

Korean Literature and Performance: from P'ansori to K-Pop

ASIAN 3314 / ASIAN 6614 / COML 3314 / COML 6314
Fall 2022

Instructor: Ivanna Sang Een Yi (isy4@cornell.edu)
Time, modality, and location: Mondays and Wednesdays, 1-2:15pm
In person at Clark Hall 294D
Office hours: Wednesdays, 3-5pm EDT and by appointment



This course examines Korean literature and performance traditions from the Chosŏn dynasty (1392-1910) to the present. Through performance workshops, the course enables students to experience how Korean epic and lyric traditions were performed in the past and how they continue to flourish in the present across various media, including recorded music, written texts, and film. We will examine how Korean literature and performance traditions have transformed over time, with attention given to how these traditions speak to local and global audiences following the Korean Wave. The course concludes with recent developments in Korean popular music, including K-pop bands and K-hip-hop. Readings for the course will be in English or in English translation and no prior knowledge of Korean culture is necessary.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Introducing students to Korean literature and performance traditions from the Chosŏn period to the present through an interdisciplinary lens, giving a four-dimensional understanding of how Korean performance traditions work through live and recorded music, written text, and film
2. As the course places a focus on the performativity of Korean literature and the interactions of the voice with the written, students will learn how to embody epic and lyric forms through workshops led by the instructor on singing *p'ansori* and *sijo*, as well as through writing their own poetry using Korean verse forms.
3. Developing students' abilities to think comparatively across cultures and disciplines
4. Building students' critical abilities to experience, appreciate, and analyze Korean literature across different media
5. Enabling students to make connections between forms of Korean literature as they were performed in the past and as they have transformed across time, both in Korea and in the larger global community
6. Inviting students to participate in the flourishing and continuation of Korean literary forms through their own performances and creative compositions

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. Han Kang, *The Vegetarian*. Translated by Deborah Smith. New York: Hogarth, 2016. (Available at the Cornell Store, on physical reserve at Uris Library and online with your net ID via the Cornell library catalog: <https://newcatalog.library.cornell.edu/catalog/11121703>)
2. Cho Nam-Joo, *Kim Jiyoung, Born 1982*. Translated by Jamie Chang. New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2021. (Available at the Cornell Store and on physical reserve at Uris Library)
3. All other readings will be posted as PDFs on the course website under "Files." For a reading assigned in Week 1, see the "Week 1" folder for the PDFs.
4. Films: Assigned films will be available electronically through Canvas.
 - *Sopyonje* (dir. Im Kwon Taek, 2000)
 - *Mother* (dir. Bong Joon-ho, 2009)

- *Chunhyang* (dir. Im Kwon Taek, 2000)
- *Kim Ji-young: Born 1982* (dir. Kim Do-young, 2019)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Participation and discussion: 10%

Every voice in our group matters. Your participation is valued and will count towards your final grade. You will be expected to come to class having completed the assigned texts. Bring your questions, thoughts and ideas to the class discussion. If you anticipate or experience difficulty speaking up in class, please be in touch with me for suggestions. If you become ill during the semester and need to be absent multiple times, be sure to let me know by email as early as possible.

Two absences during the semester will not be penalized. Any further absences due to illness or extenuating circumstances must have written documentation in order to be counted as excused. More than two unexcused absences will result in a penalty of 2 points per absence from your attendance and participation grade. Being late to class three times will count as one unexcused absence. Be sure to sign in on the sign in sheet when you come to class, it is your responsibility to sign in. Attendance will be taken each class and your grade will be updated once at the middle of the semester and also during the finals period.

