

574:220 Korean Literature in Translation I:
Twentieth Century Korea through Short Stories

Fall 2014
T TH 4:30-5:50
FH-B1

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Course Description:

In this course, we will read, analyze, and compare short Korean literary texts of the twentieth century, written in Korean and translated into English. We will also examine Korea's social, political, historical, and cultural experiences.

While this may be an unfamiliar territory for some of you, you will learn through careful reading, weekly responses, and meaningful discussion, and grow to appreciate the stories listed here, granted that you have an open mind with a critical approach. Having an open mind does not mean that you take everything at face value. Conversely, a critical approach does not mean you judge things negatively or close-mindedly. Be open to all possibilities, with compassion, but remember to examine them critically. As Carl Sagan put it, "It pays to keep an open mind, but not so open your brains fall out."

Course Objectives:

- Develop an understanding of modern Korea literature within its social, political, historical, and cultural contexts.
- Hone academic writing skills by using textual analysis and comparison of the readings to provide creative arguments.
- Gain experience presenting your research and analysis by leading class discussion.

Core Curriculum Learning Goals Met by this Course:

II.C.o: Examine critically philosophical and other theoretical issues concerning the nature of reality, human experience, knowledge, value, and/or cultural production.

II.C.p: Analyze arts and/or literatures in themselves and in relation to specific histories, values, languages, cultures, and technologies.

Department Learning Goals Met by this Course:

Acquire in-depth knowledge of the literature and culture of an East Asian country (China, Japan, or Korea); analyze issues concerning East Asia and relate them to other areas in the humanities and social sciences following an interdisciplinary approach.

Course Structure:

Classes will include combinations of discussions and lectures. **Every week except the first and two mid-term weeks, you will submit a 2-3 paragraph written response** to at least one of the readings. [Detailed instructions on last page of syllabus]

While everyone is expected to have read the assignments and come prepared with questions and comments, for each class two people will play special roles. The **Discussion Starter** prepares three to four discussion topics regarding the readings to lead off the discussion. This is not a presentation, but a chance to practice “discussion management” with the goal of getting everyone in the room to participate. **The discussion starter should post topics on Sakai by 8:00 PM on SUNDAY (for Tuesday class) or WEDNESDAY (for Thursday class). The class should review these topics before class.**

The **Scribe**, while expected to participate in the discussion as usual, is tasked with chronicling the salient points of the discussion. These digests can either be in paragraph or bullet-point form and should be posted on Sakai within 24 hours of class, i.e., by 6:00 pm on the following day. Scribes are allowed to use their laptop if desired; the goal, however, is not to churn out a rolling script of every utterance, but rather to create a succinct record to remind everyone of the general course of discussion, interesting conclusions, and unresolved questions. Each person will have the opportunity to be both the discussion starter and the scribe once.

Requirements & Grade Distribution (based on a maximum of 100 points):

Weekly Responses: 36 Points (3 points x 12 weeks)

Discussion Starter / Scribe: 9 points (6 for “Starter” Assignment / 3 for “Scribe” Assignment)

Mid-term I & II: 30 points (15 points x 2)

Final Paper (4-5 double-spaced pages, 12 pt): 25 Points

*Note: Active and meaningful participation in class will earn you an extra credit at the end of the semester and may affect your overall grade.

Course Policy:

- *Plagiarism*: All written work should be composed in the student’s own words and the ideas of others should be properly cited. It is the responsibility of all students to know and adhere to the university’s policy on plagiarism. Violations include: cheating, fabrication, and facilitating violations of academic integrity. If you have any questions concerning this policy or about documentation of sources in work you produce in this course, ask me. No form of plagiarism will be tolerated, and violations may result in a failing grade and expulsion from the university.
- *Assignments*: All reading and written assignments are required and should be done before class. Late weekly response will not be accepted. Late assignments will be deducted a **full letter grade for each late day** (i.e. A to a B, B to a C...).
- *Attendance*: Regular class attendance is mandatory. After one unexcused absence, for **each additional unexcused absence, one whole point will be taken from the overall course grade. More than 4 such absences** may result in a failing grade for the course. If you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me.
- *Gadgets*: All communication devices must be turned off for the duration of the class, and laptops are not allowed.
- *Disabilities*: Students with disabilities who are seeking consideration for services or accommodations should immediately contact the Office of Disability Services at (732) 932-2848, 151 College Ave. Full disability policies and procedures are at <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/>

