

HISTORY 200: North Korean History – Origins to the 21st Century

Seminar Meetings: Thursday, 8:50-10:45, Humanities 5257

Instructor: Prof. Charles Kim

Office Hours: Fridays, 2:45-4:45 pm

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“This is a photo from North Korea’s *Rodong sinmun*... In North Korea, people don’t just dance willy-nilly; they have to dance according to the form that corresponds to the music. They learn [these forms] at the workplace or at school and go from there. If people move their bodies as they feel, like in other countries, then it is thought that there has been a bad influence and it is a big deal... While photos of dance assemblies are common, [I chose this one] because, as I look at it, it demonstrates all too clearly the uniformity of North Korea.” (Chu Songha, North Korean defector and journalist in South Korea, “An Excessive Photograph of a Youth Dance Assembly,” [nambukstory.com](http://blog.donga.com/nambukstory/archives/104684), April 22, 2015, <http://blog.donga.com/nambukstory/archives/104684>)



“We were walking around Moran hill and came across some retirees. This elderly gentleman tapped me on the shoulder and signalled me to dance. I couldn’t so he began showing off... really showing off. It seems this place is a popular hang out for old folks and wedding couples taking bridal photos.” (Aram Pan, Singaporean photographer, DPRK 360, May 29, 2014, <https://www.facebook.com/dprk360/photos/a.213768868746949.1073741829.211159445674558/246470912143411/?type=3&theater>)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This seminar explores major topics in the politics, culture, and society of North Korea. Taking a historical approach, it delves into national division, the Korean War, postcolonial nation building, *Juche* ideology, and salient aspects of present-day North Korea. Thorough preparation and active participation in discussion is expected every week of all students.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- (1) Learn about North Korea, past and present.
- (2) Learn how to identify a scholarly argument.
- (3) Improve your ability to analyze and interpret historical documents.
- (4) Create a website based on original research.

COURSE MATERIALS:

All course readings and films will be made available to students on a UW Box folder or are already on the Internet. Be sure to bring annotated readings to seminar in an easily accessible format (i.e., printout or downloaded to your laptop or tablet).

GRADING:

(1) Attendance and Participation

Perfect attendance, diligent preparation, and active participation are expected of all students. Get into the habit of reading the required readings and giving yourself enough time to think and raise questions about them so that you can take part in discussion. If you arrive late to seminar or do not contribute to discussion, then points will be deducted from your weekly participation score. Each week, 2-3 students will co-facilitate the discussion. Attendance and participation make up 18% of the final grade.

(2) Co-facilitating Discussion

Each week, 1-2 students will facilitate the first half of the discussion. You should start with a brief presentation touching on the key points of the assigned materials. It should not exceed 8 minutes in length. From there, pose a series of questions for the discussion. Each student will facilitate discussion once during the semester. This will make up 2% of the final grade.

(3) Discussion Postings

You will write up to 9 weekly discussion posts in response to our weekly readings and films. They should be 250 to 500 words in length and posted to Learn@UW no later than 7 pm the night before class. Each post should contain the following elements: (1) **A clear, concise, and accurate statement** of the main points of the assigned materials; (2) **2 or more questions** in preparation for seminar; and (3) any additional thoughts or observations that pertain to the week's topic. Your top 8 scores will be calculated into your final grade for a total of 32% (8 x 4%) of your final grade.

(4) Project Prep Assignments

During the second part of the semester, there will be 3 preparatory assignments for your final project. They will make up 7% (3 X 2.33%) of your final grade.

(5) Final Project

For the final project, you will create a website on a specific topic pertaining to North Korea, past and present. This assignment will amount to 40% of your course grade (10% for student presentation and rough draft; 30% for final website).

GRADING SCHEME:

93-100%	A	78-82%	BC
88-92%	AB	70-77%	C
83-87%	B	60-69%	D

COURSE POLICIES:

- (1) I will regularly send course announcements, changes to the syllabus, and useful links. Be sure to check your UW email account daily, and to read all of these course-related emails. If you have any questions about them, ask me in class or by email.
- (2) Smartphones may not be used at any time during seminar. Laptops or tablets may be used only to refer to selected readings that do not appear in the course reader.
- (3) Over the course of the semester, you may use up to a total of **four** grace days for all written assignments. If you exceed your allowance, then you will receive a 5-point deduction for each late day. Please note that grace days may not be applied toward your blog posts.
- (4) Plagiarism – the use of another person's words or ideas without citation – will not be tolerated in any assignment for this course. For more on how to avoid plagiarism, see the Writing Center's "Writer's Handbook": <http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QuotingSources.html>.

NEW RESOURCE:

The History Lab: New this semester, the History Lab is a resource center where experts (PhD students) will assist you with your history papers. No matter your stage in the writing process—choosing a topic, conducting research, composing a thesis, outlining your argument, revising your drafts—the History Lab staff is here, along with your professors and teaching assistants, to help you sharpen your skills and become a more successful writer. Sign up for a one-on-one consultation online: <http://go.wisc.edu/hlab>

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS:

Please let me know at the start of the semester if you have a need for an accommodation in his course. If you have any questions about this or require any assistance, feel free to contact me or the McBurney Disability Resource Center.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Sept. 3: Course Introduction

Sept. 10: The Colonial Era

Suzy KIM, *Everyday Life in the North Korean Revolution, 1945-1970* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, YEAR), 14-41.

PAEK Namun, "Introduction" and "A Theory on the Present Stage of the Korean Economy," in *Imperatives of Culture* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2013), 104-108 and 114-126.

CH'AE Mansik, "My Innocent Uncle," *Modern Korean Fiction: An Anthology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 95-111.

