

ASAN 320K: Asian Nation Studies
Korean Culture and Society

Spring 2024	T, Th 10:30-11:45am
Location	Online via Zoom https://hawaii.zoom.us/j/91813753864 Passcode: 966389
Instructor	Young-a Park, Ph.D.
Email	yapark@hawaii.edu
Office	Moore 321
Office Hours	Mondays 2-3:30pm, on Zoom, sign up here: Dr Young-a Park Office Hours
Teaching Assistant	Lucie Crowley Duffy (lrcduffy@hawaii.edu)
Office hours	Thursdays 1-2pm, on Zoom, sign up here: Lucie Crowley Duffy TA Office Hours

Course Description

Through key works in history, anthropology, sociology, and literature on modern Korea, this course presents a fresh, multidisciplinary perspective in understanding Korean cultural institutions, politics, and history. Topics include: negotiations between religion and modernity; changing family organizations and gender constructs; state and civil society; North Korea and North Korean refugees; Korea's globalization and neoliberal turn.

Credit hours: 3

Student Learning Objectives

Upon completing the course, students will be able to:

- Have a deeper understanding of the significance of major events in Korean history (with a focus on modern Korea)
Critically assess multiple aspects of Korean religion, family/gender, state-civil society relations, division politics, and globalization processes
Apply knowledge of Korean history, culture, and politics to analyze current events and issues in Korea

Texts

All required reading materials will be uploaded on Laulima (under "Resources").

Requirements

Late work will be penalized unless an extension has been approved in advance. Your grade is based on the following elements:

1. **Attendance (15%):** Class attendance is mandatory and will be checked regularly including the add/drop period. The only exception to this policy is your health condition. One absence per semester is allowed (no questions asked, so no need to inform Instructor or TA), but beyond that any absence must be cleared with a doctor's note if you don't want to get points taken off. Please contact the TA if you have any questions about attendance records or getting permission.

2. **Participation (15%):** Your active contribution to class discussions is very IMPORTANT. In-class group activities will count towards your participation. This includes "Introduction letter" that is due Jan.12 (F).

3. **Reading log (21%):** You are expected to upload 7 reading logs to the Laulima "Discussions" throughout the semester. They should be uploaded to Laulima before class meeting starts (by 10:30am on the day of class). No points will be given for late submissions. Your response should be around 100-200 words. 7 postings×3 points=21 points

4. **Written responses to films/videos (18%):** All students are expected to watch assigned videos and respond to questions posted in the Laulima "Assignments." On the day these written responses are due, there will be no class meeting, but you are expected to submit your response by the end of the due date. Your response should be around 200 words. Assigned video or film links will be included in the Laulima Assignment prompts. At times, you will be asked to access some films with Dropbox links. Dropbox does not work like a video streaming service, so you might not be able to view the entire movie using a web browser (you will most likely have only one hour of streaming). A way to view the movies in their entirety is to download the video to your computer or tablet. You do NOT need a Dropbox account for this class. The shared video files are for class usage only, so NEVER share the video files with anyone else. I also strongly advise that you delete all the files after you are done with this class. When you submit the "Introduction letter" by the end of the first week, you will be asked to sign an agreement that you will honor the above-mentioned code of conduct. 6 postings×3=18 points

5. Final Exam (IN-PERSON): 31 %

Final exam will be a mixture of short questions (on important dates, facts, and definitions) and essay questions. There will be no make-up exams unless you have a legitimate reason (health related or family emergencies, submission of proof such as doctor's note is required).

*Always have the readings of the day available (print-outs or PDFs on your laptops or tablets) during class time, so you may reference them when you are asked to discuss the readings.

*Adjustments may be made to the course content and schedule at the Instructor's discretion and the updated syllabus will be uploaded on Laulima whenever revisions are made to the syllabus.

Other Class Policies:

Technology Requirements

Our class meetings will be conducted synchronously via Zoom video conference. Students are expected to have regular access to a steady Internet connection for this course, as well as a computer or mobile device equipped with a camera and microphone. A headset is also helpful to ensure clear audio.

