

2025
SNU International Conference
for Contemporary Korean Studies

Korea as Symptom

Perspectives on the Future

August 22–23, 2025 (Fri–Sat)

Asia Center (Building 101) 2F
Seoul National University

The 2025 SNU International Conference for Contemporary Korean Studies (ICCKS) explores the diverse phenomena of contemporary South Korea under the theme **Korea as Symptom: Perspectives on the Future**.

By reading South Korea's current issues—from democratic crisis to cultural innovation—as interconnected symptoms of broader historical and global processes, the conference invites critical reflection and seeks to develop new perspectives on Korea's past, present, and future.



Conference Program and Proceedings

snucks2025@gmail.com



서울대학교
SEOUL NATIONAL UNIVERSITY



서울대학교 현대한국종합연구단
SNU Contemporary Korean Studies

2025 SNU International Conference for Contemporary Korean Studies I Program

DAY1 August 22, 2025 (Fri)

9:00-9:20 **Opening Ceremony** | Rm.220 Samik Hall | Chair: Hyeong-Ki KWON (Director, SNU Contemporary Korean Studies) | Welcome Address: Honglim RYU (President, Seoul National University)

Track 1 Rm.210 Youngwon Hall

Simultaneous Interpretation Available

Korean Political Economy

Chair Yong-Chod HA (University of Washington)

Presentations

- Soohyun Christine LEE (King's College London)
 - Gendered Polarization among Young Koreans: Young Men's Conservative Turn in the 2022 Presidential Election
- Myung-Joon PARK (Korea Labor Institute)
 - Tripartism and the Politics of Social Pacts in South Korea: Institutional Evolution and Strategic Dilemmas
- Jitendra UTTAM (Jawaharlal Nehru University)
 - Capitalism Vs. Capitalism: Korean and Indian Experiences in the Comparative Perspective

Discussants

- Kyung Mi KIM (Sapienza University of Rome)
 - Digitalization in Japan and Korea
- Kwang-Young SHIN (Chung-Ang University)
- Hyeon Seok PARK (National Assembly Future Institute)

11:30-13:00 Lunch (Rm.220 Samik Hall)

Simultaneous Interpretation Available

13:00-14:30

Queer Representation in Contemporary Korean Fiction

Chair Youkyung SON (Seoul National University)

Presentations

- Sung Un GANG (Technische Universität Berlin)
 - The Utopia of Male Homosexuality in Contemporary Korean Fictions
- Hyejin OH (Sungkyunkwan University)
 - Geopolitical Configurations of Korean Queer Narratives and the Stigmatization of Global Queer Discourse: An Analysis of Media Mx Practices in Love in the Big City

Discussants

- Youkyung SON (Seoul National University)
- Kyung Hee YOUN (Seoul National University)

14:30-14:50 Break

14:50-16:20

Roundtable : Kpop and Activism

Chair Haekyung UM (Liverpool University)

Presentations

- John STREET (University of East Anglia)
- Suk Young KIM (University of California, Los Angeles)
- Lisa Yuk-ming LEUNG (Lingnan University)
- Sungmin KIM (Hokkaido University)
- Benjamin M. HAN (University of Georgia)
- Gyeon KDO (Seoul National University)
- HaeRan SHIN (Seoul National University)

Discussants

- Dalyong JIN (Simon Fraser University)
- Ju Oak KIM (Texas A&M International University)
- Seok-kyeong HONG (Seoul National University)

16:20-16:40

16:40-18:10

Track 2 Rm.230

Walking as Object-Method in Korean Studies: Modeling Future Trends for Conducting Fieldwork in the Social Sciences

Chair/Discussant Astric LAC (Yonsei University)

Presentations

- Valerie GELZEZAU (IHES, France)
 - Walking along the DMZ Peace Trail as Object-Method to Reconsider Post-Traumatic Space in the South Korean Border Zone
- Youna SON (IHES, France)
 - Walking Empowerment: Civil Society and the Making of Paths
- Minji JO (The Catholic University of Korea)
 - Walking with the Moving Fickles: Doing Mobile Ethnography in Digital Nomad Research
- Margot KUNZ (Zentrum Institute of Geopolitics)
 - Virtual Walking as an Experience of Contemporary Hybrid Urban Space: The Case of 'Walk in Seoul' YouTube Videos

Discussants

- Daemin LEE (National University of Singapore)
 - Walking with the Moving Fickles: Doing Mobile Ethnography in Digital Nomad Research
- Margot KUNZ (Zentrum Institute of Geopolitics)
 - Virtual Walking as an Experience of Contemporary Hybrid Urban Space: The Case of 'Walk in Seoul' YouTube Videos

Religion, Culture, and Political Identity in Korea I

Chair Sem VERMEERSCH (Seoul National University)

