

## **History of Korean Tradition and Folk Culture**

Instructor: Michael J. Pettid  
Summer 2019  
Ewha Womans University

### **Course Objectives**

This course will examine how Koreans lived in premodern times: what they ate, where they lived, what types of clothing they wore, what rituals marked their lives, and what types of entertainments they enjoyed. The aim is not learning history, but rather to understand how Koreans actually lived in past times. Students will gain insight into how people *really* lived in past times and further the great cultural diversity that characterized the people of the Korean peninsula. The course will, necessarily, be largely focused on the period after the fourteenth century, but every attempt will be made to demonstrate past traditions where materials are available. As this course is being conducted in Korea, we will make full use of museums and cultural sites to bring historic lives alive!

### **Methodology and Student Responsibilities**

Where possible, this course will utilize a seminar format and encourage student participation and discussion over a strict lecture model. Thus, students will be required to complete assigned readings before class and be prepared to share their ideas, insights and questions with the class. All readings will be in English, so fluency in Korean is not necessary. The class will also attempt to bring some aspects of history to life, and as such we will schedule trips to museums and historic sites when possible.

### **Student Evaluation**

Students will be evaluated on the basis of attendance and participation and a final examination. As this is a condensed course, frequent absences cannot be tolerated (students cannot learn if they are not present).

Attendance and participation 50%  
Final examination 50%

### **Reading Materials**

All readings will be available in electronic files.

Other readings will be available in a reading packet or PDF files.

### **Field Trips (during class time—subject to change)**

Kyōngbuk Palace

Namdaemun Market

Seoul Museum of History

Insa-dong

### **Contents**

#### **Week 1**

1. Introduction

2. Geography and Climate of Korea; Prehistoric Life on the Korean Peninsula  
Pettid, *Korean Cuisine: An Illustrated History*, 7-26.

3. How did Ancient Koreans Live? Singing and Drinking throughout History.  
*Hyangga* and *Koryŏ kayo*

4. Adoption of Foreign Belief Systems I  
Sem Vermeersch, “Buddhism as a Cure for the Land.”

#### **Week 2**

1. Adoption of Foreign Belief Systems II  
Pettid, “Confucian Educational Works for Upper Status Women in Chosŏn Korea.”

2. Farming and Trade in Chosŏn  
Kim Kuentae, “Farming in the Chosŏn Period.”  
Kim Eui-Hwan, “Salt: White Gold.”

3. Marriage and Married Life: Matrilineal and patrilineal systems, mother-in-laws and daughter-in-laws, concubines and *kisaeng*  
Kwon Soon-Hyung, “Did People Divorce in Joseon Period?”

4. Housing in Chosŏn: Where did People Live? Clothing in Chosŏn: What did they Wear?  
Pettid, “Daily Life, Ritual, and Popular Culture in Chosŏn Korea.”

### **Week 3**

1. Diet: What did People Eat? Where did *kimch'i* come from?

Pettid, *Korean Cuisine: An Illustrated History*, 27-67.

2. More Food: Ritual and Special Foods

Pettid, *Korean Cuisine: An Illustrated History*, 68-109.

Chung Yeon-sik, *Liquor and Taverns*

3. Medicine and Life in Chosŏn

Pettid, "Science, Food and Health in Chosŏn Korea."

4. Life Rituals: Milestones in Life

Pettid, "Daily Life, Ritual, and Popular Culture in Chosŏn Korea."

Sim Jae-woo, "The Penal System"

### **Week 4**

1. Death, Funerary Customs and Ghosts in Chosŏn

Pettid, "Ghostly Encounters: Perceptions of Death and the Afterlife in Koryŏ and Early Chosŏn"

2. Education: Learning and Edification for All

Jang Dong-pyo, "The Educational System"

Seo Tae-won, "Military Life"

3. Entertainment and Sports in Premodern Korea: Let's Have Fun!

Pettid, "Daily Life, Ritual, and Popular Culture in Chosŏn Korea."

O Jong-rok, "Tea and Tobacco"

4. This and that...course review and so on.