**\*Note: Theme headings are permanent. Specific readings are subject to change after confirmation of student enrollment.**

**Hallyu:**

**Korean Film, Music, and Pop Culture**

FILM S339 / EALL S226

**Meeting Times:** T, Th 1:00-4:15pm; Session B (July 4 - August 5)

**Screening Time:** Wednesday (time and location TBD) –

double-feature screening of various visual media

**Instructor:** Eugene Kwon

**Email**: [eugene.kwon@yale.edu](mailto:eugene.kwon@yale.edu)

**Office Hours:** by appointment

**Course Description:**

This reading-intensive course takes on a comparative and global perspective in approaching the phenomenon of Hallyu, or the Korean Cultural Wave. Rather than proceeding each week by covering a specific medium (music, movies, games), we proceed with specific themes tied to questions. In approaching Hallyu, we first interrogate some of the most basic concepts related to it. What is culture, and what is media? What does it mean to study ‘East Asia’ or ‘Hallyu’ at from afar? Rather than ‘studying’ either of these constructs (‘East Asia,’ ‘Hallyu’) as a cluster of nation-states or a reified cultural terrain to be mastered—both of which reflect a Cold War legacy that has become problematized—we will approach them as nodes through which we interrogate urgent problems of representation, globalization, capitalism, and nationalism. Throughout the course, we learn a variety of critical tools for understanding Hallyu from a variety of perspectives—aesthetics, historical, sociological, and anthropological. In tandem with our theoretical discussion, we closely look at various cultural instantiations in cinema, TV shows, music, games, and literature. Familiarity or fluency in an East Asian language is not required. Students who are fluent in Korean are encouraged to read in the original language, especially the two novels included in the course.

Prospective students should email the instructor ([eugene.kwon@yale.edu](mailto:eugene.kwon@yale.edu)) as soon as possible—by no later than May 31—with basic background information that includes the following: (1) institutional affiliation, (2) reason for taking the course and main interests, (3) familiarity with academic reading and writing, (4) familiarity with Korean culture and history/language background, and (5) goals for the course.

**Format:**

Seminars and in-class presentations will take place in-person.

There is a double-feature screening every Wednesday which is **mandatory**.

All required readings and PowerPoint slides and film clips will be available on Canvas.

**\* Important note: As an instructor, I take seriously the sense of *communitas* in class. Hence, laptop and electronic devices will be strictly forbidden without exception. This may be a significant challenge for quite a few of you as the course meets for three hours twice a week. That being said, numerous studies suggest that our everyday technologies reduce our attention span and distract others. Distraction is like a virus—once one person begins it, others become affected by it. The pandemic era has unsettled many of our lives, and an in-person class is a privilege, an opportunity that should not be wasted. Our general rule will be to rely on physical notetaking, mutual eye-contact, and discussion. All reading material must be printed and brought to class.**

**Requirements & Grading:**

Attendance & Participation: 20%

Discussion Posts: 10%

Presentations: 20%  
Midterm Assignment: 20%  
Final Paper / Film Essay: 30%

***Assignments must be submitted by the due date. All late papers without legitimate excuse will be marked down ½ of a letter grade for each successive day they are not received (i.e. a paper submitted 2 days late goes from an A- to a B).***

**1) Attendance & Participation:**Attendance is not only mandatory but crucial for this course. With only ten sessions, one excused absence will lead to a failing grade. (There are exceptions to this, including family emergency and sickness).

If a student cannot attend a particular session due to an emergency or serious illness, the student should let the instructor know ahead of time. A student who, in the opinion of the instructor and the Dean of Summer Session, has been absent from a course to an excessive degree and without excuse may at any time be placed on Cut Restriction in that course or in all courses. A student on Cut Restriction who continues to be absent from a course may be excluded from it without credit.