Sept. 17: The North Korean Revolution

Michael FREEDEN, *Ideology: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 78-93, 114-128.

Hagwon SUNOO and William ANGUS, "American Policy in Korea: Two Views." *Far Eastern Survey* 15 (July 31, 1946): 228-231.

Suzy KIM, *Everyday Life in the North Korean Revolution*, 71-104.

"Revolt in Korea," *LIFE*, November 15, 1948:

<https://books.google.com/books?id=YkoEAAAAMBAJ&pg=PA55&dq=korea&hl=en&sa=X&ei=-odfVfDtFMrkoASIwoDoAg&ved=oCCwQ6AEwBDiOAg#v=onepage&q=korea&f=false>

Propaganda Reel: "Korea Today" (1948): <https://archive.org/details/gov.archives.li.111-afsr-94.r1>

Sept. 24: The Fatherland Liberation War/June 25th/The Korean War

Charles K. ARMSTRONG, *Tyranny of the Weak: North Korea and the World, 1950-1992* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013), 10-51.

Film: *Grandmother's Flower* (dir. MOON Jeong-hyun, 2007, 89 min.)

Oct. 1: The Ideologies of Postcolonial/Postwar Reconstruction

Cheehyung Harrison KIM, "North Korea's Vinalon City: Industrialism as Socialist Everyday Life," *positions: asia critique* 22 (Fall 2014): 809-836.

KIM Il Sung, "On eliminating dogmatism and formalism and establishing Juche in ideological work," 1955: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/kim-il-sung/1955/12/28.htm>

PARK Chung Hee, *Our Nation's Path: Ideology of Social Reconstruction* (Seoul: Dong-A Publishing Company, Ltd., 1962), 228-232.

Film: *Kinship (Hyölmaek)*, dir. KIM Soo-yong, 82 min., 1963):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PkOExw6yU8s&index=17&list=PLC403C945BEE631E7>

Oct. 8: Juche Ideology: North Korean and Euro-American Representations

Cheehyung KIM, "Total, Thus Broken: *chuch'e sasang* and North Korea's Terrain of Subjectivity," *The Journal of Korean Studies* 17:1 (2012): 69-96.

Koen De Ceuster, "To Be an Artist in North Korea, "Talent and Then Some More," in *Exploring North Korean Arts* (Vienna: University of Vienna, 2011), 51-71.

Film: *A State of Mind* (dir. Daniel GORDON, 2004, 93 min.)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ldeaALLbDY4>

PROJECT PREP ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE IN SEMINAR: Initial Topic Proposal

Oct. 15: Individual Consultations: No Seminar

Meet with instructor and work on your project.

Oct. 22: Economic Decline & the Kim Jong Il Era

Andrei Lankov, *The Real North Korea: Life and Politics in the Failed Stalinist Utopia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 69-84.

Heonik KWON and Byung-Ho CHUNG, "North Korea's Partisan Family State," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 10 (July 9, 2012): http://www.japanfocus.org/-Byung_Ho-Chung/3789/article.html

CHO Pyönggwön, "Great General Mighty Wing," Gold Star Children's Press, 1994: heinzinsufenkl.net/dprk_manhwa.html

Film: *Dear Pyongyang* (dir. YANG Yonghi, 2005, 107 min.)

Oct. 29: Informal Economy & Everyday Politics

Bruce CUMINGS, "The Kims' Three Bodies: Toward Understanding Dynastic Succession in North Korea" in *North Korea in Transition: Politics, Economy, and Society* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2013), 67-90.

Changyong CHOI, "Everyday Politics' in North Korea," *Journal of Asian Studies* 72 (August 2013): 655-673.

DPRK 360: The North Korea Photography Project – <http://www.dprk360.com/>

Optional Reading: Andrei Lankov, *The Real North Korea*, 84-110.

Project Prep Assignment #2: Revised Topic Proposal & Preliminary List of at Least 3 Primary Sources and 10 Secondary Sources

Nov. 5: Student Presentations

Nov. 12: Student Presentations

Nov. 19: Border Crossing

Eric Bidet, "The hard life of North Korean migrants in South Korean society," in *De-bordering Korea* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 103-117.

Christopher Green and Stephen Epstein, "Now On My Way to Meet Who? South Korean Television, North Korean Refugees, and the Dilemmas of Representation," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 11 (October 14, 2013): <http://japanfocus.org/site/view/4007>

YouTube Video: "North Korean Defector Beauties Now on my way to meet you":
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5k4mYo_OUZg

Film: *Dooman River* (dir. ZHANG Lu, 2009, 89 min.)

Project Prep Assignment #3: Revised Topic Proposal, including a working title, a central research question, a working thesis statement, and an outline.

Nov. 26: Thanksgiving Break

Dec. 3: Looking Ahead

Charles K. Armstrong, "Epilogue," *Tyranny of the Weak: North Korea and the World, 1950-1992* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013), 282-294.

Victor Cha, "The End Is Near," *The Impossible State: North Korea, Past and Future* (New York: Ecco, 2012), 427-464.

Chung-in Moon, "The Sunshine Policy as the Path Forward," *The Sunshine Policy: in Defense of Engagement as a Path to Peace in Korea*. (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 2012), 218-235.

Andrei Lankov, "Change is in the air in North Korea," *NK News*, December 9, 2014:
<http://www.nknews.org/2014/12/change-is-in-the-air-in-north-korea/>

Dec. 10: Independent Work Week – No Seminar

Friday, Dec. 11: Rough Draft of Final Project Due

Dec. 22 (possibly sooner depending on students): Final Project due at 12:25 pm.