

University of Southern California  
Fall Semester

## **EALC 344g**

### **Korean Culture from Ancient to Modern Times**

Instructor: Sunyoung Park, Dept. of East Asian Languages and Cultures  
Class Hours: TTH 2:00-3:20 pm Classroom: THH 101

Teaching Assistants:  
Discussion Sections:

**Course Description:** This course explores fundamental patterns of Korean literature, arts, and culture from the ancient times to the modern era. Our readings will combine some of the finest masterpieces in the Korean literary tradition—from ancient myths and medieval love songs to modern and contemporary novels and poems—with core historical documents such as royal edicts, political memorials, and manifestoes of peasant revolutions. The readings will be accompanied by the slide presentation of artworks and the screening of films. We will approach each cultural work at once as an intellectual and artistic testimony and as a window into the culture and sensibilities of its time. This class will combine lecture with discussion, and students will be strongly encouraged to participate. The course, part of the GE-B category of Humanistic Inquiry, will also satisfy the requirement for majors and minors in East Asian languages and cultures. All the works will be read in English translation, and no knowledge of the Korean language will be required.

#### **Course Objectives:**

By completing this course, you will be able to:

1. contextualize literary and artistic works within Korean history, situating them within the changing political, economic, and social orders of different eras;
2. become familiar with the continuing and evolving patterns of Korean culture from ancient to modern times;
3. understand Korean culture comparatively and in relation to other cultures such as the Chinese, Japanese, and Western ones;
4. approach a literary text and other cultural artifacts analytically as well as critically.

#### **Required Texts:**

Kyung Moon Hwang, *History of Korea* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2017) . Available at Trojan Bookstore.

Sunyoung Park, trans. and ed., *On the Eve of the Uprising and Other Stories from Colonial Korea* (Cornell East Asia Series, 2010) [U]. Available at Trojan Bookstore.

The rest of the texts will be made available in time either on our Blackboard course webpage or via the USC library.

**Requirements:**

- 1. Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory. More than three unexcused absences will result in your final grade falling by one third of a grade per absence (e.g. from A to A-, B+ to B, etc.). Absences will be excused when they are due to documented medical, family, or personal emergencies or to religious holidays. Persistent tardiness at class will have a negative effect on your evaluation.
- 2. Participation (10%):** Your active participation is essential for the success of this course. You are responsible for reading all assigned materials before coming to lecture, and you should make your best effort to contribute positively to class discussion.
- 3. Midterm and Final Exams (30% each):** We will have a midterm exam on February 20 and a non-cumulative final on May 3. Exam questions will be based on our readings, lectures, and class discussions. The exams will require you to define key concepts, identify and discuss excerpts, and answer a short essay question. There will be no review session, but exam keynotes will be made available a week before the exam.
- 4. Essay (20%):** We will organize a class excursion to visit the Korean Art Gallery of LACMA on February 22. Based on the visit, you will write an essay (1000 to 1500 words) in which you discuss a theme in Korean cultural traditions in reference to your aesthetic experience and class readings. Sample essay questions will be given, but you are encouraged to pursue your own critical insights.
- 5. Weekly Question Postings (10%):** Each week a portion of the class will be assigned to post discussion questions to Blackboard. The questions should be based on the week's class readings and be more interpretive and critical than factual. You should post your questions in the appropriate "Discussions" forum by the time specified by your discussion section instructor.
- 6. Extra Credit Activities:** You may earn extra credit by attending select on-campus Korean cultural events and posting a short response to them. Credit will be reflected in the score of your final exam. The list of qualifying events will be announced during the semester.

**Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:** Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in Room 120 at Grace Ford Salvatori Hall and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

**Equity and Diversity:** Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity (<http://equity.usc.edu/>) or to the Department of Public Safety (<http://dps.usc.edu>). This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Engemann Student Health Center also provides 24/7 confidential support on all issues related to violence and harassment (Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services; <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>).

