v. 10, issue 9, no. 1 (February 27, 2012), pp. 1-3.

Ruediger Frank, "North Korea after Kim Jong Il: The Kim Jong Un Era and its Challenges," *Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus*, v. 10, issue 2, no. 2 (January 9, 2012), pp. 1-10.

December 3: ROK and the DPRK—Is reunification possible? Desirable? Is war inevitable? (**DISCUSSION**)

Michael E. Robinson, *Korea's Twentieth-century Odyssey*, Ch. 9 ("Untying the Korean Knot"), pp. 182-89.

December 5: Reflections on Korean History (final thoughts)

Bruce Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun*, Ch. 10 ("Korea's Place in the World"), pp. 470-513. [Note: This reading is available only on Canvas.]

December 11: Final essay due

References

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- Hong Sung-gi. "Trends in Western historiography on Korea," *Korea Journal* (1999) 39#3.
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- Stark, Miriam T. (2005). *Archaeology Of Asia*. Boston: Blackwell Publishing.
- Turnbull, Stephen (2002). *Samurai Invasion. Japan's Korean War 1592–98*. London: Cassell & Co.