2. Weekly Discussion Post: 30% (10 posts total, 3% for each post)

The weekly discussion posts are intended to help you engage more fully with the assigned texts and to facilitate an intellectual community where we share ideas and learn from each other with constructive feedback. For your discussion posts, engage with the literary and musical texts by indicating what ideas and language were compelling to you, what questions they raise, and how you or other authors and artists we have encountered in the class might respond to those questions. For your response posts, choose a discussion post from one of your classmates to respond to. What did you learn or find most interesting about their post? What resonated with you, and are there ways that your classmate could take those ideas even further? You might also respectfully disagree with your classmate, sharing your thoughts on any commonalities between your perspectives and also where your thinking diverges.

You will choose 10 times to post between weeks 2-15 (14 possible weeks to participate). Seven of these posts will be your own response to the assigned texts, and for three of your posts, choose a classmate's post to respond to. Please choose three different classmates to respond to during the semester. Each of your discussion and response posts will receive up to 3 points. Your discussion posts (approx. 250-300 words) are due on **Sunday by 5pm** in the online discussion forum on Canvas. Response posts (same length) are due on Sunday by midnight. Feel free to submit your post early. To give everyone sufficient time to review the discussion forum before class, late posts will not be accepted for credit.

3. Group Performance or Presentation: 20%

Each student will give a short performance or presentation arising from one of the performance traditions discussed in class. You may work individually or in groups of up to 4

members. The performance may be “traditional” or a contemporary interpretation incorporating a Korean traditional art form. Any medium is welcome, including live performance, video/film, and recorded music. For both the performance and presentation options, students will be expected to conduct and reference research outside of class. You will submit either a written script of your presentation or an artist statement following your performance or presentation.

4. Original Poetry Portfolio (5 poems): 10%

Your poetry portfolio will include original poems written in English, Korean, or other foreign languages (accompanied by English translations) based on traditional Korean verse forms. We will workshop your work as a group during the semester. A minimum of five poems must be your original work. **Poetry Portfolio Due by 11:59pm on Sunday, Oct. 16th in the Canvas folder.**

5. Final paper (8-10 pages for undergraduates, 15-20 pages for graduate students): 30%
(5% for paper topic and bibliography, 25% for final paper)

In your final paper, investigate how contemporary practices of Korean performance and/or written literature connect with traditional forms originating before the 20th century. How has the traditional form(s) you have chosen evolved over time, and how do you interpret its creative manifestations in the present? If you have a different question or idea you would like to pursue for your final paper, meet with Prof. Yi in office hours for discussion prior to submitting the paper topic. **Paper topic and bibliography due Sunday, Nov. 13 by 11:59 pm in the Canvas folder.** The due date for the final paper will be scheduled by the registrar.

COURSE POLICIES

Inclusion

This class is committed to fostering an inclusive environment that welcomes and supports students of every background. Discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated, including, but not limited to, gender, race, socioeconomic status, disability, age, ancestry, and religion. We are all responsible for creating and maintaining an inclusive community in our class where everyone is able to participate equally. Please be in touch with me if you have any concerns in this area, or if I can help support you to contribute to our class more fully.

Academic Integrity

For all assignments, take care to prepare and submit your own original work. Plagiarism (taking someone else’s work or ideas without giving proper credit, assuming authorship for work that is not your own) is unacceptable and any such work will be given a numerical grade of zero. All students are required to follow university guidelines concerning academic integrity.

Review the University’s guidelines on Academic Integrity here:

<http://theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/dean/the-rules/academic-integrity>

If you have not yet done so, please take Cornell’s online tutorial on plagiarism:

<https://plagiarism.arts.cornell.edu/tutorial/index.cfm>

If you have any questions on plagiarism, feel free to contact me.

Citations

Citations for assignments in this course should be in MLA or Chicago Manual of Style format, your choice. See links on the course website for further information and examples.

Covid-19 Guidance

As we continue to navigate the Covid-19 pandemic, this class seeks to be a space where you feel safe as a member of the classroom community. To protect the vulnerable in our class, please wear a well-fitting and high quality mask whenever you are in the classroom. Cornell provides free masks to all campus community members.

This course meets in person. In the case that we need to shift our class online for a course meeting due to Covid-19 isolation, you will receive a Canvas announcement with instructions.

