**Korean 186: Introduction to Korean Cinema**

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

**Spring 2018**

Lecture: MWF: 3-4 pm at 242 Dwinelle

Screening: Wed: 6-8:30 pm at **202 Wheeler**

Instructor: Jinsoo An

Office:

E-mail:

Office Hours:

This undergraduate course offers a survey of South Korean cinema from the colonial period to the present renaissance. It brings attention to historical development of (South) Korean cinema through examination of various factors including film aesthetics, genre, authorship, movement, industrial changes and censorship practice. Concurrently, we explore the way in which cinematic fictions engaged closely with the pressing social concerns and cultural discourses of the given period. In particular, how Korean cinema has reflected, transformed and disseminated the ideas and ideals of the nation will be given a special consideration. It is not necessary for students to have prior knowledge of Korean cinema, and all films shown in the class have English subtitles.

The course consists of 1) lecture and film discussion and 2) film screening. It is mandatory for students to attend film screening on Wed. Students are also expected to participate in film discussion actively. It is not necessary for students to have prior knowledge of Korea or Korean cinema. All films have English subtitles, and readings are in English.

**Grade Percentage**

Attendance: 20%

Weekly Reviews: 20%

Mid-Term Paper: 30% (5-6 pages, double-spaced), due March 16th

Final Paper: 30% (8-10 pages, double-spaced), due April 27th

**Weekly Reviews**: Weekly Review assignments are designed to facilitate discussions among students. You are expected to formulate a number of discussion questions based on the film and/or assigned readings of the week, and to post them on the “Discussions” page on bCourses. There will be a new Discussion post each week where you can respond with your questions. For those who have not formulated one’s own questions, read and answer several questions offered by others. To receive credit for each weekly review, you must submit your questions and/or responses by 11:59 pm Saturday each week.

**Policy on Late Submission and Plagiarism**: Late submission of review and paper will be significantly marked down. Plagiarism is strictly prohibited, resulting in a failing grade for the course as a whole.

**Classroom Protocols**: Classroom participation is a part of your overall grade. Read the assigned articles of the week before coming to class. Also, formulate your questions and comments for discussion. Classroom discussion should be civilized and respectful to others.

**Policy on Gadget**: Electronic devices (notebook PC, tablet PC, mobile phones) must be turned off during class.

**Required Texts:**

Readings, available on “Files” menu on bCourses

**Film Sources and Viewing Access**

1. Distribution through “Dropsend” Links

3. YouTube (Korean Film Archive Channel):

https://www.youtube.com/user/KoreanFilm

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

**Week 2: Origins of Korean Cinema and Its Occupation**

Readings: Dong Hoon Kim, “Segregated Cinemas, Intertwined Histories”

Theodore Jun Yoo, “‘The New Woman’ and the Politics of Love, Marriage and Divorce in Colonial Korea”

Film: *Sweet Dream* [Mimong] (Yang Chu-nam, 1936), 47 min.

**Week 3: Logic of Collaboration, Ambiance of Harmony**

Readings: Kelly Jeong, “Enlightening the Other”

Takashi Fujitani, “The Colonial and National Politics of Gender, Sex, and Family” in *Race for Empire*

Film: *Angels on the Street* [Chibŏbnŭn Ch’ŏnsa] (Ch’oe In-gyu, 1941), 73 min.

**Week 4: New Era, New Melodrama**

Readings: Linda Williams, “Melodrama Revised,” in *Refiguring American Film Gernres*

Sangjoon Lee, “On John Miller’s ‘The Korean Film Industry’”

Film: *Home is Where the Heart Is* [Maŭm-ŭi Kohyang] (Yun Yong-gyu, 1949)

**Week 5: Cosmopolitan Urban Culture of the 1950s**

Readings: Kathleen McHugh, “South Korean Film Melodrama and the Question of National Cinema”

Christina Klein, “Cold War Cosmopolitanism”

Film: *Madame Freedom* [Chayu Puin] (Han Hyŏngmo, 1953), 124 min.

**Week 6: Passion for the Real**

Readings: Eunsun Cho, “*The Stray Bullet* and the Crisis of Korean Masculinity,” in *South Korean Golden Age Melodrama*

“Interviews” in *Yu Hyun-mok*

Film: *The Stray Bullet* [Obalt’an] (Yu Hyun-mok, 1961), 107 min.

**🡺 No class on Feb 19th due to academic holiday**

**Week 7: Excess and Fetishism**

Readings: Chris Berry, “Scream and Scream Again” in *Seoul Searching*

Kim So-young, “Modernity in Suspense” in *Kim Ki-young*

“Interviews with Kim Ki-young,” in *Kim Ki-young*

Film: *The Housemaid* [Hanyŏ] (Kim Ki-young, 1960), 108 min.

**Week 8: Family, Class, and Gender**

Readings: Kelly Jeong, “Quasi Patriarch: Kim Sŭng-ho and South Korean Postwar Movies” in *The Korean Popular Culture Reader*

Hye Seung Chung & David Scott Diffrient, “The Nervous Laughter of Vanishing Fathers,” in *Movie Migrations*

Film: *The Coachman* [Mabu] (Kang Taejin, 1961), 97 min.

**Week 9: History and Memory**

Readings: Seung Hyun Park, “Korean Cinema after Liberation: Production, Industry, and Regulatory Trends”

Kyung Hyun Kim, “Korean Cinema and Im Kwon-Taek: An Overview” from *Im Kwon-Taek, The Making of a Korean National Cinema*

Film: *Kilsottŭm* (Im Kwon-t’aek, 1985), 105 min.

**Midterm Paper Due: March 16th**

**Week 10: Peregrination of Love**

Readings: Kyung Hyun Kim, "Reviews: *Turning Gate*”  
Akira Mizuta Lippit, “Hong Sangsoo’s Lines of Inquiry, Communication, Defense and Escape”

Film: *Turning Gate* [Saenghwal-ŭi Palgyŏn] (Hong Sangsoo, 2002), 115 min.

**🡺 No class on March 23rd due to conference attendance**

**Week 11: SPRING RECESS**

**Week 12: Advent of Transnational Genre Cinema**

Readings: Hye Seung Chung & David Scott Diffrient, “From Gojira to Goemul”

Christina Klein, “Why American Studies Needs to Think About Korean Cinema, or Transnational Genres in the Films of Bong Joon-ho”

Film: *The Host* (Bong Joon-ho, 2006), 120 min.

**Week 13: Neoliberal Order and Precarious Life**

Readings: Young-A Park, et al., “Changing Representation of the Urban Poor in Korean Independent Cinema,”

Film: *Helpless* [Hwach’a] (Byun Young-joo, 2012), 117 min.

**Week 14: Passion and Violence**

Readings: Alison Hoffman-Han, an Interview with Park Chan-wook”

Kyu Hyun Kim, “Park Chan-wook’s Thirst: Body, Guilt & Exsanguination,” in *Korean Horror Cinema*

David Scott Diffrient, “The face(s) of Korean Horror Film,” from *Korean Horror Cinema*

Film: *The Thirst* [Pakchwi] (Park Chan-wook, 2009), 133 min.

**Week 15: Ethics and Aesthetics (Recapitulation)**

Readings: Hyeryung Hwang, “Peripheral Aesthetics after Modernism: South Korean Neo-realism and Chang-dong Lee's *Poetry*”

Sally Chivers, “Seeing the Apricot: A Disability Perspective in Alzheimer’s in Lee Chang-dong’s *Poetry*,” in *Different Bodies: Essays on Disability in Film and Television*

Film: *Poetry* [Shi] (Lee Changdong, 2010), 139 min

**Final Paper Due: April 27th**