

ASIAN 374/KOR 390/EAS 300 (Winter 2018)
The Korean War in Fiction and Film
MW 2:30-4:00; 3448 MH
University of Michigan

Instructor: Professor Youngju Ryu

The Korean War played a crucial role in shaping not only the two Koreas but Northeast Asia as it exists today. In America, the Korean War laid the ground for foreign policy in the latter half of the twentieth century, gave rise to the concept of the military-industrial complex, and set an enduring tone of anti-communism. For all its importance, however, the Korean War is still known commonly as “the forgotten war” in the US. What was the nature and impact of this war, and why does it still remain the subject of much mystification more than half a century after the ceasefire? Why is it important for us, here in America in the twenty-first century, to “un-forget” the forgotten war? As a way of moving beyond nationalist historiography and international relations paradigms that have dominated existing understandings of the war, this course will focus on representations of the Korean War in fiction and film drawn primarily from Korea and the U.S. The larger aim is to trace historical and aesthetic connections that situate the Korean War within narratives that extend far beyond the boundaries of the nation and the immediate war years. This course is being offered as part of the e-school initiative in partnership with Rutgers University and the University of Wisconsin.

Requirements and Grading

Attendance and Participation

10%

Class will meet twice a week for combined lecture and discussion. In order to prepare for class, make note of points that you find especially interesting, compelling, or puzzling as you read or watch the assigned course materials. Come to class ready to discuss these points. Bring the readings with you to class.

Museum Group Project

5%

In assigned small groups, you will put a Powerpoint slideshow together that showcases one of the memorial sites associated with the Korean War. Using the reading provided and gathering as much material as you can online, provide a tour of the memorial’s highlights and answer the following questions: (1) What does the memorial make visible?; (2) What remains invisible?; (3) What is the moral and historical narrative one would have of the Korean War if one’s sole exposure to the Korean War was through the memorial in question? Upload the PPT file

Discussion Questions

5%

Post a question you would like to discuss about the reading/viewing for the day. You might focus on an aspect of the text that intrigued you, moved you, disturbed you, or otherwise elicited a strong reaction from you. Due by 9pm of the day before class on Canvas.

2 Response Papers/Interpretive Essays

30%

You will write one response paper on film and another on literature, each 2-3 double-spaced pages in length. Take a **single question** that the chosen text raised for you, and work out a provisional answer to the question by analyzing specific aspects of the text. Submit the response paper on Canvas by 9 pm of the day before the text is to be discussed. After receiving feedback, you will revise the response paper into a formal interpretive essay of 4-5 pages.

Interpretive Essay #1 is due on Canvas by 9pm, **March 9**.

Interpretive Essay #2 is due on Canvas by 9pm, **April 20**.

Midterm Exam

20%

Short answers only, focused on history.

Final Exam

30%

The exam will consist of two parts: IDs of passages or scenes, to be taken in class on **April 16**, and 3 long essay questions to be answered at home. The questions will test your ability to integrate the course material effectively under broader central themes. The take-home portion is due on Canvas by 3:30pm on **April 23**.

Required Texts

All reading materials except for one are available on Canvas. Please purchase the following title on your own. We will be discussing this book during the week of March 26.

- HWANG Sok-yong. *The Guest*. Trans. Kyung-ja Chun and Maya West. New York: Seven Stories Press. 2008.

Viewing Films

All films are available for streaming on Canvas.

Academic Integrity

You can find university guidelines on academic misconduct at following:

<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/academicintegrity/examples.html>. I will expect you to have read these guidelines before the first assignment is due and will abide fully by the university policy in the case of any misconduct.

Academic Accommodation

If you need or desire an accommodation for a disability, please make an appointment to see me during the first three weeks of the semester. Accommodations will be made through Services for Students with Disabilities in the Division of Student Affairs.

Schedule of Classes

I. PERSPECTIVES

1/8 *The Good, the Bad, the Forgotten: An Introduction to the Korean War*

1/10 *Commemorating the Korean War: Group Work in Class*

- Group A: The War Memorial of Korea, Seoul, South Korea
- Group B: Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum, Pyongyang, North Korea
- Group C: Commemorative Museum of the War to Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid North Korea, Dandong, China
- Group D: Korean War Veterans Memorial, Washington D.C., US
- Group E: Sinchon Museum of American War Atrocities, Sinchon, North Korea
- Group F: Nogunri Peace Museum, Nogunri, South Korea

1/15 *MLK Day. No class.*

1/17 *The Combat Film: Whose war and why?* (DQ)

- "Pork Chop Hill" (dir. Lewis MILESTONE, 1959)
- "The Front Line" (dir. JANG Hoon, 2011)
- Kathryn KANE, "The World War II Combat Film" in Wes D. Gehring (ed.), *Handbook of American Film Genres* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), 90-91.

