

History 2630 10 (FA 2018)

CRN 27662

**HISTORY OF KOREA**

**Korea's Place in the World**

Tues./Thurs.: 11:10 AM-12:25 PM (PHIL 111)

OH: Tues. 1:00-3:00 PM & by appointment

Prof. Jisoo M. Kim

Office: ESIA 503L



OR



**Is Korea “a shrimp caught between whales”?**

Why do Koreans refer to themselves as “a shrimp caught between whales”? Why is it that Koreans have focused on “victim”-centered-history? Is it because of their tributary relations with China pre-1900? Or because of their thirty-five years of occupation by Japan from 1910-45? Or because of the national division due to the Cold War? Is it really the case that Koreans had not been the primary subjects of constructing their own history?

These are the kinds of questions that underlie some assumptions and what could be considered as negative examples. In this course, we will challenge these inquiries and pose different kinds of questions that encourage thinking of Korean history in a more compelling manner. Instead, we will ask: How was it possible that the whales had not eaten the shrimp for thousands of years? Except for thirty-five years of Japanese occupation period from 1910 to 1945, how did premodern and early modern Korea protect their sovereignty and continue to preserve, shape, and mold their distinctive identity? How did South Korea become the only country in the world that successfully developed from a war torn poverty to a donor giving country in just several decades? Compared to other parts of the world, how did South Korea able to bring down the authoritarian regime and successfully achieve democracy in relatively short period of time? In contrast, how is it possible that North Korea has developed into such a paranoid authoritarian regime that continues to violate human rights and threaten its people? In this class, we will learn that by asking a different set of questions, we are able to construct the narrative of Korean history from “victim” centered history to examining Koreans as more “active agents” who have shaped their own history and identity. The goal of this course is to learn asking the “right” historical questions.

To facilitate critical thinking and exchange on these and other important questions, this course explores some of the key issues such as the complexity of tributary relations in premodern Korea, colonial legacy, national division, the ongoing Cold War, and the possibility of reunification. We will be learning about a wide range of themes from sublime philosophies to bloody wars, from the growth of today’s giant business conglomerates such as Samsung, Hyundai, Kia etc. and to the influence of Korean pop-culture in Asia and beyond. Throughout the course, we will link the texts we analyze to their historical context, noting how representations of people, places, and ideas change over time. We will further place Korea in the context of “globalization” and discuss the changing perceptions and definitions of “self” and “other.”

### **How will this course help you learn?**

The mission for you by the end of the course is to learn to appreciate Korean history and be able to use relevant information to make better decisions that influence today and tomorrow.

### Learning Objectives:

- 1) “Basic literacy” in Korean history. In order for you to make sense of the vast and complex tapestry that is Korean history, it is important to identify and recognize major figures, dates, and events, and make sense of Korean history. Although these facts and figures do not constitute history any more than the alphabet constitutes literature, it would be extremely difficult to understand Korean history without a firm grasp of them.
- 2) Have a deeper understanding of Korean history in order to place Korea in the global context and be able to explain how that history influenced and was influenced by other nations and peoples.

- 3) To be able to analyze a variety of historical documents, including both primary and secondary sources, theoretical texts, documentaries, and films.
- 4) To become curious and creative in not only asking critical questions but also answering them.
- 5) To develop oral and written communication skills by thinking critically about Korean history, culture, and society.
- 6) To recognize how history connects not only to your life experiences but also to the lives of others; to embrace diverse perspectives and exhibit compassion and respect inside and outside the classroom.
- 7) To integrate skills and knowledge from various disciplines in thinking about Korean history. (ex. international affairs, political science, religion, literature, art history, business, economics, biology etc.)
- 8) Relate the specific material we are studying to fundamental interpretive issues facing historians no matter what their subject. (ex. gender, race, class, continuity vs. rupture, causes of revolution etc.)

### **Grading/Evaluation**

1. ID Terms	20%
2. Participation	20%
3. Short Essay	20%
4. Midterm	20%
5. Final Exam	20%

#### **\*\*\* Extra Credit (1 point each)**

- 1) Attend Prof. Andrew Yeo's book talk (9/12) on North Korean human rights advocacy and write a report (2 pages).
- 2) Attend Prof. B. G. Muhn's talk on North Korean art (10/12) (2 pages).
- 3) Visit Old Korean Legation Museum and write a report (2 pages).
- 4) Korean War Memorial DC (2 pages).

### **Average minimum amount of out-of-class or independent learning expected per week**

Over 14 weeks, students will spend 2 hours (110 minutes) per week in class. (26 hours for the semester.) Required reading for the seminar meetings and written response papers or projects are expected to take up, on average, 8 hours per week. Over the course of the semester, students will spend 26 hours in instructional time and 112 hours preparing for class.

