

ENGFILM1470-1 Film Directors

Spring 2021

Instructor: Dr. Areum Jeong

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Lecture: Mon 6:30 pm-9 pm, Zone 3 Room 102

Office Hours: Mon and Thu 10 am-11 am and by appointment / Zone 3, Room 320B

Course Description

This course offers a broad overview of Korean “commercial auteurs”—Kim Jee-woon, Park Chan-wook, and Bong Joon-ho—and their works. According to film critic Darcy Paquet (2009), these three filmmakers created films of a “highly distinctive character within the confines of the mainstream industry, and they are responsible for giving New Korean Cinema some of its most memorable films (93-94). These films are described to be “well-made” as a commercial feature that makes use of defined genres and star system, but which contains both a distinctive directorial style and commentary on social issues” (95).

What happens when socially and politically informed filmmakers are free to explore new themes and are no longer obligated to speak for their nation or people? Focusing on the major works of Kim Jee-woon, Park Chan-wook, and Bong Joon-ho, this course will analyze how they diversified New Korean Cinema in terms of subject matter, scale, and genre, which will follow a loose chronology by filmmaker rather than production date. Students should come away with a sense both of the development of contemporary Korean film and its relationship with aspects of Korean culture and society. In addition, the course will include a strong writing component; discussion and written assignments will focus both on the films themselves as well as on related critical texts.

No Korean language ability is required; no background knowledge in Korean culture or history is assumed; all course materials are in English.

Course Objectives

- Students will identify sociocultural contexts that generated the Korean film industry as conscious consumer-scholars that reflect on and account for its globalization.
- Students will rehearse the presentation of their own research through oral presentation.
- Students will develop skills in formal analysis and improve critical writing with an emphasis on developing thesis-driven arguments.

Course Assessment

Weekly Blackboard Forum Posts and Discussion Participation 30%

Group Presentation 20%

Final Project Proposal 10%

Final Project (Individual) Presentation and Paper 40%

Course Assignments and Requirements

Attendance and Participation

Attendance and active participation are mandatory for all students. Students are expected to arrive to lecture on time and remain until class is dismissed. Students are expected to come to lecture prepared, with assigned readings and any additional assignments completed. All readings will be available as links or PDFs and uploaded on the course webpage. Students are highly encouraged to print out the readings, make notes, and bring both the readings and notes to lecture.

Electronic devices—cell phones, e-readers, laptops, pagers, tablets, etc.—must be turned off during class except with special permission from the instructor. Classroom courtesy includes the full participation of every student. If you must leave the room during class, do so quietly and unobtrusively. Disruptive eating, sleeping, and unnecessary talking will not be permitted. Anyone found to be in violation of this policy will be asked to leave the classroom immediately.

Attendance is taken at each lecture. Note: you may miss two lectures with no grade penalty. After two free absences, each unexcused absence will bear a penalty of a third of a letter grade. Five (and more) absences will receive a failing grade. It is the student's responsibility to make sure the instructor is able to note their attendance. In the case of absences, only documented medical emergencies and death of immediate family will be accepted.

Weekly Blackboard Forum Posts

Write a short (250-300 words) response to the week's prompt/question on Blackboard by 9 pm, the day before class. Each week's prompt/question will be posted on Blackboard as a new discussion forum, and you will be required to write and post your answer as a thread. There will be 10 forums in total. See appendix for grading rubric.

Group Presentation

Present on a topic in relation to the course texts and prepare 2-3 questions to lead the discussion. An ideal presentation ties case studies into the course texts, provides visual resources (images, video, etc.), and opens up deeper questions to the entire class to think together on. In addition, your group must submit a short essay (3 pages max, double-spaced, size 12, Times New Roman) that summarizes the presentation's key points, linking the observations to relevant themes or theoretical tools.

Final Project Proposal

You must submit your project topic and proposal by Week 14. You are free to explore a topic of your choice, but all topics (and topic changes) must be approved by the instructor.