**Academic Integrity and Plagiarism:** University policies concerning academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced, and you are responsible for familiarizing yourself with these policies. Plagiarism and/or cheating on exams are subject to the sanctions set forth in the Student Conduct

Code and may include expulsion or suspension from the university. For a detailed description of plagiarism and other types of academic dishonesty and the sanctions pertaining thereto, please refer to “Trojan Integrity: A Guide for Avoiding Plagiarism”

([https://dornsife.usc.edu/assets/sites/903/docs/Trojan\\_Integrity\\_-\\_Guide\\_to\\_Avoiding\\_Plagiarism.pdf](https://dornsife.usc.edu/assets/sites/903/docs/Trojan_Integrity_-_Guide_to_Avoiding_Plagiarism.pdf)).

**Classroom Etiquette:** The use of electronic devices such as laptops, tablets, and phones during class time is prohibited. Single-function e-readers such as the Kindle and the Nook will be allowed.

## Course Schedule

### I. Early Korea

**Week 1**      **Introduction/ From the Beginning to Three Kingdoms (57 B.C.–A.D. 668)**  
1/9              Introduction

1/11            The Origins of Korean Cultural Identity  
“Foundation Myths,” 3-16  
Hwang, “Goguryeo and Ancient Korea”  
Screening: VANK (Voluntary Agency Network of Korea), “Goguryeo,” 4 mins.

**Week 2**      **Silla (B.C. 57?–A.D. 935) and Goryeo (918–1392)**

1/16            Buddhism in Silla Society and Culture  
Biographies of Buddhist Monks, 26-36  
*Hyangga*, 112-114  
Hwang, “Queen Seondeok and Silla’s Unification of Korea” and “Unified Silla”  
Slides: Silla’s royal artefacts and Buddhist arts  
Screening: VANK, “The Silla Kingdom,” 4 mins.

1/18            Cultural Cosmopolitanism and Social Struggles in Goryeo  
Wang Kŏn, “Ten Injunctions,” 154-156  
Ch’oe Sŭngno, “On Buddhism,” 167-168  
“Manjŏk’s Slave Rebellion,” 200; Koryŏ Songs, 29-30, 39-40, and 44-45  
Hwang, “Founding of the Goryeo Dynasty” and “The Mongol Overlord Period”  
Slides: Aristocratic arts of Goryeo  
Screening: clips from Yu Ha, *A Frozen Flower* (2008)

### II. Joseon (1392–1910)

**Weeks 3-4**    **Confucian Hegemony and Its Challengers**

1/23            Creating a Confucian Kingdom  
King T’aejo, “Founding Edict”; the Inspector-General, “Admonition to the New King” 271-276

“Invention of the Korean Alphabet,” 294-296  
 Hwang, “Goryeo-Joseon Transition”  
 Slides: Joseon literati arts  
 Screening: clips from *Hangŭl*

- 1/25 Taoist Superheroes in Vernacular Novels  
 Hŏ Kyun, *The Tale of Hong Kildong*  
 Hwang, “Confucianism and the Family in the Early Joseon Dynasty” and “The Great Invasions, 1592–1636”  
 Screening: clips from Choi Tonghun, *Jeon Woochi the Taoist Wizard* (2009); Kim T’aeu, *Forbidden Quest* (2006)
- 1/30 Virtue and Emotion in a Queen’s Memoir  
 Lady Hyegyŏng, *Memoir of 1795*, 49-135 (w/ genealogical tables)  
 Michael J. Pettid, “Confucian Educational Works for Upper Status Women in Chosŏn Korea,” 49-70  
 Hwang, “Ideology, Family, and Nationhood in the Mid-Joseon Era”  
 Slides: Joseon documentary paintings and women’s arts
- 2/1 Love and Marriage in Poems by Working-Class Women  
 “Song of an Old Maid,” 197-199 and “Wretched Married Life,” 271-276  
 Hwang Chini, *Sijo*, 91-92  
 Milan Hejtitmanek, “Devalued Bodies, Revalued Status: Confucianism and the Plight of Female Slaves in Late Chosŏn Korea,” 137-150
- Week 5**
- 2/6 Gender Transgression in Shamanistic Song  
 “The Abandoned Princess,” 299-329  
 Boudewijn Walraven, “Popular Religion in a Confucianized Society,” 160-98  
 Slides: Shamanistic paintings  
 Screening: clips from Pak Ki-bok, *Mudang: Reconciliation between the Living and the Dead* (2002)  
 Slides: Sin Yunbok’s portraits of *kisaengs*
- 2/8 Peasants’ Everyday Life and the Tonghak Uprising  
*Sasŏl sijo*, 147, 154-157  
 Documents from the Tonghak Peasant Uprisings, 263-267  
 Hwang, “Popular Culture in the Late Joseon Era” and “1894, A Fateful Year”  
 Slides: Kim Hongdo’s genre paintings  
 Screening: clips from Lee Junik, *The King and the Clown* (2005)
- Week 6**
- 2/13 Commerce and Technology in *Sirhak*, Practical Learning  
 Pak Jiwŏn, “The Tale of Huh-Saeng,” 27-37; Pak Chega, “Memorial of 1786”;  
 Chŏng Yagyong, “Tools and Techniques,” 107-116

