

HIGR 214 – Historical Scholarship on Modern Korean History
Cold War “Korea” as Transnational History (Fall 2012)

Monday, 9:00-11:50 AM
Humanities and Social Sciences Rm. 3086

Instructor: Todd A. Henry, PhD

Email: tahenry@ucsd.edu

Office: Humanities and Social Sciences Rm. 3008

Office Hours: Monday, 1-3 PM, or by appointment

Course Description

Since the late nineteenth century, the Korean peninsula has, as Gregory Henderson once called it, served as a “vortex” of geopolitical rivalries that have left some of the most violent and alienating effects in modern history. Although the period of Japanese rule (1910-45), subsequent division (1945-48), and the “long” Korean War (1948-53) led to ethno-nationalist accounts emphasizing a collective sense of victimhood – often articulated under the rubric of *han*, or emotional suffering – Korea’s own position in the hot wars of the Asia-Pacific and beyond also hurled the southern half of the peninsula into what Jin-Kyung Lee has described as a “sub-empire.” Used by the north to assert its own program to promote what Suk-Young Kim has called an “illusive utopia,” this geo-political positioning produced equally violent reprisals against the capitalist bloc’s self-avowed enemies, such as North Vietnam. It also placed the country and its inhabitants in a dominant position vis-à-vis other regions, such as Southeast Asia, even as the US subordinated South Korea(ns) to its national, gendered, class, and racial interests.

This course will trace some of the most newly discussed analytics of the Cold War as they relate to “Korea,” such as race, sexuality, economy, militarization, diaspora, and adoption. We will extend our gaze beyond the geographical boundaries of the peninsula and its divided states to consider the ways in which post-colonial anti-communism/capitalism affected the lived realities of peoples whose fate was tied to the two Koreas. The class will thus serve as an intellectual forum for thinking about “Korea” – and, by extension, other regions – as transnational (and comparative) history. Through reading, writing, and speaking assignments (see “grading” below), class participants will be encouraged to push their thinking in these critical directions.

Grading

Attendance and active participation	22%
8 reaction papers (2-3 pages) and 1 in-class presentation (6% each)	48%
Final “think piece” (12-15 pages)	30%

Required Books

Grace M. Cho, *Haunting the Korean Diaspora: Shame, Secrecy, and the Forgotten War* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2008)

Ji-Yeon Yuh, *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown: Korean Military Brides in America* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2002)

Sealing Cheng, *On the Move for Love: Migrant Entertainers and the U.S. Military in South Korea* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010)

Eleana J. Kim, *Adopted Territory: Transnational Korean Adoptees and the Politics of Belonging* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010)

Suk-Young Kim, *Illusive Utopia: Theater, Film, and Everyday Performance in North Korea* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010)

Tessa Morris-Suzuki, *Exodus to North Korea: Shadows from Japan's Cold War* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2007)

Jin-Kyung Lee, *Service Economies: Militarism, Sex Work, and Migrant Labor in South Korea* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2010)

Theodore Q. Hughes, *Literature and Film in Cold War South Korea: Freedom's Frontier* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012)

Other readings are available on E-Reserves; please use the password "th214" to access them

Course Plan

Week 1 (Oct. 1) – Introduction and Framings

Distribute syllabus and explain course requirements

Kuan-Hsing Chen, *Asia as Method: Toward Deimperialization* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010): 1-16

Sestu Shigematsu and Keith L. Camacho, *Militarized Currents: Toward a Decolonized Future in Asia and the Pacific* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2010): xv-xlvii

Heonik Kwon, *The Other Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010): 1-36

Bruce Cummings, *Parallax Visions: Making Sense of American-East Asian Relations* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1999): 173-204

Naoki Sakai, "From Area Studies to Transnational Studies," *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 11:2 (2010): 265-74

Jodi Kim, "An 'Orphan' with Two Mothers: Transnational and Transracial Adoption, the Cold War, and Contemporary Asian American Cultural Politics," *American Quarterly* 61.4 (December 2009): 855-880

Week 2 (Oct. 8) – The Korean War and its Diasporic Aftereffects

Grace M. Cho, *Haunting the Korean Diaspora: Shame, Secrecy, and the Forgotten War* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2008)

Week 3 (Oct. 15) – Military Conduits (1): The US

Ji-Yeon Yuh, *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown: Korean Military Brides in America* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2002)

Week 4 (Oct. 22) – Military Conduits (2): The Philippines

Sealing Cheng, *On the Move for Love: Migrant Entertainers and the U.S. Military in South Korea* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010)

Week 5 (Oct. 29) – Transnational and Transracial Adoption

Eleana J. Kim, *Adopted Territory: Transnational Korean Adoptees and the Politics of Belonging* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010)

****Dr. Kim will visit seminar to discuss book, followed by lunch together****

****Dr. Kim will also be offering a lecture on new research (environment and the DMZ) from 4:30 to 6:00 PM in HSS 2150, followed by dinner****

Week 6 (Nov. 5) – North Korean Cultures

Suk-Young Kim, *Illusive Utopia: Theater, Film, and Everyday Performance in North Korea* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010)

Week 7 (Nov. 12) – Post-Colonial/Cold War “Repatriations”

No Class (Veterans Day); Read and submit (via email) reaction paper by end of class time

Tessa Morris-Suzuki, *Exodus to North Korea: Shadows from Japan's Cold War* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2007)

Week 8 (Nov. 19) – South Korea as Sub-empire

Jin-Kyung Lee, *Service Economies: Militarism, Sex Work, and Migrant Labor in South Korea* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2010)

Week 9 (Nov. 26) – Literary and Filmic Formations

Theodore Q. Hughes, *Literature and Film in Cold War South Korea: Freedom's Frontier* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012)

Week 10 (Dec. 3) – Paper Projects

Final “think piece” proposal with annotated bibliography due for individual meetings

Exam Week

Submit final “think piece” at quarter-end party