CLASS & ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

(Subject to minor changes upon notice)

WEEK 1

- 9/1: Syllabus and Introduction
In-class Reading: Steven Millhauser, "The Ambition of the Short Story"
- 9/3: About Korean Literature
READ: Kevin O'Rourke, "Introduction," in *A Washed-Out Dream* (Larchwood, 1980)*

COLONIAL EXPERIENCE

WEEK 2: Modernity and the "New Woman"

- 9/8—No class (Monday schedule)
- 9/10:
READ: Na Hye-sök, "Kyönghui" (1917)*
READ: (pp. 1-15 only) Kelly Y. Jeong, "New Woman, Romance, and Railroads: The Paradox of Colonial Modernity," in *Crisis of Gender and the Nation in Korean Literature and Cinema: Modernity Arrives Again* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2011)*

WEEK 3: Food and Survival

- 9/15:
READ: Kim Yu-jöng, "The White Rabbit" (1936)
READ: Hyön Chin-gön, "A Lucky Day" (1924)
- 9/17:
READ: Kim Tong-in, "Potatoes" (1925)

WEEK 4: Struggles and Helplessness

- 9/22
READ: Yi Sang, "Wings" (1936)
- 9/24
READ: Kim Tong-ni, "The Shaman Painting" (1936)

WEEK 5: Towards the End of the Colonial Period

- 9/29: Pastoral Scenes
READ: Yi Hyo-sök, "When the Buckwheat Blooms" (1936)
READ: Hwang Sun-wön, "The Rain Shower" (1959)*
- 10/1: Opportunists
READ: Ch'ae Man-sik, "My Innocent Uncle" (1938)
READ: Chön Kwang-yong, "Kapitan Ri" (1962)*

WEEK 6

- 10/6: MID TERM I
- 10/8: Review

LIBERATION, DIVISION, AND WAR

WEEK 7

- 10/13: The Korean War
READ: Hwang Sun-wŏn, “Cranes” (1953) (available at <https://muse.jhu.edu/journals/azalea/v001/1.hwang02.pdf>)
READ: Yi Ho-chŏl, “Far from Home” (1955)
- 10/15: Effects of the War
READ: Son Ch’ang-sŏp, “A Washed-Out Dream” (1953)*

WEEK 8: The Korean War, Reverberating

- 10/20
READ: P’i Ch’ŏn-dŭk, “Affinity” (1973)*
READ: Pak Wan-sŏ, “Winter Outing” (1975)*
- 10/22
READ: Kim Sŭng-ok, “A Record of Travel to Mujin” (1965)*

INDUSTRIALIZATION & ALIENATION

WEEK 9

- 10/27:
READ: Kim Sŭng-ok, “Seoul: 1964, Winter” (1965)
- 10/29:
READ: Ch’oe In-ho, “Another Man’s Room” (1971)

WEEK 10

- 11/3: The Working Poor
READ: Hwang Sŏg-yŏng, “The Road to Samp’o” (1974)*
READ: Ch’oe Il-nam, “Ballad” (1976)
- 11/5: Nostalgia
READ: Yi Mun-yŏl, “The Old Hatter” (1979)

WEEK 12

- 11/10: MID TERM II
- 11/12: Review & Final Paper Topics
SUBMIT PROPOSED FINAL PAPER THESIS (Not for grading)

EMERGING ISSUES IN MODERN KOREA

WEEK 12: WOMEN'S ISSUES

- 11/17
READ: O Chǒng-hŭi,, "The Wayfarer" (1983)
READ: Cho Hye-joang, "Living with Conflicting Subjectivities: Mother, Motherly Wife, and Sexy Woman in the Transition from Colonial-Modern to Postmodern Korea," in Laura Kendall ed., *Under Construction: The Gendering of Modernity, Class and Consumption in the Republic of Korea* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002)*
- 11/19
READ: Sǒ Yǒng-ŭn, "Dear Distant Love" (1983)*

WEEK 13: WOMEN'S ISSUES (CONT'D)

- 11/24
READ: Sin Kyǒng-suk, "The Blind Calf" (1992)*
- 11/26—No Class (Happy Thanksgiving!)

