

ANS 361
CAPTIALISM, CONSUMPTION, AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN KOREA
Fall 2018

Meets: TuTh 5:00-6:30, CLA 0.106
Instructor: Robert Oppenheim (University of Texas at Austin)

Overview: This is a course about contemporary social and political life in urban South Korea—to use a complex and problematic concept, about Korean modernity. It focuses on present conditions and their historical background: on the growth of Korean capitalism, on the perspectives of workers, white-collar employees, and students over time, on the lifestyles of the new middle class as well as other social transformations, and on the struggle for democracy and its aftermath. We will read ethnographies of corporations, consumption, residential living, and protest. We will also watch several recent films.

Course Activities: Class discussion is paramount, and most classes will begin with student presentations designed to get things going. There is also a significant amount of formal and informal writing for this course. This course carries the Global Cultures flag.

Assignments/Grading: I've tried to structure this course to make discussion—both in class and online—a significant aspect of your grade. Please come to class with the readings completed, if at all possible. If we really start slacking off here, I reserve the right to institute quizzes.

There will also be some more traditional writing assignments. I will grade writing based upon the presence and quality of an argument, your use of sources, and the structure and style of your paper. Please do try to be accurate in grammar and spelling; I encourage you to use the writing center or to have a friend read over a paper for errors. That said, I will not mark off for minor English errors unless they get in the way of comprehension or seem to indicate laziness on your part. I am here to teach writing, not grammar, and there is a difference.

Online reactions/discussions for at least 10 weeks beyond 10 dropped)	20% (2% each, low scores
One short (4-5 pp.) paper	10%
One midterm paper (7-8 pp.)	20%
One final paper/project (about the same)	25%
Class leadership on readings/film (A and B presentations)	10%
Class participation/attendance	15%

Online reactions/discussions: For each week of the class, there is a discussion board forum on Canvas. For most weeks at least, sometime before the end of the day of the Friday of that week, please post a comment. So, for example, for the week of September 4 (Tuesday), you should post by Friday September 7 at the end of the day if you want to receive credit.

Postings should be about a paragraph long or longer. You can comment on something we talked about in class. You can comment on a reading, or critique it, or raise a question, or highlight something you think is particularly important (explaining why). You can comment on another students' post—please do read other students' posts—or engage in (respectful) debate. Please try to do a mix of these over the semester—if you are only commenting on what others write, I will get the impression that you are not reading. I may drop into the board myself, on occasion.

Don't summarize the readings for the sake of summarization. Don't simply say something is interesting, or good/bad, or that you agree/disagree without justifying your position.

These posts are worth two points each, and serious engagements will merit a two. Since there are more than ten weeks to the course, you have ample opportunity to overwrite any bad grades with better grades – I will count your top ten at the end.

Finally, toward the final project, please keep a running file of what you wrote for each week.

Short paper: I will assign a short paper very early on to get a feel for your writing, and to give you a feel for how I read papers.

Midterm paper: This will be a larger assignment. It will be based on course readings (so no outside research is necessary) but will be conceptual. There should be some choice of topic.

Final paper/project: TBD, and likely will include some options. One possibility would be a paper asking you to reflect on your reading reactions and present some overarching narrative of the course. If you want to do a research paper, it can work for this assignment also.

Class leadership on readings/film: A and B class presentations (A=5%, B=5%): Each student will be required to give one A presentation and one B presentation over the course of the term. A presentations should be in the 5-10 minute range (NOT more than that). Please offer an overview of the main points and arguments of the reading or readings for that day's class; please do NOT attempt a full summary. B presentations should be 5 minutes, tops. Please present three questions arising from the readings for that day's class as a basis for beginning class discussion. Open-ended, comparative, or conceptual questions tend to be better than closed-ended, factual questions.

We will sign up for presentations in the first few classes. Note that not every class meeting will have presentation slots.

Note: if you lead class discussion on a film, it might be a good idea to screen the film yourself in advance, unless you are good on the spot. Such is the price of being a cinephile.