II. POLITICS OF DECOLONIZATION

1/22 *The End of an Empire*

- Carter ECKERT, et al., "Forced Assimilation and Mobilization," *Korea Old and New: A History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 305-326.

1/24 *Liberation Betrayed* (DQ)

- CHŎN Kwang-yong, "Kapitan Ri" in *Land of Exile: Contemporary Korean Fiction*, ed. Marshall Pihl, Bruce Fulton, and Ju-chan Fulton (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2007), 58-83.
- YI T'aejun, "Before and After the Liberation" in *On the Eve of the Uprising*, trans. Sunyoung Park (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2010), 265-273.

1/29 *A War Before the War*

- Sheila Miyoshi JAGER, *Brothers at War: The Unending Conflict in Korea* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2014), 36-65.
- KIM Seong-Nae, "Mourning Korean Modernity in the Memory of the Cheju April Third Incident," *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 1:3 (2000): 461-476.

1/31 *The Ethics of Remembering* (DQ)

- "Jiseul" (dir. O Muel, 2012)

III. COLD WAR, HOT WAR

2/5 *America's New Globe*

- John FOUSEK, "Visual Essay: The Globe as American Icon" and "From One World into Two" in *To Lead the Free World: American Nationalism and the Cultural Roots of Cold War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 91-102, 103-129.

2/7 *The Ideology of American Paternalism* (DQ)

- "Battle Hymn" (dir. Douglas SIRK, 1957)

- 2/12 *The Meaning of Korea and America's New Anxieties* (DQ)
- "The Manchurian Candidate" (dir. John FRANKENHEIMER, 1962)
 - Leonard Rifas, "Korean War Comic Books and the Militarization of US Masculinity," *positions: east asia critique* 23: 4 (2015): 618-631.
- 2/14 *War for the South, War for the North*
- JAGER, *Brothers at War*, 66-97, 113-171, 193-207
- 2/19 *Review*
- 2/21 *Midterm Exam*

IV. PRISONERS OF WAR

- 3/5 *Peace Deferred*
- JAGER, 208-236, 237-286
- 3/7 *Class Over Race, Race Over Nation*
- Virginia PASLEY, *21 Stayed: The Story of the American GIs Who Chose China* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, 1955), pages TBA
 - "They Chose China" (dir. Shui-Bo WANG, 2005)
- 3/12 *Q&A with Mr. and Mrs. Robert Fletcher* (DQ)
- Robert W. Fletcher Papers, selections TBA
- 3/14 *Agency, Human Rights, and the Paradoxes of War*
- Ha Jin, *War Trash* (New York: Vintage, 2005), *excerpts*
 - The Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, Geneva July 27, 1929

V. THE OTHER KOREAN WAR

- 3/19 *Gendered and Racialized Violence* (DQ)
- PAK Wansö, "Granny Flowers in Those Heartless Days," in CHUN Kyung-ja, ed., *My Very Last Possession and Other Stories* (Armonk, NY: ME Sharpe, 1999), 143-150.
 - Rolando HINOJOSA, *Korean Love Songs From Klail City Death Trip* (Berkeley, CA: Editorial Justa Publications, 1978), selections TBA.
- 3/21 *Civilian Massacres and Collateral Damage*
- Sahr CONWAY-LANZ, "Beyond No Gun Ri: Refugees and the United States Military in the Korean War," *Diplomatic History* 29, no. 1 (2005): 49-81.
 - KIM Dong-choon, "The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Korea: Uncovering the Hidden Korean War," *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, vol. 9-5-10, March 1, 2010.
- 3/26 *Truth **and** Reconciliation* (DQ)
- HWANG Sok-yong, *The Guest*
- 3/28 *Truth **or** Reconciliation*
- *The Guest* (Cont'd)

- Youngju RYU, "Truth or Reconciliation? *The Guest* and the Massacre that Never Ends," *positions: east asia critique* 23: 4 (2015): 633-663.

VI. ENDING THE UNENDING WAR

4/2 *The Spy in Korean Film History*

- Guest Lecture by Irhe SOHN
- Readings TBA

4/4 *Screening Reconciliation* (DQ)

- "Shiri" (dir. KANG Jegyu, 2000)
- "Secret Reunion" (dir. JANG Hoon, 2010)

4/9 *Division and Diaspora*

- "Dear Pyongyang" (dir. YANG Yong-hui, 2005)

4/11 *Topographies of Anti-communism* (DQ)

- HWANG Sunwon, "Cranes" in Peter H. Lee (ed.), *Modern Korean Literature: An Anthology* (University of Hawaii Press, 1990), 90-95.
- CH'OE Yun, "His Father's Keeper" in Suh Jimoon (ed.), *The Rainy Spell and Other Korean Stories* (Korean National Commission for UNESCO, 1998), 248-270.

4/16 *Final Exam (in-class portion)*

4/23 *Final Exam (take-home portion):* submit via Canvas by 3:30pm