Presentations

- Donald BAKER (The University of British Columbia)
 - Sacralizing the Nation: New Religions and Korea's Place in the World
- Lora SARFATI (Idm University)
 - The Evolving Representation of Mtang in Korean Television
- John AHN (University of Michigan)
 - A Short Critique of Korea's Political Mythology in the Post-Park Chung Hee Era

Discussants

- Hae-yeon SEONG (Seoul National University)

Religion, Culture, and Political Identity in Korea II

Chair Hyunjoong JUNG (Seoul National University)

Presentations

- Dong-kyu KIM (Sogang University)
 - Korean Political Scandals and Shamanic Rhetoric: The Shadow of the 20th Century 'Musak'
- Seongyeon BAEK (Sahmyook University)
 - Stigma and Charisma: The Political Theology of Shincheonji Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic Crisis
- Minah KIM (Incheon National University)
 - Fear, Hatred, and Anger: The Active Politics of Far-Right Protestantism in South Korea

Discussants

- Soo-Ah KIM (Seoul National University)

Break

Reading Cultural Symptoms of Korea

Chair Dongshin YI (Seoul National University)

Presentations

- Steve CHOE (San Francisco State University)
 - Sympathy as Symptom: K-Drama Mediation and Communal Affect
- Tzuang-wen CHEN (National Chengchi University, Taiwan)
 - Behind and Beyond the Logic of Initiation: From Assemblage of Chips to the K in Action
- Nathalie LUCA (IHES, France)
 - The Rise of Heedlessness in South Korea: Success or Failure, Dream or Nightmare?

Discussants

- Jaeho KANG (Seoul National University)
- Hong Jung KIM (Seoul National University)
- Munyoung CHO (Yonsei University)

Break

Simultaneous Interpretation Available

The Political and Social Landscape of Korea: Legacies and Realities

Chair Changkeun LEE (KDI School of Public Policy and Management)

Presentations

- Muntaha ABED (Brecht University)
 - Cultural Productions of Resistance: The Gwangju Uprising and Its Legacy in South Korean Protest Culture
- Torunika ROY (Jawaharlal Nehru University)
 - The Legacy of Populism in Korea: How Cold War Politics Shaped South Korea's Fertility Crisis
- Yashendra SINGH (Jawaharlal Nehru University)
 - The Impact of Media and Performance on South Korea's Welfare State
- Kyung Mi KIM (Sapienza University of Rome)
- Bongseok HAN (Pukyong National University)
- Soyeon KANG (Seoul National University)

Discussants

- Soyeon KANG (Seoul National University)

South Korea and Post-Cold War Geopolitics

Chair Jeehye SONG (Korea University)

Presentations

- Miriam BARTOLOZZI (University of Macerata)
 - Promoting Human Rights and Democracy in Today's World: Digital Activism, Popular Culture and Environmental Advocacy Among South Korean Youth
- Cristina PREUTTI (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies)
 - Korean Peninsula and Romania in the Context of Collapse of Communist Bloc and the Reshaping of New Geopolitical Order
- Trung Hiep NGUYEN (Seoul National University)
 - From War to Cultural Exchange: The Evolution of Korea-Vietnam Relations as Symptom of Geopolitical Transformation

Discussants

- Seonhee KIM (Seoul National University)
- Ki Eun RYU (Seoul National University)

Simultaneous Interpretation Available

Narrative Alternatives Imagining the Post-1987 System

Chair Hyoung Cheol SHIN (Seoul National University)

Presentations

- Min Jung KIM (Sungkyunkwan University)
 - The Square Changes Words: Words Change the Square
- Jun Seok CHOI (Seoul National University of Science and Technology)
 - Justice and Community Beyond the Law: Questions and Responses in Korean Literature and Film after 1987

Discussants

- Hyoung Cheol SHIN (Seoul National University)
- Yun Eui YANG (Korea University)

Track 3 Rm.240

Foreign Policy Narratives toward South Korea: From the Outside In

Chair/Discussant Jeffrey ROBERTSON (Yonsei University)

Presentations

- Shin-ae LEE (Sasakawa Peace Foundation)
 - Japan's Strategic Narrative towards South Korea: The Case of the Indo-Pacific Jeonwo CHOD (Kyung Hee University)
 - China's Korean Diplomacy Narratives in the Xi Jinping Era
 - Kyoungh CHUNG (Kangwon National University)
 - US Strategic Narratives on East Asian Allies under Retrenchment: A Case of Sino-US Rapprochement under the Nixon Administration
 - Claudia Junghyun KIM (City University of Hong Kong)
 - Elite Victim or Elite Power? Korea's Victimhood Narratives and Status-Seeking in the World

Discussants

- Shin-ae LEE (Sasakawa Peace Foundation)
- Kyoungh CHUNG (Kangwon National University)
- Claudia Junghyun KIM (City University of Hong Kong)
- Jeehye SONG (Korea University)