Final Project

Choose one of the topics below:

1. What would happen if Park Chan-wook's characters met Kim Jee-woon's characters? What might an interaction look like between *Oldboy*'s characters and *Lady Vengeance*'s characters? Select characters from Park Chan-wook, Kim Jee-woon, or Bong Joon-ho's works and describe a hypothetical encounter. This 2000-word paper must provide evidence selected from the film (for example, "Daesu might say, 'A, B, and C,' upon meeting Geumja, because in *Oldboy*, Daesu says, 'X, Y, and Z.'"). You may script some dialogue, but speaking lines should be limited and integrated into your paper. This paper should be analytical and critical. You are not writing a script. Instead, you are describing hypothetical scenarios. Anything could happen!

2. Submit a creative work in any medium expressing your own understanding of a film examined in the course. Write a 1000-page statement explaining your project. Previous examples of students' projects include a board game for *Snowpiercer*, a fifteen-minute short film of *The Handmaiden* set in the present, a series of hand-drawn postcards retelling the events in *The Thirst*, a restaurant menu for Park Chan-wook's films, and a theme park design of *The Good, The Bad, The Weird*.

Use of Machine Translation and Other Online Writing and Language Tools

While students are encouraged to use dictionaries and other language resources, they should not rely on machine translators for large sections of text. Papers must be written in English. Any paper that is written in Chinese and then processed through an online translator will be considered unacceptable.

If an instructor believes that a paper was written using machine translation, the instructor reserves the right to ask the student to re-write (potentially with a different topic), or give an alternative assignment, which may include a timed-writing essay assignment. Until the re-write is submitted the student will have an F for the assignment.

Use of Non-English Sources

All non-English sources must be cited. The translation of non-English sources is equivalent to quoting. When using Chinese sources, use quotation marks to directly quote the sources and include the original text in brackets. For example:

Wang Chao in describing nanocarriers says, "Interaction between nanomaterials and organisms, especially Interaction between the Immunological Effect of Nanomaterials and the Immune System in vivo further clarification is needed to optimize the shape, physicochemical properties, size and surface of nanocarriers [纳米材料与生物机体内的相互作用，特别是纳米材料本身的免疫学效应与体内免疫系统的相互作用需要进一步阐明，优化纳米载体的形状、大小、表面、理化性质等]" (Wang 96).

Course Website

Assignment guidelines, lecture slides, supplemental handouts and information regarding academic writing and research, and the syllabus will be posted to the course website and/or emailed to students.

Additional readings and materials may be uploaded on a regular basis. Although these are not required reading, you may find them very useful in order to gain more in-depth understanding, which will be helpful for the writing of your papers. You will receive notifications when these additional resources are available, but it is your responsibility to check the course website on a regular basis. Students are also welcome to post thoughtful comments, ideas, and questions on the discussion thread. Please make sure that your e-mail address is up to date on the course website.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy

Students are expected to do their own work; this holds, in particular, for the writing assignments you have for the course. All assignments are expected to reflect the student's careful research, original thinking, and writing. Plagiarism—the presentation or submission of work, in any form, that is not a student's own, without acknowledgment of the sources—is a serious offense and can result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or dismissal. If you obtain ideas or information from an outside source, that source must be acknowledged. Citations must be provided for the content, ideas, or other materials that originate from other authors. Cheating will not be tolerated and those who do will receive a failing grade on the assignment or for the entire course.

Note: The instructor reserves the right to make reasonable changes to the assignments and schedule when deemed necessary and will offer advance notice.

Course Schedule

Week 1 (March 8) Introduction

SECTION I: PARK CHAN-WOOK

Week 2 (March 15) *Oldboy* (2003)

Week 3 (March 22) *Lady Vengeance* (2005)

Week 4 (March 29) *Thirst* (2009)

Week 5 (April 5) *The Handmaiden* (2016)

SECTION II: KIM JEE-WOON

Week 6 (April 12) *A Tale of Two Sisters* (2003)

Week 7 (April 19) *A Bittersweet Life* (2005)

Week 8 (April 26) *The Good, The Bad, The Weird* (2008)