### **Required Texts:**

**\*\*\* It is mandatory that you bring your reading materials to each class and be ready to refer to them whenever possible.**

**\*\*\* The reading assignment may be modified. Advance notice will be sent.**

Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Korea: From Antiquity to the Present* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2016)

Peter H. Lee eds., *Sources of Korean Tradition, vol.1: From Early Times Through the 16th Century* (Columbia University Press, 1996)

Peter H. Lee eds., *Sources of Korean Tradition, vol 2: From the 16th to the 20th Century* (Columbia University Press, 2000)

All other readings are available through Gelman Library or our course website, <http://blackboard.gwu.edu>.

## **WEEKLY TOPICS AND READINGS**

This course outline gives you a sense of the topics covered in the course, as well as the flow of the course. Reading assignments will run between about 75 and 125 pages per week, depending on the difficulty of the reading.

### **Week 1**

#### **8/28 (T): Introduction Meeting**

No readings.

#### **8/30 (Th): Korea in World History**

Charles Holcombe, *A History of East Asia*, 1-30.

Michael J. Seth, *A History of Korea: From Antiquity to the Present* (hereafter *Korea*), Introduction & Ch. 1

Q) What is East Asia and what is Korea in the context of East Asia and the world?

Q) Why states rely on the foundation myth?

### **Week 2**

#### **9/4 (T): The Three Kingdoms: Koguryō, Paekche, and Silla**

*Korea*, Ch. 2

Peter H. Gries, "The Koguryo Controversy, National Identity, and Sino-Korean Relations Today," *East Asia*, vol. 22, no. 4 (2005).

Q) What are the similarities and differences in the social and political structures of the three kingdoms: Koguryō, Paekche, and Silla?

Q) Why is it that Korea and China in the 21st century are arguing over an ancient state Koguryō?

\*\*\* Map HW due 9/4

### **9/6 (Th): Unified Silla: Unification or Conquest?**

*Korea*, Ch. 3

*Sources* vol. 1, 54-73, 118-120

Richard McBride II, "Silla Buddhism and the Hwarang," *Korean Studies* vol. 34 (2010).

Q) How can we perceive the struggles of the Silla's unification process in the larger context of Northeast Asia? Is it legitimate to use the term "unification" of Silla? Or is it Silla's "conquest" of Koguryō and Paekche?

Q) Discuss the significance of Parhae.

Q) How should we understand the emergence of Later Three Kingdoms? What does it tell us about the "unified" Silla?

### **Week 3**

### **9/11 (T): Koryō (918-1392): State Formation and Society**

*Korea*, Ch. 4.

*Sources* vol.1, 151-156.

Q) Discuss the significance of Kwangjong's adoption of the civil service examination system in Koryō society.

Q) Do you think identity is centered on culture, territory, and ideology? Or more on national interest based on the economic basis? Or both?

\*\*\* North Korean defector students' visit to our class

### 9/13 (Th): Koryŏ and Foreign Relations

*Korea*, Ch. 5

*Sources* vol. 1, 191-215 & 237-239

M. Rogers, "Medieval National Consciousness in Korea," 151-172.

Q) According to Rogers, when did "Korean" national consciousness first emerge in Korean history?

**\*\*\* First ID terms due 9/13**

### Week 4

#### 9/18 (T): Early Chosŏn

*Korea*, Ch. 6.

JaHyun Kim Haboush, "Creating a Society of Civil Culture: Early Chosŏn, 1392-1592," Soyoung Lee ed., *Art of the Korean Renaissance, 1400-1600* (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2009)

Donald Clark, "Sino-Korean Tributary Relations under the Ming"

*Sources* vol. 1, 272-278

Q) What kind of an ideal society did Chosŏn bureaucrats envision that was different from previous Koryŏ dynasty? Compare the founding edicts of Koryŏ and Chosŏn.

#### 9/20 (Th): The Communicative Space of Chosŏn Korea

*Korea*, Ch. 7.

*Sources* vol. 1, 293-310.

J. Kim, "Women's Legal Voice," *The Journal of Asian Studies* (2013).

Q) Discuss the significance of Sejong's creation of Korean alphabet.

Q) What does it mean for women of both elite and non-elite to be empowered with the legal capacity to petition the state to appeal their grievances in premodern society?

**Week 5****9/25 (T): Imjin War**

J. Haboush, *The Great East Asian War and the Birth of the Korean Nation*, Ch. 1.

Kenneth Swope, "Crouching Tigers, Secret Weapons"

Q) Discuss the impact of Hideyoshi's invasion in East Asia and the rise of discourse of nation in Korea.

Q) According to Swope, why did Japan lose the war?

**9/27 (Th): Late Chosŏn and the Encounter with the West**

*Korea*, Ch. 8.

*Sources of Korean Tradition vol. 2* (hereafter *Sources vol. 2*), 117-142 & 212-244.

Q) Discuss Korea's negative encounter with the West?

