Instructor: Jeeyoung Shin, Ph. D
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Class meetings: Wednesdays 2:00-4:50 p.m. (Media Hall 505)

Course Description
This course offers a broad overview of South Korean cinema. We will examine historical, political, cultural, and aesthetic issues, from both local and transnational perspectives. We will also investigate how changes in geo-cultural politics at the local, national, regional, and global levels have influenced the making and remaking of South Korean cinema in terms of both textual and contextual practices. Special attention will be given to the various ways in which contemporary South Korean cinema manifests the complex dynamics and processes of transnationalization and globalization through intraregional and transregional cultural interactions.

The course is divided into two parts. The first is largely devoted to an exploration of Korean film history; the second will train students to analyze individual contemporary Korean films in terms of both their aesthetic qualities and the broader cultural and social issues they embody. Weekly screenings will give students 1) exposure to a representative range of film-making traditions, such as Korean Cinema during the Colonial Period, Golden Age, Im Kwon-taek, New Wave, and New Korean Cinema, and 2) a sampling of popular genres and important topics within contemporary South Korean cinema, such as melodrama, North Korea-themed blockbuster, reimagining colonial Korea, transnational auteur, transnational co-production and remake, and multiculturalism and cultural diversity. Throughout the semester, we will also consider how Korean cinema has created and sustained local specificity of culture while drawing on the widely shared consumer language of cinema. At the end of this course, students will have a better understanding of current Korean society and culture, as well as the history and characteristics of Korean cinema. Students are not expected to have any prior knowledge of Korea or of the Korean language.

Classes will consist of mini-lectures, student presentations, discussions, and film screenings.

Required Text
Course Reader

Requirements/Grading
Attendance/participation (including short film responses) 30%
Class presentation 10%
Two position papers (1 single-spaced page each) 10%
Final research paper (10-12 pages) 50%
(Proposal/preliminary bibliographic project: 5%; presentation: 5%; final paper: 40%)
Attendance/participation (30%):  
Attendance at all class meetings and screenings is mandatory. More than one unexcused absence will negatively affect your grade, and four will result in a failing grade for the course. Unavoidable absences must be carefully documented, preferably in advance. Furthermore, three late arrivals, or missing more than sixty minutes of class time, will count as one absence.

Students should come to class prepared to discuss all the readings and the films assigned for that week. The course will combine mini lectures, student presentations, discussions, and screenings. Although I will occasionally give short lectures to provide background information not covered in the readings, the class will focus on discussions and student presentations of course materials and students will be responsible for leading this seminar through active participation. Part of the final grade will be based on your participation, which involves not only presence and preparation, but also frequent and significant contributions to class discussions.

Each week students will also post on the course’s Blackboard site a short (approximately 250 to 300-word) response to the assigned film, commenting on certain aspects of the film that are related to the weekly topic and the assigned readings.

Class presentation (10%):  
Beginning in Week 3, each student will be asked to give a presentation (20 min) on the assigned materials for the weekly seminar. Along with a brief summary of the main arguments of the assigned readings, the student presenter should identify important issues they raise and prepare 3-5 questions with which to organize and lead the seminar discussion. Discussion questions must be posted on Blackboard by 10PM on the Tuesday before the seminar meeting. Sign-up sheets for the dates of presentation will be provided during the second week.

Two position papers (10%):  
You will write two short (400-500 words) critical essays, each responding to two of the readings for the assigned week. In these essays, you should 1) identify major arguments in the readings, 2) speculate on the authors’ contributions to the field, and 3) critique the arguments by locating their limitations and problems.

Research paper (50%) –  
Proposal/preliminary bibliographic project (5%)/presentation (5%)/final paper (40%):  
Students will write a research paper of 3000-4000 words on a topic relevant to this course. Seven weeks before the final research paper is due, each student will submit a proposal of his/her research project, and four weeks before the due date, a bibliographic project must be submitted. You may expand on one of the lecture topics or choose your own topic. Each student will also be asked to present to the class her/his own research paper in progress, in order to get as much feedback as possible from classmates.