Week 9 (May 3) Q&A with Director Kim Jee-Woon

SECTION III: BONG JOON-HO

Week 10 (May 10) *Memories of Murder* (2003)

Week 11 (May 17) *The Host* (2006)

Week 12 (May 24) *Snowpiercer* (2013)

Week 13 (May 31) *Parasite* (2019)

Week 14 (June 7) Students' Presentation

Week 15 (June 14) Students' Presentation

Week 16 (June 21) Final Project due

Appendix

Grading Rubric for Blackboard Forum Posts

Excellent (3)

- Responds directly to the assignment, prompt, and/or question, and includes support material
- Appropriate length to develop a specific idea clearly and fully
- Logically sequenced, organized, well-structured sentences, written in formal language
- Contribution is analytical, original, and thoughtful
- Author makes clear, meaningful connections between ideas and shows understanding of the assignment and (prompt/question) course texts
- Free of grammatical/spelling errors
- Post was submitted before the deadline

Acceptable (2)

- Responds in some part but not directly to the assignment, prompt, and/or question
- Appropriate length, but idea developed is incomplete or vague
- Structure is present but organization of ideas is somewhat sporadic
- Shows evidence of study of the course texts and analytical thought, but analysis is not clearly presented or fully developed
- Some connections between ideas, but connections not clearly presented
- Some grammatical/spelling errors
- Post was submitted before the deadline

Unacceptable (1 or below)

- Does not respond to the assignment, prompt, and/or question

- Short answer which does not develop an idea fully
- Lacks flow, organization, and/or structure
- Lacks depth or insight, does not express opinion clearly, and/or shows little understanding of the assignment (prompt/question) and/or course texts
- Written in informal language (using abbreviations or text lingo)
- Many grammatical errors and poor spelling
- Post was submitted after the deadline

Grading Rubric for Final Paper

A/A- – Above and beyond. This paper is well-written with an explicit thesis, points of support that are well-selected to advance the thesis, vivid detail, full development, a strong introduction and conclusion, clear and logical organization, and strong coherence and quote integration/selection and transitions. It should be generally free from contradicting or unrelated points, format/grammar/mechanics errors should be minor and not distracting, and the tone should be appropriate for the reader. This paper shows high engagement with the assignment and critical thought.

B+/B/B- – Solid. This paper contains a thesis that takes an identifiable position, with plausible supporting details and examples. It should be well organized, and format or grammar errors should be minor enough to not distract from the clarity of the paper. It should be generally free of contradicting points, it should show a clear attempt to fulfill the essay prompt, and the tone should be appropriate for the audience. This paper shows a solid attempt to engage with the assignment and is moving in the right direction. Often, it is a strong paper with one big thing holding it back.

C+/C/C- – Average. This paper contains a thesis with an identifiable position although it may be implicit or somewhat disconnected from the evidence. The reader may have to struggle to understand the argument. It may read as simplistic in style or rough/underdeveloped. It should nonetheless show a clear attempt to fulfill the paper prompt. It should be generally organized, and not appear written at the last minute. However, the paper may be less clear due to widespread grammatical, logical, or organizational mishaps, the argument might not follow the thesis or may contain contradictions, the points of support may be unrelated to the argument, or the tone may be inappropriate for the audience. Quotations will be present, but may not be integrated. Transitions may be lacking. Citation has been attempted, but may not follow MLA or Chicago format well.

D+/D/D- – Not passing. This paper must roughly focus on the prompt, with some attempt at maintaining focus, although it may be vague. However, it may have either an incoherent thesis or no thesis at all. Points do not connect with the thesis well. It may be too short/undeveloped to fulfill the prompt, or have such severe grammatical, logical, mechanical, or organizational problems that it is difficult to follow beyond a rough “general idea.” It may appear hastily written at the last minute, or may fail to fully follow the assignment prompt. There will still be some attempt to follow appropriate citation (otherwise it will fall into the “F” range), but it may be inconsistent, such as supplying only the author’s last name in an in-text citation without the page number.

F – To receive this score, the paper shows incoherence on all levels, with an obvious lack of attendance to the prompt. It does not read as a serious attempt at the assignment.