

HISTORY 108/ASIAN 108: Introduction to East Asian History–Korea

UW–Madison Department of History

Professor Charles Kim/Summer 2023/Asynchronous

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[Office hours for 1:1 meetings](#) (Zoom): Wednesdays 2:00–3:30 pm

Weekly Conversation Sessions–*optional* & open to all (Zoom): Thursdays 11:00–12:30

Course [Zoom](#) and Course [Canvas](#)



The Cheonggye Stream in Seoul: From the turn of the 20th century to the early 21st century.

Course Description:

Korea has a rich history that provides a fascinating vantage point into colonialism, the Cold War, memory politics, and other major processes in East Asian and global history. This course is an exploration of major topics in Korea's culture, society, and politics in the 20th and early 21st centuries. The course consists of four units. Unit 1 examines the origins of Korea and the onset of the modern era, with a focus on colonialism. Unit 2 explores the formation of competing North Korean and South Korean nation-states and the Korean War. The class turns in Unit 3 to a consideration of popular experiences under authoritarian rule, amidst rapid, Cold War

industrialization in the two Koreas. The final part of the course explores social realities in the global era.

Course Designation: Breadth: Humanities or Social Science; Level: Elementary;
L&S Credit: Counts as Liberal Arts and Science credit;
Requisites: None.

Learning Outcomes:

- Gain a sound understanding of Korea's political history and economic transformation in the modern era (late 1800s to recent times)
- Develop a nuanced and inclusive awareness of Korean historical experience, from a grassroots perspective.
- Understand how modern Korea has shaped, and been shaped by, major processes of global history, such as imperialism, war, and decolonization.
- Hone your ability to identify and discuss historically significant information in primary sources.

Course Format:

Unit 1 will post on Canvas on Monday, May 29. Subsequent Units will post on **Sundays**—June 4 (Unit 2), June 11 (Unit 3), and June 18 (Unit 4).

Every week, my optional one-to-one Zoom [office hours](#) will be held on Wednesdays, 2:00–3:30. I'll also hold **Zoom conversation sessions on Thursdays**, 11:00–11:45 and 11:45–12:30. These will be similar to discussion sections in a fall or spring semester class, but they are optional. These conversation sessions are an opportunity to discuss lessons and materials, share ideas in preparation for the weekly discussion posts, and just about anything else related to the class. Sign-ups for each week will be available on Canvas. If you would like to meet and talk about the class but aren't able to make it to my office hours or the conversation sessions, you can email me to schedule an appointment.

In a typical week, students can expect to listen to/read the transcript of 4 recorded VoiceThread (VT) presentations (20–30 minutes each), read 120–150 pages, and watch a film, together with some short video clips. In addition, each week students will be given quizzes, analysis exercises, a discussion post, and peer responses. Regular and substantive interactions with the instructor will take place through the recorded VT presentations. With the exception of Unit 1, quizzes, exercises, discussion posts, and peer responses will be due on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

Readings will include academic texts, memoirs, activist writings, and short stories. The class will also include a weekly movie that portrays a key event or period from Korea's modern past, such as the colonial era, the Korean War, and the era of authoritarianism.

Quizzes will be assessed to measure understanding of the key information from the recorded presentations and the assigned materials. They will be administered on Canvas and will consist of multiple choice and true-false questions. For analysis exercises, students will respond to questions about an assigned text by identifying relevant passages and providing concise explanations. These exercises will be evaluated in terms of how effectively students are drawing relevant connections between the text and key ideas from the unit. Discussion posts and peer responses will be a forum for students to synthesize their observations and thoughts about assigned texts, video clips, and films.

Required Work:

- *To do well on the quizzes and the other assigned work, you'll need to read/view/listen to all of the course readings, visual materials, and presentations.*
- Quizzes: 25%
- Analysis Exercises: 20%
- Discussion Posts: 35%
- Peer Responses: 20%

Course Materials:

All materials for this class are available on Canvas. This includes the links to the VoiceThread presentations. To access and interact on VoiceThread (VT), use [this link](#) to sign up on VT (no cost to students).

Course Guidelines:

- This syllabus is a road map to the course. Please read through it carefully. Don't hesitate to email me or visit office hours if you have any questions.
- If anything comes up (illness, family emergency, etc.), don't hesitate to contact me to fill me in.
- Late assignments will receive a deduction of half a letter grade for each late day.
- Plagiarism – the use of another person's words or ideas without citation – will not be tolerated in any assignment for this course. Please remember that all work must be your own. *There's an easy way to bring in the work of others into your written work and into our discussions: just cite the author to whom you're referring.* For more on how to avoid plagiarism, click [here](#).

Academic Accommodations:

Please let me know at the start of the semester if you need any accommodations for this course. I am happy to work with you and the [McBurney Disability Resource Center](#) to implement them.

Course Credits:

This is a 3-credit course. The credit standard for this course is met by an expectation of a total of 135 hours of student engagement with the course learning activities (at least 45 hours per credit), which include: regularly scheduled instructor:student meeting times (optional conversation sessions and office hours held every week); reading; listening to slide presentations; taking quizzes; doing analysis exercises; and writing discussion posts and peer responses.

Course Schedule:

Unit 1: Narrating Korea's National Past

Getting Started:

- *Sign up on* [VoiceThread](#)
- *Listen to or read* VoiceThread (VT) on the [format of this class](#)
- *Post your* [Self-introduction](#)

Lesson 1: Who Were the First Koreans?