Online Class Etiquette

In order to help ensure that we have productive, engaging live Zoom discussions, please...

- Call from a quiet place and use a headset if you anticipate background noise.
- Use “gallery view,” which will allow you to see everyone in the class at once.
- Use the Zoom raise hand feature when you wish to speak so that the instructor can call on you.
- Mute yourself when you are not speaking to reduce the background noise on the call.
- Keep your video on whenever possible (especially when speaking) in order to facilitate interaction and rapport-building with the instructor and other students.
- Choose “hide self view” if you’d prefer not to see yourself on your own screen.
- Use a virtual background if you are concerned about the privacy of your surroundings.

If you need to occasionally turn off your video due to circumstances such as poor Internet connection, that is fine. If you anticipate an ongoing need to keep video off, please consult with the instructor.

Academic Integrity

The integrity of a university depends upon academic honesty, which consists of independent learning and research. Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, which is often a concern in writing classes such as this one. Plagiarism is a very serious matter and may result in suspension or expulsion from UH Manoa. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, submitting any document that has been copied in whole or in part from another individual’s work without identifying that individual; neglecting to identify quotations or ideas that came from outside sources; and submitting the same material for more than one course without obtaining permission from the instructors involved. Students who engage in academic dishonesty will receive a 0 for that assignment on the first incident; a second incident will result in an automatic failing grade for the course and referral to the university disciplinary process.

Artificial Intelligence

In this course, students are not permitted to use generative AI applications such as ChatGPT, Bard, or Bing, in whole or in part, to generate course materials or assignments. Grammar and spell checking tools such as those integrated into MS Word may be used. If you have any questions about whether a particular tool or specific use is permitted, check with the instructor.

Disability Accommodations

If students feel that they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, they are invited to contact the instructor privately via email. The instructor is happy to work with you and the KOKUA Program (Office for Students with Disabilities) to ensure reasonable accommodations in this course. KOKUA can be reached at (808) 956-7511 or (808) 956-7612 (voice/text) in room 013 of the Queen Lili'uokalani Center for Student Services.

Course Schedule

I. Korean History: Its Relevance in Current Affairs

Week 1

1/9 (T): Introduction (Class overview, explanation of class requirements)

1/11 (Th): Pre-modern Korea

Cumings, 1997. *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History*, Ch.1, Read pp. 22-26 (focus on Tan'gun mythology); pp. 45-56 (the Chosŏn period and transformation from Koryŏ); pp. 57-67 (family, mobility, education)

Questions:

1. What is the story of Dan'gun? Why do Koreans throughout history perpetuate this origin story?
2. How did the establishment of Chosŏn affect women's status in Korean peninsula, especially in comparison to Koryŏ?

Week 2 Japanese Colonial Rule

1/16 (T): "Comfort Women" Video Response #1: 63 Years On (Please check "Assignments" on Laulima for details)

1/18 (Th): Colonial Rule and Current Rupture between Korea and Japan

1. NYT article on Japan-Korea agreement in Dec. 2015
2. Morris Suzuki's article on the "comfort women" issue

3. Gregg Brazinsky article (on recent trade war between Korea and Japan)

Questions:

1. Is there anything that the Korean and Japanese governments could have done or can do differently to alleviate the tension between the two countries?
2. What is the U.S.'s role in this historical conflict?

Week 3

1/23 (T): Korea's Post-1945 History: The Korean War

Cranes by Hwang Sunwon (short story)

Questions:

1. What do the cranes represent in this story?
2. What happened to Tokjae at the end of the story?
3. What is the author's intention of telling this story?

1/25 (Th): Korea's Post-1945 History: South Korea's Developmentalism and Military Dictatorship

Kyung Moon Hwang. 2017. *A History of Korea*. Ch. 23 (1960s South Korea), Ch. 24 (Culture and Politics in 1970s South Korea).