Class participation: This is a discussion-based class, and you will be rewarded for the quantity and quality of your participation. Attendance is one factor here as well (I will take attendance at the beginning of some classes, and bad attendance without proper

notification will certainly hurt). At the same time, if you are the vocal type please be respectful of other students and give others a chance to speak as well.

I will make use of plus/minus grading. Generally, I regard averages ≥ 92 (rounded) as an A, 89-91 as an A-, 87-88 as a B+, 82-86 as a B, and so on at equivalent points down the scale.

Readings/Films: I've ordered the following books for this course, all available at the Coop. They are also on reserve at PCL. I recommend buying/acquiring the books (there or elsewhere) as soon as you commit to the course, if possible, since the Coop returns books to the publisher early in the term and it is best to order additional books early if that becomes necessary:

Laura C. Nelson, *Measured Excess*.
Jesook Song, *Living on Your Own*.
Roger Janelli with Dawnhee Yim, *Making Capitalism*.
Namhee Lee, *The Making of Minjung*.
Jiyeon Kang, *Igniting the Internet*.

All other readings will be on Canvas.

Films are also an important component of this course. If you miss a showing in class, I expect you to go and watch the film yourself at the Fine Arts Library. You may need to request the film in advance.

Schedule:

30-Aug *Introduction*

04-Sep *Modernization, Modernity, Modernism*

Marshall Berman, *All That is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York: Penguin, 1982), "Introduction: Modernity—Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" (pp. 15-36).

Laurel Kendall, "Introduction," in Kendall, ed., *Under Construction: The Gendering of Modernity, Class, and Consumption in the Republic of Korea* (Honolulu: U Hawaii, 2002), pp. 1-5 **only**.

Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Minneapolis: U Minnesota Pr, 1988), Introduction (pp. xxiii-xxv).

06-Sep *Cinematic Modernity/ism*

Film: *The Aimless Bullet* (오발탄) (1961)

11-Sep Discussants: _____

Film: *The Aimless Bullet* (concludes)

Short paper assigned

13-Sep *Life in A Korean Corporation (circa the 1980s)* Discussants: _____

Roger Janelli with Dawnhee Yim, *Making Capitalism: The Social and Cultural Construction of a South Korean Conglomerate* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1993), Introduction and chs. 1-2

18-Sep Discussants: _____

Janelli with Yim chs. 3-4.

20-Sep Discussants: _____

Janelli with Yim chs. 5-7, Conclusion.

25-Sep *Labor, Gender, and Citizenship* Discussants: _____

Seungsook Moon, *Militarized Modernity and Gendered Citizenship in South Korea* (Durham: Duke, 2005), Chs. 2-3.

27-Sep *Workers, Suffering, Sacrifice, Struggle*

Short paper due

Film: *A Single Spark* (아름다운 청년 전태일) (1995)

02-Oct Discussants: _____

Film: *A Single Spark* (concludes)

04-Oct *Students, Intellectuals, and the Minjung* Discussants: _____

Namhee Lee, *The Making of Minjung* (Ithaca: Cornell, 2007), Intro and chs. 1-3.
{Note: This is a long reading. Get started during the *Single Spark* viewing.}

09-Oct Discussants: _____

Lee, chs. 4-6.

Second paper assigned

11-Oct Discussants: _____

Lee, chs. 7-8 and Conclusion.

16-Oct *Gender, Consumption, Apartments* Discussants: _____

Laura C. Nelson, *Measured Excess: Status, Gender, and Consumer Nationalism in South Korea* (New York: Columbia, 2000), Preface and Chs. 1-2.

18-Oct Discussants: _____

Nelson, chs. 3-4.

23-Oct Discussants: _____

Nelson, chs. 5-6.

Pak Wan-sô, "Identical Apartments"

25-Oct *Dialectics of Consumption in the 1990s-2000s* Discussants: _____

Second paper due

Kyung-Koo Han, "The 'Kimchi Wars' in Globalizing East Asia: Consuming Class, Gender, Health, and National Identity," in Laurel Kendall, ed., *Consuming Korean Tradition in Early and Late Modernity* (Honolulu: U Hawaii, 2011), pp. 149-166.

