**Korean 187: History and Memory in Korean Cinema**

**Dept. of East Asian Languages and Cultures, UC Berkeley**

**Fall 2018**

Lecture: MWF: 3-4 PM, at 229 Dwinelle

Screening: Wed: 5-8 PM, at 223 Dwinelle

Instructor: Jinsoo An

Office:

Email:

Office Hours:

This undergraduate course examines representation of history and memory in contemporary South Korean cinema. Recent South Korean films have shown a thematic preoccupation with the nation’s tumultuous history by presenting diverse stories of past event and experience. They have also rendered unique ways to project, address and thematize the social developments and cultural phenomena that relate to the formation of modern national identity. We will pay close attention to ways in which popular narrative films make visible and comprehensible the sense of history and memory. Our goal is to develop critical understanding of diverse modes of temporality that constitute popular historical imagination of South Korea.

The themes that we deal with are not structured chronologically but thematically. We will cover such topics as aporia of premodern monarchy, remembrance of Korean War, authoritarian politics, democratic movement, cultural tradition, trauma and amnesia, spectral return, developmentalism, etc. In particular, we will pay close attention to the subject of colonialism as an important configuration of history in South Korean cinema. It is not necessary for students to have prior knowledge of South Korea, and all films have English subtitles.

The course consists of 1) lecture/film discussion and 2) film screening. It is mandatory for students to attend weekly film screenings on Monday; students are also expected to participate in film discussion actively.

Grade Percentage

Attendance: 10%

Weekly Film Reviews\*: 30% (1 page, double-spaced) Due at 11:59 pm on Wed.

Mid-Term Paper: 30% (5-6 pages, double-spaced) Due on Oct 1st

Final Paper: 30% (6-8 pages, double-spaced) Due at 3 pm on Dec 7th

\*Weekly Film Reviews: This weekly essay should be 1-page in length. Post your review on the “Assignments” menu on bCourses before 11:59 pm, Weds. The instructor will distribute questions for review before each film screening. Film review should also reflect your understanding of the assigned reading.

Late submission of review/paper will be significantly marked down. Plagiarism is strictly prohibited, resulting in a failing grade of the course as a whole. Three unexcused absences adversely affect your overall grade, and five such absences result in the failure of total grade. Refrain from using electronic or digital devices in class, unless used solely for accessing the course-related materials on bCourses.

Required Text:

* All readings are available on bCourses

Recommended Text:

* Michael Robinson, South Korea’s Twentieth Century Odyssey

<http://oskicat.berkeley.edu/search~S1?/tKorea%27s+twenthieth+century/tkoreas+twenthieth+century/-3%2C0%2C0%2CB/frameset&FF=tkoreas+twentieth+century+odyssey&2%2C%2C2/indexsort=->

Film Access: Distributed through “Dropsend”

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Week 1: Course Syllabus, Logistics, Introduction**

* Robert A. Rosenstone, “History in Images/History in Words”

**Week 2: Introduction, Nexus of History and Cinema**

* Hayden White, “Historiography and Historiophoty,” The American Historical Review 93-5
* Vivian Sobchack, “Surge and Splendor: A Phenomenology of Hollywood Historical Epic”
* Film: *King and the Clown* (Lee Jun-ik, 2006), 120 min.

**Week 3: Veracity and Reflexivity in Historical Drama**

* JaHyun Kim Haboush, “Confucian Kingship and Royal Authority in Yi Monarchy,” *The Confucian Kingship in Korea*
* JaHyun Kim Haboush, “Introduction” *The Memoirs of Lady Hyegyŏng*
* JaHyun Kim Haboush, “The Memoir of 1805,” (Recommended)
* Film: *The Throne* (Lee Jun-ik, 2015), 125 min.