Devices

Computers, laptops, and tablet computers may be used during class for participating in Zoom, note-taking purposes, and reading PDF files assigned for the course. Cell phones may not be used during class; please turn them off or put them on silent before entering class. If there is an academic reason for using your cell phone, please consult with me in advance. Checking email, social media, or other messages on devices during class is not permitted. Use of devices for reasons not related to the course will detract from your participation grade.

Office Hours and Communication

Prof. Yi's office hours will be held every week on Wednesdays from 3-5pm and by appointment.

I encourage you to meet with me to discuss the course material, your interests in Korean Studies, or any questions or issues that may arise throughout the course. If you would like to meet with me, feel free to sign up for a time via Google docs. If you are unavailable during office hours, email me to set up an appointment at another time.

Class rosters provide each student's legal name. If you have an alternate name or gender pronoun by which you would like to be addressed, let me know early in the semester so I can honor your request.

Email

Outside of office hours, the best way to reach me is by email. I aim to answer email within 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours during the weekend.

Extensions

As a general rule, extensions will not be given on assignments in this course. However, if you have a medical reason or can demonstrate extenuating circumstances, contact me by email at least 72 hours in advance of the deadline for consideration. Late work will be lowered by one letter grade per day (A to A-, etc.).

Religious Observances

If you have a conflict with attendance or an assignment because of religious observances, notify me at least two weeks before your religious obligations so that accommodations can be made. See Cornell's policy here: <https://scl.cornell.edu/identity-resources/office-spirituality-and-meaning-making/resources/religious-observance-accommodations>

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability and require academic accommodations, be sure to submit your letter from the Student Disability Services (SDS) office to me by the end of the second week of classes so I can respond in a timely manner. Feel free to meet with me in office hours to discuss your specific needs; these discussions will remain confidential.

For more information on Student Disability Services and to request accommodations, see <https://sds.cornell.edu/>. To request accommodations, contact Disability Services by email at sds_cu@cornell.edu or by phone at 607-254-4545. For temporary medical conditions or injuries, see guidelines at <https://sds.cornell.edu/get-started/what-do-if-you-are-injured>.

University Policy: Together with all the members of the Asian Studies Department, I respect and uphold University policies and regulations pertaining to racial or ethnic discrimination, sexual harassment, assistance available to handicapped, visually and/or hearing impaired students, the observation of religious holidays, and plagiarism. All students are advised to become familiar with the respective University regulations and are encouraged to bring any questions or concerns to my attention.

RESOURCES

Library

For a concise guide to library resources on Korean Studies, including e-resources, visit: <https://guides.library.cornell.edu/koreanstudies/home>

The Korean Studies Librarian, You Lee Chun, is available to help you with research and to connect you with library resources. You can schedule an online meeting with her by email (yc935@cornell.edu). For more resources and to chat with a librarian, see <https://www.library.cornell.edu/ask>

Writing

The Cornell Writing Centers offer students the opportunity to work one-on-one with writing tutors for free. The Center offers assistance at all stages of the writing process, from brainstorming through revision. For more information on services, see their introduction video at: <https://youtu.be/NwBtY1W7i7k>. If you would like to work on strengthening your writing, I encourage you to make an appointment with the Writing Center: <https://knight.as.cornell.edu/wc>

Mental Health

Cornell Health offers free confidential individual and group counseling, as well as other mental health services, for Cornell students. Counseling can help address a range of concerns such as stress, anxiety, depression, body image, relationships, and more. Drop-in consultations are also

available and appointments are currently conducted through online video appointments. For more information, visit: <https://health.cornell.edu/services/mental-health-care>

COURSE READINGS AND SCHEDULE

****The following schedule may be modified during the semester. Stay tuned for announcements made in class, and check the syllabus on the front page of our Canvas course website for the most current version of the schedule. It is your responsibility to keep up to date with announcements and changes to the schedule.****