Rebecca Ruhlen, "Korean Alterations: Nationalism, Social Consciousness, and 'Traditional' Clothing," in *Re-Orienting Fashion* (London: Berg, 2003), pp. 117-138.

Timothy Tangherlini, "Shrinking Culture: Lotte World and the Logic of Miniaturization," in Kendall, *Consuming Korean Tradition*, pp. 39-64.

30-Oct *On Advertising* Discussants: _____

Olga Fedorenko, "South Korean Advertising as Popular Culture," in Kyung Hyun Kim and Youngmin Choe eds., *The Korean Popular Culture Reader* (Durham, Duke University Press, 2014), pp. 341-362.

Olga Fedorenko, "Quandries of Advertising Censorship in South Korea: Freedom-loving Censors, Smart Consumers, and Cynical Sensibility," *Anthropological Quarterly* 89(4): 1049-1079 (2016).

Nicholas Harkness, "Softer Soju in South Korea," *Anthropological Theory* 13(1/2): 12-30 (2013).

01-Nov *Class and Cosmopolitan Striving* Discussants: _____

So Jin Park and Nancy Abelman, "Class and Cosmopolitan Striving: Mothers' Management of English Education in South Korea," *Anthropological Quarterly* 77(4):645-672 (2004).

Joseph Sung-Yul Park, "Naturalization of Competence and the Neoliberal Subject: Success Stories of English Language Learning in the Korean Conservative Press," *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 20(1):22-38 (2010).

06-Nov *Just Because: The End of Grand Narrative?*

Film: *Attack the Gas Station* (주유소 습격 사건) (1999)

08-Nov Discussants: _____

Film: *Attack the Gas Station* (concludes)

Nancy Abelman and Jung-ah Choi, "'Just Because': Comedy, Melodrama and Youth Violence in *Attack the Gas Station*," in Chi-Yun Shin and Julian Stringer, eds., *New Korean Cinema* (Edinburgh UP, 2005), pp. 132-143.

13-Nov *Apartments, Again: Dilemmas of Single Youth and "Post-Revolutionary Affect"*
Discussants: _____

Final project/paper assigned

Jesook Song, *Living on Your Own*, Introduction and Chs. 1-2.

15-Nov Discussants: _____

Song, chs. 3-4.

20-Nov *Familialist Pressures and LGBTQ Strategies* Discussants: _____

Tari Young-Jung Na, "The South Korean Gender System: LGBTI in the Contexts of Family, Legal Identity, and the Military," *Journal of Korean Studies* 19(2): 357-377 (2014).

John (Song Pae) Cho, "The Wedding Banquet Revisited: 'Contract Marriages' Between Korean Gays and Lesbians," *Anthropological Quarterly* 82(2): 401-422 (2009).

Michael Pettid, "Cyberspace and a Space for Gays in South Korea," in Timothy Tangherlini and Sallie Yea, eds., *Sitings: Critical Approaches to Korean Geography* (Honolulu: U Hawaii, 2008), pp. 173-185.

27-Nov *The Revolution This Time: Youth, Media, Protest* Discussants: _____

Jiyeon Kang, *Igniting the Internet*, Introduction and Chs. 1-2.

29-Nov Discussants: _____

Kang, chs. 3-4.

04-Dec Discussants: _____

Kang, chs. 5-6 and Conclusion.

06-Dec *Scandal/Politics* Discussants: _____

Gi-Wook Shin and Rennie J. Moon, "South Korea after Impeachment," *Journal of Democracy* 28(4): 117-131 (2017).

Jamie Doucette, "The Occult of Personality: Korea's Candlelight Protests and the Impeachment of Park Geun-hye," *Journal of Asian Studies* 76(4): 851-860 (2017).

Final paper due in week after classes end – exact date TBD.

There is no in-class final exam for this course.