**Week 4: Spectrum of Cultural Nationalism**

* Kyung Hyun Kim, “The Transnational Constitution of Im Kwon-taek’s Minjok Cinema…”
* Kajiyama Toshiyuki, “The Clan Records” (recommended)
* Film: *The Genealogy* (Im Kwon-t’aek, 1978), 108 min.

**Week 5: Decolonization, the Cold War and Redress Movement**

* Lisa Yoneyama, “Introduction,” from *Cold War Ruins*
* Film: *The Apology* (Tiffany Hsiung, 2016) 104 min.
* Guest-Lecture (9/19) by Yun Mi-hyang, Co-Chair, The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Sexual Slavery by Japan

**Week 6: Colonial Modernity on Post-Colonial Screen**

* Koen De Ceuster, “Wholesale Education and Sound Leisure”
* Jung Hwan Cheon, “Bend it Like a Man of Chosun: Sports Nationalism and Colonial Modernity in 1936,” *The Korean Popular Culture Reader*
* Film: *YMCA Baseball Team* (Kim Hyun-suk, 2002) 104 min.

**Week 7: Passion for Historical Justice**

* Koen De Ceuster, “The Nation Exorcized, Historiography of Collaboration in South Korea”
* Jinsoo An, “War as Business in South Korea’s Manchurian Action Films”
* Film: *Assassination* (Choi Dong-hoon, 2015) 140 min.

**Week 8: Spectral Time and Colonial Nostalgia**

* Bliss Cua Lim, “Spectral Times: The Ghost Film as Historical Allegory”
* Film: *Epitaph* (Chung Brothers, 2007) 102 min.

**Week 9: Korean War as Melodramatic Spectacle**

* Michael Robinson, “Contemporary Cultural Production in South Korea: Vanishing Meta-Narratives of Nation, *New Korean Cinema*
* Chris Berry, “‘What is Big about the Big Film?’: De-Westernizing the blockbuster in Korea and China”
* Film: *Taegukgi* (Kang Je-gyu, 2004), 140 min.

**Week 10: Atrocity, Ritual and Collective Memory**

* Bruce Cumings, “The Cheju Insurgency,” *The Korean War*
* Sohl Lee, “Cinema as Ritual Space: O Meul’s Jeseul,” *Asian Cinema and the Use of Space*
* Film: *Jiseul* (O Meul, 2012) 109 min.

**Week 11: Making of Cultural Tradition**

* Chungmoo Choi, “The politics of gender, aestheticism and cultural nationalism in Sopyonje and the Genealogy,” *Im Kwon-Taek: the Making of a Korean National Cinema*
* Julian Stringer, “Sopyonje and Inner Domain of National Culture,” *Im Kwon-Taek:* *the Making of a Korean National Cinema*
* Film: *Sopyonje* (Im Kwon-taek, 1993) 112 min.

**Week 12: Developmentalism and Time-**Travel

* Haejoang Cho, “Living with Conflicting Subjectivities”
* Nancy Abelmann, “Melodramatic Texts and Contexts: Women’s Lives, Movies and Men”
* Film: *My Mother, the Mermaid* (Park Hŭngsik, 2004) 107 min.

**Week 13: Amnesia and Revenge**

* Ian Buruma, “Mr. Vengeance”
* Steven Choe, “Love Your Enemies: Revenge and Forgiveness in Films by Park Chan-wook”
* Robert L. Cagle, “The Good, the Bad and the South Korean: Violence, Morality and the South Korean Extreme Film,”
* Film: *Oldboy* (Park Chan-wook, 2003), 120 min.

**Week 14: Cartography of Trauma**

* Joseph Jonghyun Jeon, “Memories of Memories”
* Film: *Memories of Murder* (Bong Joon-ho, 2003) 127 min.

**Week 15: Rendition of Pro-Democracy Movement**

* Wonmo Dong, “University Students in South Korean Politics”
* Han Sung-Joo, “South Korea in 1987: the Politics of Democratization”
* Film: *1987: When the Day Comes* (Jang Joon-hwan, 2017) 129 min.