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# Korean Film



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## Introduction



### Korean Film As A Cultural Text of Koreans

Korean film is unique in the sense that “the distinction between cinematic images and reality often becomes blurred”, as Hyangjin Lee, the author of “Contemporary Korean Cinema” points out (P.1).

The Korean film industry, which came into existence with the introduction of moving pictures to Korea at the beginning of the 1920s, can be subdivided into number of periods, beginning with the colonial period and extending to the present day. In this exhibition, films from each period are closely associated with the society which Koreans were facing in their everyday lives.

### The Introduction of Motion Pictures to Korea

“It was only in 1903 that foreign motion pictures were introduced to the Korean public for the first time through an advertisement.”

Due to the circumstances under which every aspect of Korean society was under the control of the Japanese colonial government, it was particularly difficult for Koreans to develop their own film industry. It is still a debatable issue among film historians as to which

film can be considered as the starting point of Korean film made by Korean directors.

### The Development of South Korean Film

“South Korean film has always been ideologically controlled by its government.” Until the early 1990s, it was not unusual for directors to be “arrested and banned from making or releasing their movies because of an alleged violation of national security.”

After the liberation from Japanese rule in 1945, most feature films were called liberation films and dealt with stories of Korea’s liberation from Japan. Then the Korean War broke out. During the war, filmmakers in the South were divided into different groups and many talented filmmakers either relocated to North Korea on their own or were kidnapped.

The period after the Korean War (the late 1950s and early 1960s) is referred to as a “revival period” or “boom period.” Movies became the most important entertainment medium for the general public and they achieved remarkable development in artistic expression through a variety of genres.



\* This brochure is prepared for a Korean film exhibition in the East Asian Library held from September 2008 to December 2008.

## Topic 1

### **The Colonial period: The Struggles and Consequences of the Colonial Experience on the Korean Peninsula**

#### **1) Hurrah! For freedom(Chayu manse)**

Directed by: Ch'oe In-gyu

Starring: Ch'oe Ch'ang-gün, Hwang Yö-hüi, Yu Kye-sön

Released date: Oct. 21, 1946

Running time: 80 min.

Genre: Martial-melodrama

Call Number: PN1997.2 .C424 2004



#### **2) The Murmuring, Habitual Sadness (Najun moksori 1, 2)**

Directed by: Pyön Yöng-ju

Starring: Kang Tök-kyöng, Pak Ong-nyön

Released date: 1995

Running time: 231 min.

Genre: Documentary

Call Number: D810 .C698 N35862 2005, D810 .C698 N35863 2005



## Topic 2

### **The Unfinished war: the Korean War**

#### **1) Southern Guerrilla Forces (Nambu-gun)**

Directed by: Chöng Chi-yöng

Starring: An Söng-ki, Ch'oe Chin-sil, Ch'oe Min-su

Released date: 1990

Running time: 157 min.

Genre: war

Call Number: PN1997 .N363846 2005



#### **2) The Brotherhood of War (Taegükki hwi-nallimyö)**

Directed by: Kang Chae-gyu

Starring: Chang Tong-gön, Wön Pin, Yi Ũn-ju

Release date: Feb. 6, 2004

Running time: 148 min.

Genre: war, drama

Call Number: PN1997.2 .T34485 2004 v.1-3



## Topic 3

### **Facing the Post-war reality: Destabilization, Poverty and Anti-socialism**

#### **1)The Aimless Bullet (Obalt'an)**

Directed by: Yu Hyön-mok

Starring: Ch'oe Mu-ryong, Kim Chin-gyu, Mun Chöng-suk

Release date: Apr. 13, 1960

Running time: 110 min.

Genre: Literary art

Call Number: PN1997 .O23 2002



## Topic 4

### **The Military Authoritarian regime and Democratization: the Democratic Transition from Authoritarian Rule in South Korea**

#### **1)Peppermint Candy (Pakha Sat'ang)**

Directed by: Yi Ch'ang-tong

Starring: Söl Kyöng-gyu, Mun So-ri, Kim Yö-chin

Running time: 129 min.

Released date: Jan.1, 2000

Genre: drama

Call Number: PN1997 .P354 2000



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· Shin, Chi-Yun., Julian Stringer. *New Korean Cinema*. Edinburgh University Press, 2005.

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Call Number: DS901 . R476

· Park, Soyang. "Silence, subaltern speech and the intellectual in South Korea : The politics of emergent speech in the case of former sexual slaves." *Journal for Cultural Research* Vol. 9, Issue 2 (2005) : 169-206.

Call Number: Electronic Resources

### Other Useful Resources

· <http://www.kmdb.or.kr/eng>

· <http://www.koreafilm.org>

· <http://www.koreanfilm.or.kr/index.jsp>