**Week 6****10/2 (T): The End of East Asian World Order**

*Korea*, Ch. 9.

*Sources vol. 2*, 245-260.

Andre Schmid, "Rediscovering Manchuria."

Q) Why did Sin Ch'aeho emphasize Manchuria at the turn of the twentieth century?

Q) To what extent did modern East Asian nationalisms emerge as a reaction against Western imperialism?

Q) What is modernity? Can we equate "modernization" with "Westernization"?

**\*\*\* Second ID terms due 10/2**

**10/4 (Th): Japanese Colonial Rule, 1910-1919**

*Korea*, Ch. 10.

Sources vol. 2, 315-351.

Q) Discuss the significance of March First Movement.

Q) Why did Japan, rather than other European powers, become the main imperial power in Northeast Asia at the turn of the twentieth century?

## **Week 7**

**10/9 (T): NO CLASS (FALL BREAK!!)**

**10/11 (Th): Japanese Colonial Rule, 1919-1930**

M. Robinson, *Korea's Twentieth Century Odyssey*, ch. 3

*Sources* vol. 2, 352-366.

Recommended:

Hildi Kang, *Under the Black Umbrella*, 1-86.

Q) Was national liberation possible through legal and gradualist program of national development, or did such a program play into the hands of Japanese colonial policy?

## **Week 8**

**10/16 (T): Japanese Colonial Rule, 1930-1945**

M. Robinson, *Korea's Twentieth Century Odyssey*, chapter 4

Spring of Korean Peninsula (1941) (Youtube)

Director: Lee Pyŏng-il

Kyu-Hyun Kim, "Viral Colony: Spring of Korean Peninsula and Epitaph,"

Controversy: 1) collaboration vs. resistance 2) patriotic enlightenment thinkers vs. radical nationalists

Q) How is the assimilation policy implemented by the Japanese colonial government reflected in the film?

Recommended:

Hildi Kang, *Under the Black Umbrella*, 87-148.



\*\*\* Third ID terms due 10/16

**10/18 (Th): Liberation, the Two Regimes & the Korean War**

*Korea*, Ch. 11

*Sources* vol. 2, 367-395.

Monica Kim, "The Intelligence of Fools: Reading the US Military Archive of the Korean War," *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique*, vol. 23, no. 4 (2015).

Q) Discuss the consequences of national division on both North and South Korea?

Q) Why Korea remains divided long after the end of the Cold War?

Discussion: Historical debate in Korean history: 1919 vs. 1945

Recommended:

Legacies of the Korean War Website:

<http://legaciesofthekoreanwar.org>

**Week 9**

**10/23 (T): Midterm Exam**

**10/25 (Th): The Industrialization of South Korea**

*Korea*, Ch. 13.

A letter to Jimmy Carter by Kim Daejung, Yun Poson, and Hahm Sokhon (Critical Oral History)

Q) In the context of post-liberation period, discuss whether you think economic development should have preceded democracy.

Q) Autocratic development? Democracy vs. Economic development

**Week 10**

**10/30 (T): 5.18 Kwangju**

*Korea*, Ch. 14.

*Sources* 2, 431-451.

N. Lee, *The Making of Minjung*, ch. 1

Documentary: The Dynamic Development of Korean Democracy (YouTube/45min.)

Q) What is minjung movement? Explain the significance of minjung movement in Korean history.

### **11/1 (Th): War, Memory, and Comfort Women**

S. Soh, "From Imperial Gifts to Sex Slaves".

Thomas J. Ward, "The Comfort Women Controversy: Not Over Yet," *East Asia* 33 (2016).

Japan-ROK Agreement on Comfort Women  
[http://www.mofa.go.jp/a\\_o/na/kr/page4e\\_000364.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/na/kr/page4e_000364.html)

NY TIMES Article:  
[http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/30/world/asia/south-korea-japan-comfort-women.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/30/world/asia/south-korea-japan-comfort-women.html?_r=0)

WSJ Article:  
<http://www.wsj.com/articles/japan-south-korea-reach-comfort-women-agreement-1451286347>

Voice of America:  
<http://www.voanews.com/content/comfort-women-agreement-hailed-breakthrough-seoul-tokyo/3125575.html>

Q) Japanese government continues to claim that comfort women were not "sex slaves" but prostitutes? Based on your research, how would you define or understand comfort women?

H.W. Submit a 1-2 page report regarding whether you support the agreement made by Japan and ROK on the issue of comfort women.

### **Week 11**

#### **11/6 (T): The Korean Wave in the Age of Social Media**

Sangjoon Lee and Abe Mark Nornes, eds., *Hallyu 2.0* (University of Michigan Press, 2015), Introduction, Ch.1, 9 & 10

**11/8 (Th): Globalization of K-Pop**

Suk-Young Kim, *K-Pop Live: Fans, Idols, and Multimedia Performance* (Stanford University Press, 2018), Introduction, Ch. 1 & 2

**Week 12****11/13 (T): The role of media and divided politics in South Korea**

Guest speaker

**11/15 (Th): North Korean Revolution**

*Korea*, Ch. 12.

