

# Contemporary Korean Society and Experiences

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- **Course Description**
  - This course is designed to give students a general introduction to the Korean society and urban space with focus on the rapid transition from traditional to post-modern era. Korean society and urban space have been changed very rapidly, driven by a series of interrelated processes of change - economic, political, cultural, and socially contingent forces. These forces operate at a variety of socio-spatial scales ranging from the global to the local. The task of this course is to understand the underlying processes and the characters of Korean society, culture, and urban space. In doing so student will be exposed to:
    - Korean tradition, its transformation process, and the repercussions;
    - The characteristics of Korean society transformed: Compressed Modernity.:
    - The changing socio-spatial characteristics of Korean economic & urban growth;
    - The rapid socio-economic growth, the compressed modernity, and conflicts;
    - Contemporary Korean culture and trends for young generations and their critics;
    - The democratic resilience of Korean society and the Cosmopolitan Seoul and Korea
    - The rise and fall of Korean cultural industries, say K-pop, K-drama, and K-movies
  
- **Reading Materials**
  - Lim, Sujin and Asford, N., eds., 2022, *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary South Korea*, Routledge, London.
  - Kim, Youna, 2021, *The Soft Power of the Korean Wave: Parasite, BTS and Drama*, Routledge.
  - Kim, Taeyoung, 2025, *Cultural Policies in the Era of the Korean Wave*, Routledge.
  
- **Course Website**
  - During the term, information pertaining to lecture, examination, assignments and other course-related matters will be posted on the course's website, <https://blog.naver.com/sinbado2> → click '26-s-SISS' on the left hand-side menu bar.
  - Please note that the lecture materials and files for each week are for review purposes only. The slides provide only a condensed overview of the material covered in class.
  
- **Course marks are based on three items:**
  - **Final Exam:** 60 percent [Students will be given a list of expected questions for the final exam.]

- **Students' presentations:** 30 percent
  - Select one from Korean novels, dramas, movies, or documentaries, read or watch it, summarize its content, critique it, and add your own opinions with references for final presentation. After presentation, please submit the text. [AI detector will be used].
- **In-class discussion:** 10 percent
  
- **Lectures**
  - **Lecture 01 Course Overview: Introduction to Korean Society and Space**
    - Korea at a glance, The Theme of the course
  - **Lecture 02 History of Society and Space of Korea and Seoul**
    - Who are Koreans & What is Korean Culture?, Political Timeline, Main features of Korean social change, Socio-cultural change
  - **Lecture 03 Korean Economic Development and the Growth of Seoul**
    - Korea's Economic Development, Seoul is?, Transformation of Seoul's urban development, Urban Planning Governance
  - **Lecture 04 Korean Society Transformed: Culture and Tradition**
    - Economic Development and Factors of Economic Success, Where the Koreans come from?, Korean Culture and society
  - **Lecture 05 Koreans Today: Compressed Modernity**
    - Compressed modernization in Korea, Developmental mentality, Dark side of modernity, Hell Joseon Phenomenon, Components of Korean Mentality
  - **Lecture 06 Contemporary Korean Society and Experiences**
    - Gender and sexuality, Hard Working Society, Korean festival, Telling Stories, Shaping the Future, A beauty takeover
  - **Lecture 07 Korean Generations: Dynamics and Legacy**
    - Liberation Generation, Postwar Generation, Generation 4.19, Yushin Generation, Generation 386, The IMF Generation, Candlelight Generation
  - **Lecture 08 The Uneven Socio-spatial Development in Korea**
    - Economic Growth and Regional Disparities, Poverty and Polarization, Generation Disparity and Social Disparities, Toward an inclusive city?
  - **Lecture 09 Contemporary Korean Culture and Young Generations**
    - Simultaneity of the non-simultaneous, Women at the bar, MZ Consumption Trend[Meaning-out, Self-gifting, God-saeng], Art Fairs, Experience goods and Pop-up Stores, Self-improvement Leisure
  - **Lecture 10 Korean Wave Evolution and the other side of Stardom**

- Korean Film and Drama, K-Pop, Game, Animation, Cartoon, 'factory-like' K-pop idol training system
- **Lecture 11 Koreans Cultural Industries: Policies and Repercussions**
  - The rise of new cultural economy, Characteristics of Cultural Industries in Korea, Changes in Cultural Industry Policies in Korea, Structural Subjugation by Global OTT?, Success factors of the Korean Cultural Industries, Driving Forces in South Korean Soft Power, Future of Korean Wave
- **Lecture 12 Korean Civil Society Organizations and the Cosmopolitanism in Seoul**
  - Changes in Urban Society in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, The process of Korean urbanization, Civil society in Korea, Top 10 most powerful countries in the world in 2025, The Growth of South Korean Soft Power, Korean Diaspora and Hallyu, Korean Family in Transition, Conclusions
- **Lecture 13 Student Presentations**
- **Lecture 14 Student Presentations**
- **Lecture 15 Final Exam**