Week 1, August 22, 24: Introduction to Korean Performance Traditions

M: Course Overview and Introductions

Overview of major themes of the course and discussion of course requirements

W: P'ansori and Contemporary Korean Cinema

- Im Kwon Taek, Dir., *Sopyonje*. Taehung Pictures, 1993. Watch before class in Library Reserves on the course website.
- Cho Hae-Joang. 'Sopyonje: Its Cultural and Historical Meaning,' in David E. James and Kyung Hyun Kim, Eds. *Im Kwon-Taek: The Making of a Korean National Cinema*, Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002. pp. 134-56.

Week 2, August 29, 31: Epic Heroines: Ch'unhyang and Sim Ch'öng

M: *The Song of Sim Ch'öng* (심청가)

- Marshall Pihl, *The Korean Singer of Tales*. Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies: Distributed by Harvard University Press, 1994. pp. 124-233.
- [Excerpt from The Song of Sim Ch'öng](#) (at the end, where Sim Ch'öng's father opens his eyes, seeing his daughter again)

W: *The Song of Ch'unhyang* (춘향가)

- *Chunhyangga, Kim Sohui Version*. Yu Sŭng et al., Seoul: Minsokwŏn, 2005. pp. 353-447.
- [Kim Sohui \(김소희\) singing "The Song of Separation" \(이별가\)](#) from *The Song of Ch'unhyang*

Week 3, Sept. 5, 7: Contemporary P'ansori Performance

M: LABOR DAY (no classes)

W: Waterfall Fieldwork, P'ansori Workshop

This class will include a workshop on *p'ansori* singing. We will learn to sing an excerpt from *The Song of Ch'unhyang*. This class will include a visit to Triphammer Falls, where we will sing the "Song of Separation."

- Chan E. Park, "Acquiring Sori" and "Narrating the Interior" in *Voices From the Straw Mat: Toward an Ethnography of Korean Story Singing*. University of Hawaii Press, 2003. pp. 155-213.
- Ivanna Yi, "Continuing Orality in Korean Literature: Opening a P'an for the Page," in Heekyoung Cho, ed., *Routledge Companion to Korean Literature*. London and N.Y.: Routledge, 2022. 371-382.

Week 4, Sept. 12, 14: Lady Hyegyŏng and the Reinvention of the Memoir Genre

Monday

- Hyegyŏnggung, Hong Ssi. Translated by JaHyun Kim Haboush. *The Memoirs of Lady Hyegyong: The Autobiographical Writings of a Crown Princess of Eighteenth Century Korea*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996. pp.197-239.

Wednesday

- Jahyun Kim Haboush, "Private Memory and Public History." In *Creative Women of Korea: The Fifteenth through the Twentieth Centuries*, edited by Young-Key Kim-Renaud. Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2004. pp. 122-141.
- Hyegyŏnggung, Hong Ssi. Translated by JaHyun Kim Haboush. *The Memoirs of Lady Hyegyong: The Autobiographical Writings of a Crown Princess of Eighteenth Century Korea*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996. pp.1-35

Week 5, Sept. 19, 21: Kasa and the Lyric Poetry Tradition

M: Early Kasa

- Chŏng Ch'ŏl, "The Wanderings," "Hymn of Constancy," "Little Odes on Mount Star"; Hŏ Nansŏrhon, "A Woman's Sorrow," in Peter Lee, *Anthology of Korean Literature From Early Times to the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 104-116.
- Wiebke Denecke, "Shared Literary Heritage in the East Asian Sinographic Sphere," in *The Oxford Handbook of Classical Chinese Literature*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017. pp. 510-530.

W: Transformations of Kasa

- Bruce Fulton and Ju-Chan Fulton, "Three Early-Modern Kasa." *Acta Koreana*, Vol. 20, No. 1, June 2017. pp. 307-314.
- Boudewijn Walraven, "Kasa, Communication, and Public Opinion," in *Journal of Korean Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 1, Spring 2015. pp. 201-228.