Hwang, “Intellectual Opening in the Late Eighteenth Century” and “Nineteenth-Century Unrest”

Slides: *Chaekkōri* paintings

2/15 Journalism and the Enlightenment in the Great Korean Empire

Yu Kilchun, “Levels of Enlightenment,” 248-253

Sō Chaep’il, “People Are the Masters,” 286-288

Hwang, “The Great Korean Empire”

Screening: clips from *The Last Empress* (2001)

**Week 7. Midterm**

2/20 Midterm Exam

2/22 Excursion to the Korean Art Gallery at LACMA

### III. Colonial Korea (1910–1945)

**Week 8. Cultural Nationalism and Its Socialist Critics**

2/27 Colonial Modernity and Cultural Nationalism

Na Hyesök, “Kyunghui,” 61-86

Hwang, “The Japanese Takeover 1904-1918” and “The Long 1920s”

Slides: Images of new women in colonial paintings

Screening: clips from Soyoung Kim, *New Woman: Her First Song* (2004)

3/1 The Proletarian Wave

Yöm Sangsöp, “On the Eve of the Uprising” [U]

S. Park, “Confessing the Colonial Self: Yöm Sangsöp’s Literary Ethnographies of the Proletarian Nation,” 160-196

Slides: Socialist magazine illustrations

Screening: clips from *Socialism and the Communist Movement* (2005)

**Week 9. Modernisms in Late Colonial Korea**

3/6 The Avant-Gardes in a Colonial Metropolis

Pak T’aewön, “A Day in the Life of Kubo the Novelist,” 141-194 [U]

Yi Sang, “Wings,” 65-84

Hwang, “Nation, Culture, and Everyday Life in the Late Colonial Period”

Screening: clips from Yoon In-ho, *Radio Days* (2007)

3/8 Primitive Passions in Nativist Aesthetics

Kim Tongni, “The Shaman Painting,” 35-58

Yi T’aejun, “Antiques and Daily Life,” 141-144

Janet Poole, “A Private Orient,” 85-113

Slides: Late-colonial nativist arts

**Week 10. Spring Break****Week 11. Art under War Clouds**

3/20

Pan-Asianism and Its Paradox

Kim Namch'ŏn, "Barley," 195-234 [U]

Kim Saryang, "Into the Light," 13-38

Hwang, "Wartime Mobilization, 1938-45"

Slides: Propaganda posters of the Pacific War

Screening: *Chosŏn, Our Rear Base* (1939), 8 mins.**Essay assignment due****IV. The Two Koreas (1945-present)**

3/22

Aesthetic Autonomy During the Cold War

Yi T'aejun, "Before and After Liberation," 235-273 [U]

Kim Tongni, "The True Meaning of Pure Literature: A Present Task of National Literature," 197-199 and 201-203

Hwang, "The Liberation Period, 1945-50"