Canvas discussion posts: In preparation for each class, you will prepare a 300-word annotation of a selected text and two questions for all of us to think about. The annotation and questions should be posted on that session’s discussion page on Canvas *by 9pm EDT on the previous day.* This activity will keep you engaged with the readings throughout the course and help you with the final project.

**2) Presentations:**Alone or in pairs, students will be required to give **two** in-class presentations. If working with a partner, please collaborate outside of class to plan your presentation. Each student is expected to speak for 10 minutes per presentation. ONE OF THE PRESENTATIONS MUST BE COMPLETED BY SESSION 5. In other words, one presentation each for first-half and second-half of the course.

**One** will be a presentation on an assigned reading. This should include the following components: (a) the question the book/article answers (b) a keyword or concept with a concise definition (c) sources and methodologies (d) your response to / criticism of the reading (e) one discussion question for the class.

**Another** will be a presentation on an assigned media text in the course (novel, film, TV shows, etc). This should include the following components: (a) background of your chosen text, historical context (b) clips or passages from your chosen text (c) connection between the text and the theoretical concepts explored in class and (d) questions posed for the class.

**3) Midterm Assignment – Close Analysis (5 pages) – Submit on Canvas:**For the midterm assignment, students will engage in a close analysis of one of the following films or novels:

**(1) *Swiri,* (2) *Peppermint Candy*, (3) *Kim Ji Young Born in 1982*, or (4) *Human Acts*.**

For those who are new to close analysis of either film or literature, I will provide you with resources to help you with the process.

DUE: SESSION 5 during WEEK 3.

**4) Final Project (8-10 pages) - Submit on Canvas:**

Students are encouraged to meet with the instructor to discuss possible topics **as early as possible**. I cannot emphasize this last part more.

You have two options:

1. a final academic research paper
2. film essay

(1) Students will write 8-10 pages on a selected theme from the syllabus. The paper must present an original argument that touches upon a question raised in the class. I will devote part of a session in Week 1 or 2 to cover some of the basic principles of academic writing (this will depend upon everyone’s background).

(2) What exactly is a film essay? For a solid example, please see the following video by **Kogonada** (director of *Pachinko* along with Justin Chon): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t1FR_SEOm9U>

You’ll need to have editing skills to choose this option (Final Cut Pro, Adobe). Students will make a cogent video that makes an argument concerning a concept or media text explored in the class. This is not an ‘easy’ alternative to the paper option as editing takes a copious amount of time. The film essay must be accompanied by a 5 page text with a bibliography.

**Academic Integrity Statement**

My version: In short, no plagiarism. What is plagiarism? Citing, wittingly or unwittingly, any outside information and owning it as your own. This means that you need to learn proper citation (MLA or Chicago Style). Learn how to do this before the class begins so that you’ll have time to focus on the class material.

The official version (take a breath here): Academic integrity and honesty are central components of a student's education, and the strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. Plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be treated lightly. You must document all of your source material. If you take any text from somebody else, you must make it clear the text is being quoted and where the text comes from. You must also cite any sources from which you obtain numbers, ideas, or other material. If you have any questions about what does or does not constitute plagiarism, ask! Yale punishes academic dishonesty severely. The most common penalty is suspension from the university, but students caught plagiarizing are also subject to lowered or failing grades as well as the possibility of expulsion. Please be sure to review [Yale’s Academic Integrity Policy](http://catalog.yale.edu/undergraduate-regulations/policies/definitions-plagiarism-cheating/): <http://catalog.yale.edu/undergraduate-regulations/policies/definitions-plagiarism-cheating/>

**Week 1:**

**Hallyu as a Cultural Industry:**

**Or How to Sell the Brand of Korea to the World**

**Session 1: The History of Modern Korea and the Origin of Hallyu**

READING:

1. Introduction from *Hallyu 2.0: The Korean Wave in the Age of Social Media* 1-30.
2. Williams, Raymond. *Culture and Society*. Conclusion.
3. Hall, Stuart. “Encoding/Decoding.” *Culture, Media, and Language*. 128-138.
4. Jain, Karji. “media.” <http://tif.ssrc.org/2020/02/14/media-jain/>

CLIPS:

*Winter Sonata* (겨울연가), *Parasite* (기생충)

SCREENING: The blockbuster and the art-cinema.

