Ethnographies of Korea – YISS 2016
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Description:

In the last twenty years, anthropologists of the Koreas have developed a significant volume of ethnographic study on a wide range of topics. Providing insight into the social and cultural aspects of everyday life, this literature addresses the historical, economic and political issues which have defined modern Korean society and nationhood. This course revolves around four texts: three ethnographies (N Kim, Abelmann and Song) and one history with a strong ethnographic sensibility (S Kim). It is far from a comprehensive survey of Korea. Rather, it deals with major themes across distinctive historical periods such as anticolonial nationalism before the War (1950-53), North-South relations post-1990, labor movements and democratization (1960s-1990s), and neoliberal crises of social welfare (1997-present).

This course is reading-intensive and requires interactive groupwork. Students are highly encouraged to consider assigned readings in relation to current affairs, debates and sites in the Koreas today.

Texts:

The course reader is available for purchase at the YISS bookstore.

Requirements:

Attendance is mandatory. You are expected to read the assigned chapters/ articles listed for a lecture date prior to class so you can participate fully in discussion. Participation means active engagement in course discussion. Come prepared with comments and questions based on the readings.

- Participation 25%
- Midterm Exam 20%
- Group Presentations 30%
- Final Exam 25%

Rules:

1. Bring the readings to class. No electronic devices permitted during class, even for note taking. Please turn off all computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices.
2. Come prepared to discuss and actively participate. If you miss class repeatedly because of a personal situation, notify me.
3. Cite the bibliographic sources of any phrases, sentences, or ideas that appear in your work. If you use the words of another person without proper attribution, that is plagiarism. Any plagiarism or cheating will automatically result in a failing grade.

Schedule:

**Week One: Studying Korea Through Ethnography**

June 28  
Overview

June 29  
"Ethnography: Theory and Methods." In A Handbook for Social Science Field Research, Alma Gottlieb

June 30  
"Korea in the World." In Two Koreas, Charles Armstrong

**Week Two: Anticolonial Nationalism**

July 4  
"North Korea and 'Socialism of our Style.'" In Ethnic Nationalism in Korea, Gi-wook Shin

July 5  
"Introduction" and "Revolutions in the Everyday." In Everyday Life in the North Korean Revolution, Suzy Kim

July 6  
"The Collective." In Everyday Life in the North Korean Revolution, Suzy Kim

July 7  
"The Game of their Lives" (2005), dir. David Anspaugh

**Week Three: War and Division**

July 11  
"Introduction" and "Another War." In A Social History of the Korean War, Dong Choon Kim

July 12  
"Fateful Passages, In-Between States." In Memory, Reconciliation and Reunions in South Korea, Nan Kim

July 13
"Threshold Rituals of Reconciliation." In Memory, Reconciliation and Reunions in South Korea, Nan Kim

July 14
Midterm

**Week Four: Social Movements, Democratization**

July 18
"The Democratic Movement, 1960-1996." In Korea’s Place in the Sun, Bruce Cumings
"Tear Gas." In Buja's Diary, O, Seyeong

July 19
"The Minjung Imaginary." In Echoes of the Past, Epics of the Dissent, Nancy Abelmann

July 20
"The Practices of Protests." In Echoes of the Past, Epics of the Dissent, Nancy Abelmann

July 21
Groupwork

**Week Five: Economy and Neoliberal Welfare**

July 25
"The Crash: Timeline of the Panic." Frontline PBS
"Introduction." In South Koreans in the Debt Crisis, Jesook Song

July 26
"Seoul Train Station Square." In South Koreans in the Debt Crisis, Jesook Song

July 27
"Youth as Neoliberal Subjects." In South Koreans in the Debt Crisis, Jesook Song

July 28
Group Presentations

**Week Six: Studying Global Education**

Aug 1
"Domestication of Pre-College Study Abroad," Jiyeon Kang and Nancy Abelmann

Aug 2
"Intrinsic and Extrinsic Cosmopolitanisms: Fathers and Daughters Vie for Control Over Early Study Abroad," Vivien Chung and Nancy Abelmman
"Class and Cosmopolitan Striving: Mothers' Management of English Education in South Korea," So Jin Park and Nancy Abelmann
Aug 3
Course Wrap-up and Review

Aug 4
Final Exam