Assignment schedules will be available in Week 2, and more detailed guidelines for each assignment will be given in class ahead of time.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE  
(Subject to change as necessary)
Part I. Korean Film History

Week 1 (9/7)
Introduction
Introduction to the course; Korean history timeline
In-class viewing: Excerpts from *Sweet Dream* (Yang Joonam, 1936) and *Snowpiercer* (Pong Junho, 2013)

Week 2 (9/14)
Ch’usŏk Holiday – No class

Week 3 (9/21)
Korean Cinema during the Colonial Period
Film: *Spring of Korean Peninsula* (Yi Pyŏngil, 1941; 87 min.)
Required readings:

Week 4 (9/28)
Post-war South Korean Cinema
Film: *Madame Freedom* (*Chayu puin*, Han Hyŏngmo, 1956; 125 min.)
Required readings:
Kathleen McHugh, “South Korean Film Melodrama: State, Nation, Woman, and the Transnational Familiar,” in *South Korean Golden Age Melodrama*, 17-42.

Week 5 (10/5)
Golden Age of South Korean Cinema I
Film: *The Housemaid* (*Hanyŏ*, Kim Ki-young, 1960; 111 min.)
Required readings:
Further reading:
Soyoung Kim, “Questions of Woman’s Film: The Maid, Madame Freedom, and Women,” in *South Korean Golden Age Melodrama*, 185-200.

**Week 6 (10/12)**
**Golden Age of South Korean Cinema II**
Film: *Aimless Bullet* (*Obalt'an*, Yu Hyœnmok, 1961; 110 min.)
In-class viewing: Excerpts from *A Coachman* (*Mabu*, Kang Taejin, 1961)
Required readings:

Further reading:

**Week 7 (10/19)**
**Dictatorship and Censorship; Transition to Democracy and New Wave**
Film: *Black Republic* (*Küdüldо urich’ороm*, Pak Kwangsu, 1990; 102 min.)
In-class viewing: Excerpts from *Chilsu and Mansu* (Pak Kwangsu, 1989)
Required readings:

**Week 8 (10/26)**
**Im Kwon-taek and the Making of a National Cinema**
Film: *Sopyonje* (*Sŏp’yŏnje*, Im Kwon-taek, 1993; 112 min.)
In-class viewing: Excerpts from *General’s Son* (Im Kwŏntaek, 1990)
Required readings:
CHO HAN, Hae-Joang, “*Sopyonje*: Its Cultural and Historical Meaning,” in *Im Kwon-Taek*, 134-156.
**Final Paper Proposal Due: Thursday, October 27, 5PM via Email**

**Part II. Globalization and New Korean Cinema**

**Week 9 (11/2)**
**The Rise of New Korean Cinema**
Film: *Take Care of My Cat* (*Koyangyi rŭl put’akkhae*, Chŏng Chaeũn, 2001; 112 min.)
In-class viewing: Excerpts from *Beat* (Kim Sŏngsu, 1997)
Required readings:

Further reading:

Week 10 (11/9)
Melodrama in New Korean Cinema
Film: Christmas in August (P’alwol üi k’ürisūmasū, Hō Jinho, 1998; 97 min.)
Required readings:

Week 11 (11/16)
The Theme of North Korea and Korean Blockbuster
Film: Welcome to Dongmakgol (Pak Kwanghyŏn, 2005)
In-class viewing: Excerpts from Taegeukgi (T’aegŭkki, Kang Chegyu, 2000)
Required readings:

Further reading:

Week 12 (11/23)
Reimagining Colonial Korea
Film: Blue Swallow (Ch’ŏngyŏn, Yun Chongch’an, 2005; 133 min.)
In-class viewing: Excerpts from Modern Boy (Modŏn poi, Chong Chiu, 2008)
Required readings:
*Preliminary Bibliographic Project Due: November 25, at Noon (12:00 PM) via Email
Week 13 (11/30)
Transnational Auteur: PARK Chan-wook
Film: *Old Boy* (*Oldů poi*, Park Chan-wook, 2003; 120 min.)
Required readings:
Kyung Hyun Kim, “Park Chan-wook’s ‘Unknowable’ *Old Boy,*,” in *Virtual Hallyu*, 178-199.

Week 14 (12/7)
Transnational Co-productions and Remakes
Film: *The Good, The Bad, The Weird* (Kim Ji-woon, 2008; 139 min.)
In-class viewing: Excerpts from *Daisy* (*Taeiji*, Andrew Lau, 2006)
Required readings:

Further reading:

Week 15 (12/14)
Screening Multicultural South Korea
Film: *Secret Reunion* (*Ŭihyŏngje*, Chang Hun, 2010)
Required Reading:

*Presentation of final research paper in progress
** Final Research Paper Due: Wednesday, December 21, 4:00 PM via Blackboard