

Modern Korea

— Contending with Modernity —

History 1530
MWF 10:00-10:50

Fall 2014
Sayles 005

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Among the nations of modern East Asia, Korea's history is the least well-known and least understood. Yet, today Korea impinges upon the consciousness of the world. Booming demand for automobiles and consumer products propels the vibrant economy of South Korea, whose democratic experiment is regarded with keen interest and whose film and music industries have created a popular culture that enjoys growing fandom worldwide. North Korea, too, looms large, and clearly no permanent resolution of international tensions in north Asia can be achieved without observing realities on the peninsula. Deemed a "Hermit Kingdom" by Westerners when they sailed into the waters of East Asia some two hundred years ago, Korea commands a global presence at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

As we have begun to pay more attention to Korea, it is evident that the peninsula has been part of Asia's so-called "Great Transformation"; that is, today's Koreas have been (or more accurately, still are) engaged in making the wrenching shift from a traditional to a modern society. Just as clearly, the contemporary peninsula is a product both of the general historical forces that have swept across East Asia during the past two centuries and the evolution of Korea's own internal traditions. The purpose of this course is to examine Korea's confrontation with modernity — to comprehend the universal aspects of that great upheaval, as well as to appreciate the significance of those elements that derived from the country's own distinctive cultural heritage and from the fact that it was subject to the imperialistic impulses of one of its Asian neighbors.

PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS



You are expected to read and to think about the assignments according to the following schedule. To this end, I have requested the Rockefeller Library to make available as many readings as possible and all films through the Course Reserve (OCRA) system (the course password is Seoul7). The *Canvas* website includes the course syllabus, chronologies, discussion handouts, the few readings not available on OCRA, and other materials. For each discussion session, I will distribute in advance a list of readings and topics for thought and possible discussion.

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. Yǒng-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 (“Chǒng Yagyong: Letters to His Sons”), pp. 60-67 (“Yi Tǒngmu: *Small Manners for Scholars (Sasojŏl)*”), and pp. 168-71 (editors comments; “Kim Myǒngyŏl: 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.

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,

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.

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-jŏng, "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.

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).

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: Chaebŏl 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.

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

ASSESSMENT

Discussion Meetings:

Ten discussion meetings have been scheduled (September 10, 17, and 29; October 17, and 24; November 7, 14, and 21; and December 1 and 3). You are expected to attend each and to contribute to the discussions. On five (5) occasions of your choice, following

the discussion each student will submit a short statement (two-three paragraphs) on a topic announced in advance. Discussion participation and statements will count for approximately 30 percent of the course grade. See the Discussion Guide (distributed in class and available on the *Canvas* site for additional details).

Midterm Essay and Examination:

All students will complete two midterm, take-home essay examinations.

The first take-home essay will cover the sections of the course labeled “Moments out of Time” and “The Challenges of a New Age,” will deal with a topic distributed in advance, and should be approximately five pages in length (that is 1,500~1,800 words). The specific topic will be distributed no later than Monday, September 29, and the essay will be due in both paper and electronic forms by 3:00 p.m. on Monday, October 6. You will be able to complete the essay using the assigned readings for the course; no additional, outside readings are necessary. This essay will count for approximately 20 percent of the course grade.

The second take-home essay will cover the material included in the section of the course labeled “Japanese Occupation and Korean Modernity.” In parallel with the first essay, it should be approximately five pages in length (that is 1,500~1,800 words). The specific topic will be distributed no later than Friday, October 24, and the essay will be due in both paper and electronic forms by 3:00 p.m. on Friday, October 31. You will be able to complete the essay using the assigned readings for the course; no additional, outside readings are necessary. This examination will count for approximately 20 percent of the course grade.

Final Essay:

During Reading Period, each student will complete an eight- to ten-page essay (2,500~3,000 words). This paper will be based on specific questions that will ask you to analyze one or more key themes in the course. The questions will be distributed in advance (by December 3) and will focus on the relationship between developments in “Contemporary Korea” and the peninsula’s past history. The essay is due in both paper and electronic forms by 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 11 (i.e., the end of Reading Period). This essay will count for approximately 30 percent of the course grade.

Optional Projects:

Because of personal interests or specific concentration requirements, some of you wish to complete an optional project in lieu of one or more of the above course essays. I am happy to discuss these with you on an individual basis.