Week 6, Sept. 26, 28: Sijo Poems as World Literature

M: Writers of Sijo

- David McCann, *Early Korean Literature: Selections and Introductions*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000. pp. 47-57.
- Constantine Contogenis and Wolhee Choe, Trans. *Songs of the Kisaeng: Courtesan Poetry of the Last Korean Dynasty*. Rochester, NY: BOA Editions, 1997. pp. 25-77.

W: Contemporary Sijo Performance

This class will include a workshop on sijo singing and writing. You will learn to sing Hwang Jini's *sijo* "Blue Stream" and we will discuss how breath informs the poetic form on the page. The last half hour of class will be a workshop on sijo writing in English.

- Ivanna Yi, "River and Other Sijo Poems: Translations of Contemporary Sijo," *Azalea: Journal of Korean Literature & Culture* 4 (2011), 193-204.
- [Contemporary Performance by Byun Jin-Sim](#) (변진심)

Week 7, Oct. 3, 5: Folk Songs and Modern Korean Poetry

Monday

- Kim Sowŏl, *Azaleas*. Translated by David McCann. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007. pp. 1-40.
- Wayne de Fremery, "Kim Sowŏl's Chindallaekkot (Azaleas) as an Immersive Environment." *Acta Koreana*, Vol. 17, No.1, 2014. pp. 5-27.

Wednesday

- Peter Lee, Ed. *Echoing Song: Contemporary Korean Women Poets*. Buffalo, NY: White Pine Press, 2005. pp. 118-134; 183-200
- Ch'oe Sungja, Kim Hyesun, and Yi Yonju. Translated by Don Mee Choi. *Anxiety of Words: Contemporary Poetry by Korean Women*. Zephyr Press, 2006.

Week 8, Oct. 10, 12: Recording Technology and Transformations of Korean Drama

Monday

FALL BREAK and Indigenous Peoples' Day (no class)

Wednesday

- Michael Robinson, "Broadcasting, Cultural Hegemony, and Colonial Modernity in Korea, 1924-1945." In Gi-Wook Shin and Michael Robinson, eds., *Colonial Modernity in Korea*, Harvard University Press, 1999. pp. 52-69.

- Haekyung Um, *Korean Musical Drama: P'ansori and the Making of Tradition in Modernity*. Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2013. pp.33-56, 123-150.

****Poetry Portfolio Due Sunday, Oct. 16th by 11:59pm on in the Canvas folder.**

Week 9, Oct. 17, 19: Performing Dissidence During the Park Chung Hee Era

M: Kim Chi-Ha's "Five Bandits"

- Kim Chi-Ha, "Five Bandits," in *The Colors of Dawn: Twentieth Century Korean Poetry*. Brother Anthony of Taize and Frank Stewart, Eds. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2015. pp. 94-104.
- Youngju Ryu, "On Trial: Kim Chi-ha's Bandits," in *Writers of the Winter Republic*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2015.

W: Percussion and the Sounds of Dissent

- Katherine In-Young Lee, "The Drumming of Dissent during South Korea's Democratization Movement." *Ethnomusicology* 56, no. 2 (2012): 179-205.
- Namhee Lee, "Introduction" from *The Making of Minjung: Democracy and the Politics of Representation in South Korea* (Cornell University Press, 2011), 1-20.

Week 10, Oct. 24, 26: The Anti-heroine in Korean New Wave Cinema

M: Chunhyang, Reinterpreted

- Im Kwon Taek, Dir., *Chunhyang*. Taehung Pictures, 2000. Film. Watch before class in Library Reserves on the course website.
- Hyangjin Lee, "Chunhyang: Marketing an Old Tradition in New Korean Cinema." In Chi-Yun Shin and Julian Stringer (eds), *New Korean Cinema*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005. pp. 63-78.