Screening: clips from *History of Korean Independence 3* (2005)**Week 12.**

3/27

Cross-Border Korea and the Postcolonial Moment

Hwang Sunwon, "To Smoke a Cigarette," 1-13

Kye Yongmuk, Counting Stars, 1-16

Cheon Jong-hwan, "Liberation-Era Street Politics and the Production of Representations," 10-32

3/29

Competing Narratives of the Korean War

Hwang Sunwŏn, "Cranes," 90-95

Cho Chŏngnae, "Land of Exile," 200-243

Hwang, "The Korean War"

Slides: Postwar Korean Arts

**Week 13. Developmental Dictatorship and the Culture of Democratization in South Korea**

4/3

Dissident Voices under Developmental Dictatorship

Kim Suyŏng, "Ha... No Shadows" 138-139

Kim Chiha, "Five Bandits," 401-411

Ruth Barraclough, "The Road to Seoul," from *Factory Girl Literature*, 56-86

Hwang, "1960s South Korea" and "Culture and Politics in 1970s South Korea"

Screening: clips from *Big Businesses and the Ghost of Confucius* (1992)

- 4/5      The *Minjung* Culture Movement  
 Kang Sökkyöng, “Days and Dreams,” 1-27; Pak Nohae’s poems, 264-269  
 Choi Chungmoo, “The Minjung Culture Movement and the Construction of  
 Popular Culture in Korea,” 105-118  
 Hwang, “South Korean Democratization”  
 Screening: clips from *The Fight for Democracy* (1992)
- Week 14.      The Culture of North Korea**
- 4/10      North Korea Beyond Juche Ideology  
 Bandi, “Life of a Swift Steed” 61-88 and “On Stage,” 151-180  
 Hwang, “Early North Korea” and “Monumental Life in North Korea”  
 Individual Screening: Inhak Jang, *A Schoolgirl’s Diary* (2007), 94 mins.  
 Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=azsi8sxeSTc>
- 4/12      Gender Politics in the North Korean Migration to South Korea  
 Sung Kyung Kim, “ ‘Defector,’ ‘Refugee,’ or ‘Migrant’? North Korean Settlers in  
 South Korea’s Changing Social Discourse,” 94-110  
 Theodore Hughes, “ ‘North Koreans’ and other Virtual Subjects: Kim Yong-  
 ha, Hwang Suk-young, and National Division in the Age of  
 Posthumanism,” 99-117  
 Individual Screening: Jero Yun, *Hitchhiker* (2016), 20 mins.
- Weeks 15-16. Globalization and Queird Imaginations in Contemporary South Korea**
- 4/17      Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism in Cyberculture  
 Djuna, “Bloody Battle of Broccoli Plain,” 137-153  
 Ki-Sung Kwak, “Digital Media and Democratic Transition in Korea,” 218-30  
 Youna Kim, “The Korean Wave: Korean Popular Culture in a Digital  
 Cosmopolitan World,” 269-282
- 4/19      Queer Bodies, Queer Identities  
 Yi Namhee, *Plastic Sex*  
 Hyung-Young Kwon Kim and John Cho, “The Korean Gay and Lesbian  
 Movement, 1993-2008,” 206-23  
 Hwang, “South Korea in the Twenty-First Century”  
 Screening: clips from Yi Yeong, *Troublers* (2015), 97 mins.
- 4/24      The Aesthetics of the Absurd in Post-IMF Youth Culture  
 Pak Min-gyu, “Is That So? I Am a Giraffe,” 62-82  
 Cho Hae-joang, “The Spec Generation Who Can’t Say ‘No’: Overeducated and  
 Underemployed Youth in Contemporary South Korea,” 437-462  
 Screening: Yeon-ha Kang, *Dear Sujin* (2008), 20 mins.

4/26

Toward a Multicultural Future

Kim Chaeyong, "Elephant," 182-208

Jin-kyung Lee, "Immigrant Subempire, Migrant Labor Activism, and  
Multiculturalism in Contemporary South Korea," 149-161

Screening: Ashok Tapa, *The Korean Dream* (2013), 6 mins.

**Week 17**

**Final Exam**

5/3

Final Exam: 2-4 pm