Questions:

1. Why do you think South Koreans are nostalgic about Park Chung Hee despite serious human rights violation that occurred under his rule?
2. Why was Gim Jiha charged with violating the Anti-Communist Law even though his poems did not praise communism?

II. Negotiating Religion and Modernity

Week 4

1/30 (T): Confucianism

Moon, Okpyo. 2011. "Guests of Lineage Houses: Tourist Commoditization of Confucian Cultural Heritage in Korea." In *Consuming Korean Tradition in Early and Late Modernity: Commodification, Tourism, and Performance*, edited by Laurel Kendall, 88–104. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Questions:

1. Is Confucian heritage being sustained or threatened by individuals like Kim Won Kil?
2. Do you see any parallels between this Korean case and the case of Hawaiian heritage preservation?

2/1 (Th): Folk Religion

Andrew Eungi Kim. 2005. "Nonofficial Religion in South Korea: Prevalence of Fortunetelling and Other Forms of Divination." *Review of Religious Research*, Vol. 46, No. 3.

Question: What's the author's main argument and are you convinced by it? Any questions concerning this article?

Week 5

2/6 (T): Christianity

Baker, Don. 2008. *Korean Spirituality*, Ch. 4. Korean Spirituality.

Questions: TBD

III. Changing Family and Kinship

2/8 (Th): The Korean Family in Transition

Finch, John and Seung-kyung Kim. 2017. "The Korean Family in Transition." Pp. 135-148 in *Routledge Handbook of Korean Culture and Society*.

Question:

What were the most notable transitions discussed in this chapter? What were the aspects that were most surprising to you and why?

Week 6

2/13 (T): Video response #2: Family Project: Father's House (Please check "Assignments" on Laulima for details)

2/15 (Th): Familial Relationship and Women's Status

Kim Yi, Eunhee, 2001. "Mothers and Sons in Modern Korea," *Korea Journal* 41 (4): 5-27.

Question:

According to this article, succession of male headship of the house was important in traditional Korea but woman gained power in her husband's family as she formed strong alliance with her son. What are the changes that are happening in contemporary Korean families that might threaten this alliance?

IV. State and Civil Society

Week 7

2/20 (T): Kwangju Uprising

Shin, Gi-Wook. 2003. "Introduction" In Gi-wook Shin and Kyung Moon Hwang, eds., *Contentious Kwangju: The May 18 Uprising in Korea's Past and Present*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Question:

According to Shin, what were the key explanations for the rise of Kwangju citizens against the government?

Also watch:

Kwangju video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iNPlj0vArCg&list=FL82d8wTjW4w--6_o_y8bb4w&index=123 OR

Uprising in South Korea”: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01yzmxm>

2/22 (Th): Labor Movement

Lee, Yunkyung. 2015. Sky Protest: New Forms of Labor Resistance in Neo-liberal Korea.”

Questions:

1. Why do workers engage in extreme forms of protests like the “sky protests”?
2. What were the structural contexts in which these extreme forms of protests flourish?

Week 8

2/27 (T): Labor Suppression

Video response #3: *We Are Not Defeated* (Please check “Assignments” on Laulima for details)

2/29 (Th): South Korean Bourgeoisie

Eckert, Carter. 1993. “The South Korean Bourgeoisie: A Class in Search of Hegemony,” In Hagen Koo, ed., *State and Society in Contemporary Korea*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

Questions:

1. What is hegemony and how is it different from power?
2. Why does the Korean bourgeoisie remain an unhegemonic class despite its wealth and increasing political influence?

Week 9

3/5 (T): Legacy of the 1980s

Kong, Chi-yŏng. 1993. *Human Decency*. Wayfarer. 42-78.

Questions:

1. Describe the narrator.
2. Who are Kwon O-Gyu and Yi Min-ja? What are the values that they respectively represent? By contrasting Kwon and Yi, what does the author try to accomplish?

V. North Korea/North Koreans

3/7 (Th): North Korean Political System

Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun*, Ch. 8, pp. 394-414, pp. 415-433.

