

SOC 380F KOREAN POLITICS THROUGH CINEMA

Binghamton University

Fall 2007

MWF 2:20-3:20

AAG 021

Office hours: Wednesday 11am-12pm
or by appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to introduce Korean politics to students who are interested in learning about Korea, a divided country whose political fate has tightly been interwoven with American foreign policy. By examining political events such as Japanese colonialism, the Korean War, division, dictatorship, economic growth, democratization, and North Korean nuclear crisis, students will gain a better understanding of the complexities of the political contours that have molded contemporary Korean society, both in the north and the south. To facilitate this process of understanding, analysis, and discussion, this course incorporates readings, movies, and documentaries that depict the turbulent political experiences Korea underwent over the last several decades. Through this exploration, students will examine questions such as

- What legacies did Japanese colonialism leave on Korean society?
- Why did the Korean War occur and what were the consequences for the Korean people?
- Why was Korea divided into the north and the south and how did the division affect both societies?
- Why and how did authoritarianism last for three decades in South Korea?
- What was the untold story of South Korea's successful economic development?
- How did South Korea make a successful transition from authoritarian rule to democracy?
- What has been the role of the US in the politics of the Korean peninsula?
- Why doesn't North Korea collapse despite its political rigidities and economic failures?

-What are the root causes that have created the North Korean nuclear crisis?

GRADING AND EVALUATION

Participation: 10%	Do the assigned readings, come to class, participate in class discussion, and ask questions.
Film critique: 20%	Students watch five films in class and choose ONE to write a film critique (<u>4-5 pages</u>), due the next class following the film show. The paper should address specific questions about the film and the political event portrayed in the film.
Presentation & report: 20%	Each student signs up for ONE of the five films assigned for presentation. Students watch the film before the class and prepare a report similar to a response paper (<u>4-5 pages</u>) due on the day of presentation. The presentation and report should address specific questions about the film and the political event portrayed in the film.
Exams (2): 50%	There will be two exams to evaluate students' understanding of the key concepts and arguments discussed in lecture, assigned readings, and films. <u>Exam 1: Oct. 8 (in-class) and Exam 2: Dec. 5 (take-home)</u>

Absence

Regular attendance is a must for this class. If students have inevitable reasons for their absence, they have to inform the professor in advance.

Incomplete

No incomplete will be granted in this course unless the student provides evidence of family or medical emergencies.

Laptops

Laptops can be used in class but no web browsing is allowed. If it is found, points will be deducted from class attendance and participation.

Plagiarism (<http://library.lib.binghamton.edu/instruct/plagfaculty.htm>)

Plagiarism is defined as presenting the work of another person as one's own work (including papers, words, ideas, information, computer code, data, evidence organizing principles, or style of presentation of someone else taken from the internet, books, periodicals, or other sources).

→Any detection of plagiarism will result in a failing grade and a report to the University administration.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required book

Bruce Cumings. *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2005 (Updated edition).

Other readings are available on Blackboard (Course Reserves)

Films to watch in class

“Their Stories Are Still Going On” (“Comfort women”)

“Welcome to Dongmakgol (The Korean War)

“Single Spark” (Korean workers in the 1970s)

“Peppermint Candy” (The Kwangju Massacre)

“A State of Mind” (North Korea)

Films for presentation (Reserved for a 3-hour loan)

“Joint Security Area” (Divided Korea)

“The President’s Barber” (Authoritarianism)

“Repatriation” (Long-term prisoners in South Korea)

“Remember 518” (The Kwangju Massacre)

“The Bridge at Nogunri” (The Korean War and Americans)

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
8/27-8/31	Introduction -Presentation sign-up	<i>Japanese Colonialism...</i> <u>Read</u> Cumings p.139-162	<u>Watch</u> “Their Stories Are Still Going On”
9/3-9/7	NO CLASS	<u>Read</u> Cumings p. 162-184 Assignment: Film critique	<u>Read</u> Tetsuya “Yasukuni Shrine...”; McNeill “Japan’s History Wars...”
9/10-9/14	<i>The Korean War...</i> <u>Read</u> Cumings p.185-254	NO CLASS	NO CLASS
9/17-9/21	<u>Watch</u> “Welcome to Dongmakgol”	<u>Watch</u> “Welcome to Dongmakgol”	NO CLASS
9/24-9/28	<i>Divided Korea...</i> <u>Read</u> Cumings p.255-275 Assignment: Film critique	<u>Read</u> Cumings p.275-298	Presentation: “Joint Security Area”
10/1-10/5	Presentation: “The Bridge at Nogunri”	<u>Read</u> Shin “Ethnic Nationalism in Korea” p.1-24	*Conference on Asian Labor
10/8-10/12	Exam 1	<i>S.Korea under Dictatorship...</i> <u>Read</u> Cumings p. 299-309, 337-347	<u>Read</u> Cumings p.347-367
10/15-10/19	<u>Read</u> Cumings p.377-393	Presentation: “The President’s Barber”	Presentation: “Repatriation”
10/22-10/26	<i>S. Korea’s Economic Growth...</i> <u>Read</u> Cumings p.309-336	<u>Read</u> Koo “Korean Workers”p.46-68	<u>Watch</u> “Single Spark”

Week	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
10/29-11/2	<p><u>Watch</u> “Single Spark”</p> <p>Assignment: Film critique</p>	<p><i>S.Korea’s Democratization...</i></p> <p><u>Read</u> Kim “The Politics of Democratization in Korea”p.137-149</p>	<p><u>Read</u> Shin “Contentious Kwangju” p.xi-xxxi</p>
11/5-11/9	<p>Presentation: “Remember 518”</p>	<p><u>Watch</u> Peppermint Candy</p>	<p><u>Watch</u> “Peppermint Candy”</p>
11/12-11/16	<p><i>North Korea...</i></p> <p><u>Read</u></p> <p>Assignment: Film critique</p>	<p><u>Read</u> Cumings p.429-447</p>	<p><u>Watch</u> “A State of Mind”</p>
11/19-11/23	<p><u>Read</u> Kihl “Staying Power of the Socialist Hermit Kingdom” p.3-17</p>	NO CLASS	NO CLASS
11/26-11/30	<p><u>Read</u> Kihl “Staying Power of the Socialist Hermit Kingdom” p.17-33</p>	<p><u>Watch</u> “Docu on North Korea”</p>	<p><u>Watch</u> “Docu on North Korea”</p>
12/3-12/7	<p>Discussion on North Korea</p> <p>Assignment: Film critique</p>	Exam 2	Wrap-up