WEEK 14

- 12/1: Idealism and Reality
READ: Ch'oe Yun, "The Gray Snowman" (1992)
- 12/3: Sexuality and Morality
READ: Yi Mun-yŏl, "The Anonymous Island" (1982)*
READ: Kim Yǒng-ha, "Lizard" (1997)

WEEK 15

- 12/8: Inequality
READ: Cho Se-hŭi, "Knifeblade" (1975)
WATCH: Film *Chilsu and Mansu* (Pak Kwang-su dir., 1988) on Korean Film Archive YouTube site (<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLC5EBBCD66FD252F8>) prior to class meeting
- 12/10: North Korea
READ: Kim Puk-hyang, "The Son" (1971)
FINAL PAPER DUE

Required Texts (Available for purchase at B&N campus bookstore or Amazon.com):
Bruce Fulton and Youngmin Kwon, eds., *Modern Korean Fiction: An Anthology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

Note: Readings marked with asterisks (*) are posted on Sakai.

FINAL NOTE: This syllabus may be modified throughout the semester, and it is the responsibility of each student to keep up to date of any and all announcements made in class.

GUIDE TO WRITTEN RESPONSES

You are responsible for one written weekly assignment (2-3 paragraphs). Each week, choose a reading or readings from either Tuesday or Thursday readings. Post your responses on Sakai no later than 8PM on **Sunday (for Tuesday's readings) or Wednesday (for Thursday's readings)**

1. Do NOT summarize, but demonstrate that you critically engaged with the reading by discussing some of the main themes and issues that you found interesting and/or problematic. In other words, share your comments, critiques, and reactions.
2. Separately, posit 1-2 questions or issues you would like to raise for class discussion.
3. Finally, if applicable, identify any terms, concepts or words that you did not understand (even after using a dictionary) and would like to go over in class.

Each response will be given FULL CREDIT (3 course grade points), PARTIAL CREDIT (2 course grade points) or MINIMUM CREDIT (1 course grade point), depending on the quality of the questions you raise and the analyses you employ in discussing them. **Late responses will not be accepted and will receive ZERO CREDIT unless there is a documented emergency.**

GUIDE TO CRITICAL READING

Whenever you read a text you should ask yourself the following questions.

1. What is the context?
2. What was the author's intent in writing it?
3. What issues does the author pose?
4. Why are these issues important?
5. What is the author's central position and how is it expressed?
6. Does the author's position rest on any unspoken assumptions?
7. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the author's position and/or writing style?

GUIDE TO DISCUSSION STARTER

Public speaking is a skill, like writing and reading, which needs to be practiced and cultivated. The purpose of this assignment is not only to have you present discussion issues in class, but also to provide you with an opportunity to develop your public speaking and leadership skills. The purpose is to help you organize and publicly articulate your thoughts while facilitating discussion by pinpointing the main issues in the readings and your reactions to them. So, in preparing to be Discussion Starter, be mindful of the following components.

- Forming Discussion Topics: What are the most important aspects of the story? Why are they significant in the social, political, historical, or cultural context that we examine? How does the author portray certain themes, backgrounds, and characters, and why? Does it work? Why or why not? Answer these questions to yourself before finalizing 3-4 topics to discuss.
- Preview of the class's thoughts: Review the class's responses to your reading before class.
- Discussion Management: How much time should you set aside for each issue? How would you engage the class in it at the outset? What would you do so that the discussion does not stray away from the main topic? Each Discussion Starter should prepare for a **30-minute discussion** even though the actual discussion time may vary.
- Delivery: Good speech is delivered in a smooth and confident manner, maintaining eye contact and connecting with the audience. The fastest way to lose an audience is to look down and read from the paper in a monotone voice. Nothing is more effective than practicing to improve public speaking skills.