W: Unraveling the Mother Archetype

- Bong Joon-ho, Dir., *Mother*. CJ Entertainment, 2009. Film. Watch before class in Library Reserves on the course website.
- Michelle Cho, "Face Value: The Star as Genre in Bong Joon-ho's *Mother*." In *The Korean Popular Culture Reader*, edited by Kyung Hyun Kim and Youngmin Choe. Duke University Press, 2013.

Week 11, Oct. 31, Nov. 2: Voice, Gender, and the Global Korean Novel

M: Han Kang's *The Vegetarian*

- Han Kang, *The Vegetarian*. Translated by Deborah Smith. New York: Hogarth, 2016. pp. 1-96.
- Han Kang interview in *World Literature Today*, May 2016.

<https://www.worldliteraturetoday.org/2016/may/violence-and-being-human-conversation-han-kang-krys-lee>

W: *The Vegetarian* continued

- Han Kang, *The Vegetarian*. Translated by Deborah Smith. New York: Hogarth, 2016. pp. 97-188.

Week 12, Nov. 7, 9: Voice, Gender, and the Global Korean Novel II

M: Cho Nam-Joo's *Kim Ji-young, Born 1982*

- Cho Nam-Joo, *Kim Jiyoung, Born 1982*. Translated by Jamie Chang. New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2021.

W: Kim Ji-young on Screen

- *Kim Ji-young: Born 1982* (dir. Kim Bo-young, 2019). Watch before class in Library Reserves on the course website.

****Paper topic and bibliography due Sunday, Nov. 13 by 11:59 pm in the Canvas folder**

Week 13, Nov. 14, 16: K-pop and the Korean Wave

Monday

- “Emerging New Wave: Transnational Hallyu,” in *Transnational Hallyu*, pp. 5-23.
- Kwon Hyunseok, “Korean Pop Music and Korean Identities: A Political-Cultural History of Korean Pop Music and Its Use of Traditional Korean Musical Elements,” in *Made In Korea: Studies in Popular Music*, edited by Hyunjoon Shin and Seung-Ah Lee (New York: Routledge Press, 2016), 157-167.
- [“Gangnam Style”](#) by PSY, [“I’m Your Girl”](#) by S.E.S.; [“Candy”](#) by H.O.T.

Wednesday

- Kent Ono and Kwon Jungmin, “Re-worlding Culture?: YouTube as a K-pop Interlocutor,” in *The Korean Wave: Korean Media Go Global*, edited by Youna Kim. New York: Routledge, 2013.
- [“Save Me,”](#) by BTS, [“SOJU ft. 2 Chainz”](#) by Jay Park, [“It G Ma”](#) by Keith Ape available through YouTube links on course website

Week 14, Nov. 21, 23: K-Hip Hop and Rap

Monday

- Um Haekyung, “The Poetics of Resistance and the Politics of Crossing Borders: Korean Hiphop and ‘Cultural Reterritorialisation’.” *Popular Music* 32, no. 1 (2013): 51-64.
- Myoung-Sun Song, “The S(e)oul of Hip-Hop: Locating Space and Identity in Korean Rap,” in *The Korean Wave: Korean Popular Culture in Global Context*. New York:

Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. pp. 134-146.

- “[Come Back Home](#)” by Seo Taeji; “[Hangover](#),” PSY featuring Snoop Dogg, “[We Are](#)” by Woo Won Jae; “[Who Dat B](#)” by Jessi, [Changmo](#) on Killing Verse

W: Thanksgiving Break (no classes)

Week 15, Nov. 28, 30: Virtual Communities

M: Gaming in Contemporary Fiction

- Park Mingyu, “Racoon World,” in *Azalea: Journal of Korean Literature and Culture* 1 (2007), 193-214.

W: Performances and presentations

Week 16, Dec. 5: Performances and Presentations

M: Performances and presentations, concluding discussion

****Final Paper due date scheduled by the registrar**