- *Listen to or read* VoiceThread (VT) Presentation
- *Read* Kyung Moon HWANG, "Goguryeo and Ancient Korea"
- *Read* "Accounts of the Eastern Barbarians"
- *Take Quiz 1* (due May 30)
- *Do Analysis Exercise 1* (due Wed., May 31)

Lesson 2: Imperialist Pressures and Modern Korean Nationalism

- *Listen to or read* VT Presentation
- *Read* Michael ROBINSON, "A New Century and the End of an Era"
- *Take Quiz 2* (due Wed., May 31)

Lesson 3: The Colonial Era on Film": *Mal-Mo-E*

- *Listen to or read* VT Presentation
- *Read* Michael SHIN, "The Japanese Occupation Period"
- *Read* "March 1st Movement" & "Strategies for Regaining National Independence"
- *View* EOM Yu-na, *Mal-Mo-E: The Secret Mission*
- *Do Analysis Exercise 2* (due Thurs., June 1)

Lesson 4: The Grays of Colonial Life

- *Listen to or read* VT Presentation
- *Read* HONG, KANG, and Yi oral histories in *Under the Black Umbrella*
- *Do* Discussion Post 1 (due Sat., June 3)
- *Do* Peer Responses 1 (due Mon., June 5)

Unit 2: Division, War & After the War

Lesson 5: The Korean War: A Civil War & an International War

- *Listen to or read* VT Presentation
- *Read* Michael ROBINSON, “Liberation, Civil War, and Division”
- *Take* Quiz 3 (due Mon., June 5)

Lesson 6: The War against the Civilian Population, Part 1: 1945–53

- *Listen to or read* VT Presentation
- *Read* Heonik KWON, “Korean War Traumas”
- *View* MOON Jeong-hyeon, *Grandmother’s Flower*, part 1
- *Take* Quiz 4 (due Wed., June 7)

Lesson 7: The War against the Civilian Population, Part 2: 1950s–on (195 min.)

- *Listen to or read* VT Presentation
- *View* MOON Jeong-hyeon, *Grandmother’s Flower*, part 2
- *Read* KIM Min-Suk, “Scarlet Fingernails”
- *Do* Analysis Exercise 3 (due Wed., June 7)

Lesson 8: Healing & Reconciliation

- *Listen to or read* VT Presentation
- *View* MOON Jeong-hyeon, *Grandmother’s Flower*, part 3
- *Read* KANG Sangjung, “Memories of a Zainichi Korean Childhood”
- *Do* Discussion Post 2 (due Fri., June 9)
- *Do* Peer Responses 2 (due Mon., June 12)

Unit 3: Cold War Korea

Lesson 9: Cold War Mirroring & Postwar North Korea

- *Listen to or read* VT Presentation
- *Read* Michael Robinson, “Going It Alone: The DPRK, 1953–present”
- *Take Quiz 5* (due Mon., June, 12)

Lesson 10: Postcolonial Nation Morality & South Korea’s Economic “Miracle”

- *Listen to or read* VT Presentation
- *Read* Michael Robinson, “Political & Economic Development in South Korea,” part 1
- *Take Quiz 6* (due Wed., June 14)

Lesson 11: South Korea’s *Minjung* Movement

- *Listen to or read* VT Presentation
- *Read* Michael Robinson, “Political & Economic Development in South Korea,” part 2
- *Read* Charles Kim, “Developmental Nationalism” & “*Minjung* Nationalism”
- *Read* “Founding Statement of the Youth Alliance of the Democratization Movement” (1983) & “Declaration of the Movements for Democracy, Reunification, and People” (1985)
- *Take Quiz 6* (due June 14)
- *Do Analysis Exercise 4* (due Wed., June 14)

Lesson 12: The *Minjung* Movement on Film – 1987

- *Listen to or read* VT Presentation
- *As background for the film, read* “The Death of Park Jong-cheol and the Concealment of Torture” & “The Unfolding of the June Uprising and the Presidential Election”
- *View* JANG Joon-Hwan (dir.), 1987: *When the Day Comes* (2017)
- *Read* “June 10 is a Day of Action” (1987) & “Founding Statement of the Nationwide League for the Movement of Nation and Democracy” (1989)
- *Do Discussion Post 3* (due Fri., June 16)
- *Do Peer Responses 3* (due Mon., June 19)

Unit 4: Global Koreas

Lesson 13: North Korea in the Global Era

- *Listen to or Read* VT Presentation
- *Read* excerpts from *Ask a North Korean*
- *Take Quiz 7* (due Mon., June 19)

Lesson 14: South Korea in the Global Era: A Tough Society

- *Listen to or Read* VT Presentation
- *Read* Youngmi KIM, “*Hell Joseon: Polarization and Social Contention in a Neo-liberal Age*”
- *View* TBD
- *Take Quiz 8* (due Wed., June 21)

Lesson 15: South Korea in the Global Era: Back to Community

- *Listen to or Read* VT Presentation
- *Read* TBD
- *View* TBD

Lesson 16: Reflective Nostalgia

- *Listen to or Read* VT Presentation
- *Read* TBD
- *View* TBD
- *Do Discussion Post 4* (due Fri., June 23)
- *Do Peer Responses 4* (due Sun., June 25)