* *Swiri.* (쉬리 Kang Je-gyu, 1999)
* *Peppermint Candy*. (박하사탕 Lee Chang-dong, 1999)

**Session 2: Hallyu as a cultural industry within a global context**

If Hallyu is a cultural industry, how does it function? What is it ‘selling’ to the world? What is the role of the state and globalization in its sprawling manifestation? And how does globalization and its logic of pluralism give birth to ethnocentrism?

READING:

1. Hardt, Michael and Antonio Negri. *Empire.* Excerpt.
2. Harvey, David. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*.
3. Choi, Jung-bong. Chapters 1 from *Hallyu 2.0: The Korean Wave in the Age of Social Media* 31-52.
4. Oh, Youjeong**.** “Image Producers.” *Pop City: Korean Popular Culture and the Selling of Place*. Cornell University Press, 2018.
5. Cwiertka, Katarzyna. “The Global *Hansik* Campaign and the Commodification of Korean Cuisine.” *The Korean Popular Culture Reader*. Duke University Press, 2014. 363-385.

CLIPS:

* *Babel* (Alejandro Gonzales Innaritu, 2006).

RECOMMENDED:

1. Said, Edward. *Orientalism*.

**Week 2:**

**Gender Trouble/Violence and Historical Trauma**

**Session 3: Feminism in South Korea**

Cho Nam-Ju’s novel *Kim Ji-young Born in 1982* sparked a controversy with its publication. The novel, which also became popular in Japan, sparked a debate about (Korean) ‘feminism.’ How does the novel and the film approach the issue of feminism in South Korea? What was the reception of this novel across East Asia, South Korea and Japan in particular?

READING:

1. *Kim Ji-young Born in 1982* (1982년생 김지영 Cho Nam-ju, 2016).
2. “In This Korean Best Seller, A Young Mother Is Driven to Psychosis.” (New York Times) <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/14/books/review/kim-jiyoung-born-1982-cho-nam-joo.html>

SCREENING:

* *Kim Ji-young Born in 1982* (82년생 김지영 Kim Do-young, 2019)
* *Bloodless* and *Tearless* (동두천, 소요산 Gina Kim) – VR Films with Oculus 2

**Session 4: Representing Historical Trauma**

**Guest Speaker- Gina Kim (UCLA) via Zoom**

Often at the fringe of Hallyu, a whole host of artworks attempt to deal with the unrepresentable—the historical trauma of South Korea’s modern history, the issue of the comfort women, and the marginalization of minorities. What ethical issues do these artworks confront? How do they approach individual and collective trauma?

READING:

1. *Human Acts* (소년이 온다Han Kang, 2014)
2. Henry, Todd. *Queer Korea*.

CLIPS:

* Episode 1- *D.P.* (Han Jun-hee, Netflix 2021)
* *Hiroshima mon amour* (Alain Resnais 1959)
* *Taegukgi: The Brotherhood of War* (태극기 휘날리며 Kang Je-gyu 2004)

**Week 3: Hybridity, Translation, and Transnational**

**Session 5: Cultural Hybridity**

How useful is it to think about the Korean New Wave as a hybrid cinema? After all, aren’t all films really hybrid? And what do people really mean by “cultural hybridity”?

READING:

1. Bhabha, Homi. *The Location of Culture*. 1994. Excerpt.
2. Anderson, Crystal S. "Hybrid Hallyu: The African American Music Tradition in K-Pop" In *Global Asian American Popular Cultures*. New York University Press, 2016. 290–303.