Simultaneous Interpretation Available

Telling the Stories of Other Korea: Critical Approaches to Historical Narrative

Chair Olivia U. RUTAZIBWA (London School of Economics)

Presentations

- Inho CHOI (Seoul National University)
 - Strang Politics in Early Modern East Asia: The Objective Value of Fictionalized History
- Jaeyoung KIM (San Diego State University)
 - Revisiting Historical East Asia: A Reflection on and from Ancient Korea
- Yeonhee Sophie KIM (Sogang University)
 - Trust in the Digital Age? Digital CBMs, Trust & Diplomacy, and North Korea's Cyber Challenge

Discussants

- Jeehye SONG (Korea University)

Korean Narrative Today I: Inventing a Way of Living in Margin

Chair Kyung Hee YOUN (Seoul National University)

Presentations

- Charlotte HAMMOND (University of Edinburgh)
 - Trauma and the Monstrous-Feminine in Korean On-Screen Media
- Sungwon HEO (University of California, Davis)
 - Queer Futures in Warm-Out Stories: A Queer Reading of Love in the Big City
- Yun-Jong LEE (Korea University)
 - Toward Care of the Self and Others: A Cinematic Critique of South Korean Self-Developmentalism in Microhabitat

Discussants

- Keonhyung KIM (Seoul National University)

Simultaneous Interpretation Available

Korean Narrative Today II: Gleaning the Shards of History

Chair Hyeonkyung SONG (Korean Broadcasting System)

Presentations

- Jeremiah Estela MAGONCIA (Atrium de Manila University)
 - Korea as a Narrative: Digital Mediation Through True Crime
- Julie LEE (University of Music and Theatre Munich)
 - In Perfect Harmony? Constructing Complex Female Characters and Their Relationships Through Music in K-Dramas

Discussants

- A-young IN (Seoul National University)

DAY2 August 23, 2025 (Sat)

9:30-11:30

Perspectives on the Statehood of Modern and Contemporary Korea

Chair Jonghak KIM (Seoul National University)

Presentations

- Inghwan OH (East Asia Institute)
 - The Protestant Work Ethic and the Origin of Korean Enlightenment Nationalism, 1896-1900
- Joonyoung JUNG (Seoul National University)
 - Education as an Instrument of Colonial Rule? Hegemonic Competition and the Educational System in Colonial Korea
- Jongwook HONG (Seoul National University)
 - Decolonization and Dependent Development in Korea
- Todd A. HENRY (University of California, San Diego)
 - 'Hetero-Authoritarianism': Toward Embodied Histories of State and Society in 'Hot War' South Korea

Discussants

- Jaeyoung KIM (San Diego State University)
- Jeanhyoung SOH (Seoul National University)
- Choonyoung KIM (Seoul National University)
- Yong-Chod HA (University of Washington)

11:30-13:00 Lunch (Rm.220 Samik Hall)

Simultaneous Interpretation Available

13:00-15:00

Korean Democracy at a Crossroads: Historical and Comparative Perspectives

Chair Hyeong-Ki KWON (Seoul National University)

Presentations

- Chulki HONG (Korea Institute for National Unification)
 - How Liberal Democracy Became the 'Founding Doctrine' of South Korea: A Conceptual History of Chanyungilgwil from 1945 to 1963
- Talyoung HONG (Korea National Defense University)
 - Liberal Transition of Korean Democracy after 1987
- Hannes MOSLER (University of Duisburg-Essen)
 - Democratic Backsliding by Invitation: The People Power Party and South Korea's Constitutional Crisis

Discussants

- Joohyung KIM (Seoul National University)
 - Disenfranchisement in Korean Politics
- Jin-Wook SHIM (Chung-Ang University)
- Hyun KIM (Yonsei University)

15:00-15:20 Break

Simultaneous Interpretation Available

15:20-16:50

Migration Issues and Gender Inequality in Korea

Chair Dongwon LEE (Seoul National University)

Presentations

- Eun Kyung KIM (Hansung University)
 - Disability, Migration, and (Non) Labor: The Oral Life History of a Returning Woman Adoptee
- Yoo Jan LEE (University of Tübingen)
 - 'You Have to Be Better Than the Germans': Discrimination Experiences of Korean Labor Migrants in Germany
- Jongwook LEE (Seoul National University)
 - Global Labor Mobility: The Uses of Migrant Workers in South Korea and Their Families in Origin Countries

Discussants

- Jung Eun LEE (Suncheon National University)
- Minji JO (The Catholic University of Korea)

16:50-17:10 Break

Simultaneous Interpretation Available

17:10-18:10

Korea as Symptom: Why Symptomatology in Korean Studies?

Chair Jaeho KANG (Seoul National University)

Presentations

- Hong Jung KIM (Seoul National University)
- Woosung KANG (Seoul National University)

Discussants

- TBA

Closing Roundtable

18:10- Closing Reception | Rm.220 Samik Hall