Suzy Kim, *Everyday Life in the North Korean Revolution, 1945-1950* (Cornell University Press, 2013), Ch. 1

*Sources* vol. 2, 419-425.

Q) According to Suzy Kim, what is revolution in North Korean everyday life?

Recommended:

Andre Schmid, ““My Turn to Speak”: Criticism Culture and the Multiple Uses of Class in Postwar North Korea,” *International Journal of Korean History*, vol. 21, no. 2 (2016).

**\*\*\* Fourth ID terms due 11/15**

**Week 13****11/20 (T): North Korean Human Rights**

Christine Hong, “Reframing North Korean Human Rights,” *Critical Asian Studies* 45:4 (2013): 511-32.

**11/22 (Th): THANKSGIVING BREAK (NO CLASS!!)****Week 14**

**11/27 (T): North Korean Defectors: Refugees or Illegal Migrants?**

A. Lankov, "Bitter Taste of Paradise: North Korean Refugees in South Korea," *Journal of East Asian Studies*, 6.1 (2006): 105-37.

Elim Chan & Andreas Schloenhardt, "North Korean Refugees and International Refugee Law," *International Journal of Refugee Law*, 19.2 (2008): 215-45.

- Q) Why is China treating them as "illegal economic migrants" instead of treating North Korean refugees as political refugees?
- Q) According to Lankov, how did South Korea's attitude toward North Korean refugees recently change and what is his view about the new policy devised by the South Korean government?

Seoul Train (New Day Films, 2008) (Blackboard e-reserves)

**11/29 (Th): Inter-Korean Relationship and the Issue of Unification**

Sungrim Park (Ministry of Unification)

**Week 15****12/4 (T): North Korea's Political Economy**

Dr. Joongho Kim

**12/6 (Th): Final Review****Syllabus Appendix****Policies and Resources**

## 1. Unexcused late work and extensions

a. I will NOT accept late essays without a documented personal emergency. If this occurs, you must contact me at the earliest possible date after the deadline has passed and provide me with proper documentation. Only a hospitalization, contagious illness with a doctor's note, death in your family or a religious holiday justifies an excused absence.

b. If, in advance, you foresee a serious problem with meeting submitting your papers on time, I will consider an extension. Otherwise, and barring a documented personal emergency, I will deduct one letter grade for every day that is late. Any papers submitted 4 days or more after the deadline will earn a zero.

2. *Writing Center* (<http://www.gwu.edu/~gwriter/>): The GW Writing Center provides individual support to students who need one-on-one help with their writing projects. If you need assistance, schedule an appointment through their online system, and send your paper (at least 24 hours in advance of your appointment) to [gwriter@gwu.edu](mailto:gwriter@gwu.edu). Include the name of your tutor, time of your session, and number you will be calling from at the time of your appointment.

3. *English for Academic Purposes*: Students with non-English backgrounds who have the ability to travel to GW's Foggy Bottom campus can take advantage of GW's EAP (English for Academic Purposes) Writing Support Program. The program offers a free, one-on-one tutoring to support any stage of the writing process. Tutors are trained to provide focused support for non-native speakers. Visit the [appointment website](#) to make an appointment.

4. *Religious Holidays*: You must notify me the first week of the semester of your intention to be absent from class on your day(s) of religious observance. Together we will arrange any necessary make-up provisions.

5. *Academic Integrity*: All submissions of written work **MUST** be entirely your own and all sources must be properly cited. If you have any questions about this or other related matters, consult the GWU Code of Academic Integrity (<http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html>) or see me. Cheating, plagiarism, or other violations of the Code will result in **NO CREDIT** for the assignment or test and may result in failure for the course. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the paper and may result in failing the course (or worse). Plagiarism is defined in the GW Code of Academic Integrity as follows:

**Plagiarism**- intentionally representing the words, ideas, or sequence of ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise; failure to attribute any of the following: quotations, paraphrases, or borrowed information.  
([http://cs.seas.gwu.edu/general/gwintegrity.html#\\_Toc420653052](http://cs.seas.gwu.edu/general/gwintegrity.html#_Toc420653052))

6. *Disability Support Services* (202-994-8250): Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the DSS office by phone or in person at the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information, please visit <http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/>.

7. *University Counseling Center* (202-994-5300): The UCC offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills problems. For more, visit <http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingService/AcademicSupportServices>.

8. *Security*: In the case of an emergency, if at all possible, the class should shelter in place. If the building that the class is in is affected, follow the evacuation procedures for the building. After evacuation, seek shelter at a predetermined rendezvous location.

9. No laptop policy.