CLIPS

1. Music video clips of Seo Tae-ji, H.O.T., and others

SCREENING:

* *Snowpiercer* (설국열차 Bong Joon-ho, 2013)
* *Broker* (브로커 Kore-eda Hirokazu, 2022 TBD)

**Session 6: Translation and Transnational**

PRESENTATION #1 DUE

READING:

1. Sakai, Naoki. *Translation and Subjectivity: On Japan and Cultural Nationalism*.
2. Cho, Michelle. “Genre, Translation, and Transnational Cinema.” *Cinema Journal*, Vol. 54, No. 3. 44-68.
3. Klein, Christina. “Why American Studies Need to Think About Korean Cinema, Or, Transnational Genres in the Films of Bong Joon-ho.” *American Quarterly*, Vol. 60, No. 4, 2008. 871-898.

**Week 4:**

**Performance, Gaming/Interactivity, and Biopolitics**

**Session 7: Shamans and Idol Groups**

READING:

Malingkay, Roald. “The Popularity of Individualism: The Seo Taiji Phenomenon in the 1990s.”

Kendall, Laurel. *Shamans, Nostalgias, and the IMF: South Korean Popular Religion in Motion*. University of Hawaii Press, 2009. Excerpt.

CLIPS: BTS, Psy (“Gangnam Style”)

SCREENING:

* *Intoogi: The Battle of Internet Trolls*(잉투기 Um Tae-hwa, 2013)
* *Manshin* (만신 Park Chan-kyong, 2013)

**Session 8: World-Class Gamers**

Why are there so many capable online gamers from South Korea? What is the underlying societal infrastructure that have enable this?

READING:

1. Foucault, Michel. “The Birth of Biopolitics.” *Ethics, Subjectivity, and Truth*. 73-79.
2. Bae, Keung Yoon. “‘Too Many Koreans’: Esports Biopower and South Korean Gaming Infrastructure.” *Media Technologies for Work and Play in East Asia: Critical Perspectives on Japan and the Two Koreas*. Bristol University Press, 2021. 205-228.

**Week 5:**

**Technology, Information, and Crisis/Catastrophe**

**Session 9: Technology and Information in South Korea**

READING:

1. Paik, Nam June. *We Are in Open Circuits*. Excerpt.
2. Readings related to the concept of ‘information society’ and the history of Samsung

SCREENING:

* *Default* (국가부도의 날 Choi Guk-hee 2018)

**Session 10: Crisis and Catastrophe— North Korea, the Collapse of a Department Store, the Sinking of a Ferry**

READING:

1. Nancy, Jean-Luc. *After Fukushima: The Equivalence of Catastrophes*. Fordham University Press. 2014. (Entire Book)

CLIPS:

House of Hummingbird (벌새 Bora Kim 2018), Under the Sun (Vitaly Mansky 2015), Performance of heavy metal rock concert in nK

FINAL PAPER DUE

Recommended Readings for Your Final Paper:

Cho, Michelle. “Meta-Hallyu TV: Global Publicity, Social Media, and Citizen Celebrity.” In *Hallyu 2.0: The Korean Wave in the Age of Social Media.* Edited by Sangjoon Lee and Abé Mark Nornes. University of Michigan Press. 154-171.

Tilland, Bonnie. “Towards a Visual Sociology and Anthropology of North Korea.” *Journal of Asian Sociology*, Vol. 50, No. 2. 299-320.

Yoo, Theodore. “Korea in the World.” *The Koreas: The Birth of Two Nations Divided*. University of California Press, 2020. 226-284.

Choe, Youngmin. "Introduction: Distracted Attractions." In *Tourist Distractions: Traveling and Feeling in Transnational Hallyu Cinema*. Duke University Press, 2016. 1–28.

Burch, Noel. *To the Distant Observer: Form and Meaning in Japanese Cinema* excerpt. / Introduction by Harry Harootunian.

Choe, Steve and Se-young Kim. “Never Stop Playing: Starcraft and Asian Gamer Death.” *Techno-Orientalism: Imagining Asia in Speculative Fiction, History, and Media*. 113-124.