Questions:

Provide short summaries of both excerpts and add 1-2 questions for the class to discuss.

Week 10

3/12 (T): Everyday Life in North Korea

Video response #4: *North Korea: A Day in the Life* (Please check “Assignments” on Laulima for details)

3/14 (Th) Discussion of “North Korea: A Day in Life” and Review of class materials (with Graduate Assistant)

Spring break: 3/18-22

Week 11

3/26 (T) Holiday-Kuhio Day

3/28 (Th): North Korean Refugees

Park, Young-a. 2020 “North Korean Migrants in South Korea: ‘Multicultural’ or ‘Global’ Citizens?” *Korean Studies* 44: 123-148.

Questions:

1. Why do you think the author chose the term “migrant” to describe North Koreans in South Korea and NOT “refugees” or “defectors”?
2. What are the characteristics of North Korean migrants who adopt the global citizen narrative?

Week 12

4/2 (T): Representation of North Koreans in South Korean Cinema

Video response #5: *JSA* (Please check “Assignments” on Laulima for details)

VI. Globalization/Neoliberalism

4/4 (Th): Neoliberal Turn and Intensified Social Stratification

1. Koo, Hagen. 2016. “The Muddled Middle Class in Globalized South Korea.”
2. BTS, “Try-Hard/Silver Spoon” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P9-QNnOm2RU>

Questions:

1. How has middle class transformed in South Korea since the late 1990s?
2. What are the main features that Koo discusses in this article?

Week 13

4/9 (T): Increasing Inequality

Required film: Watch Bong Joon-ho’s *Parasite* on your own before you come to class. The film is available through UH library’s streaming service.

Optional reading: Chang, Ha-Joon. “The Political Economy of Parasite: Inequality and Social Mobility in Post-Miracle South Korea” (Presentation given at CKS Yang’s Lecture Series)

Questions:

1. Inequality is a common theme in films throughout the world. However, the story in *Parasite* is a story of inequality which is very unique to Korea. What are the unique qualities of Korea’s inequality and how are they portrayed?

2. Please reflect on the readings we have done so far including Hagen Koo's article and class lectures given by Prof. Park. How do these academic analyses shed light on the themes represented in the film?

4/11 (Th): Multiculturalism

Lim, Timothy. 2010. "Rethinking Belongingness in Korea: Transnational Migration, 'Migrant Marriages' and the Politics of Multiculturalism." In *Pacific Affairs*.

Question:

Once the EPS was adopted, what were the changes that happened to Korea's immigration policies?

Week 14

4/16 (T): Multiculturalism continued

#Video response #6: *Lost Baggage* (2008) ((Please check "Assignments" on Lulima for details))

4/18 (Th): Globalization and Education/Youth

1. Abelmann, Nancy et al. 2015. Introduction: South Korea's Education Exodus: History, Context, and Motivations," read pp. 1-11.
2. Kang, Joshua. 2015. "My Life in the States, Alone." pp. 270-290 (cartoon drawn by a student).
3. Koo, Se-Woong, "An Assault Upon Our Children: South Korea's Educational System Hurts Our Children": <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/02/opinion/sunday/south-koreas-education-system-hurts-students.html>

Questions:

1. What are the causes of South Koreans' dissatisfaction with their educational system?
2. Why do Korean families choose to send their children abroad to pursue education and what are the experiences of these children?
3. Do you see any parallels in other countries? If so, please compare and contrast.

Week 15

4/23 (T): New Forms of Misogyny and Narrative of "Fairness"

Park, Nathan. 2021. "Why So Many Young Men in South Korea Hate Feminism," *Foreign Policy*

Questions:

Why has misogyny emerged as a new phenomenon in South Korea? Do you see any parallels in other countries? If so, please compare and contrast.

4/25 (Th): Korean Popular Culture (lecture by Lucie Crowley Duffy)

TBD

Week 16

4/30 (T): LAST DAY OF CLASS, Wrap up, Review for final exam.