

JSISA/ANTH 448A: Modern Korean Society
Professor Sorensen
October 19, 2022

**2022 Take-home
Midterm**

Write two essays, one from each section of the exam, in well-argued and well-formed paragraphs. It is due on Canvas by **Sunday, October 30th 11:59PM**. It is open book, and you have more than a week to work on it. All necessary information for the exam has been presented in lecture and assigned readings. No outside reading is required or expected. Each answer should be typed and should be limited to about 1000 words or less (2-4 pages double-spaced). Be sure to cite the readings when appropriate giving author and page number in parentheses. Students able to synthesize readings with the lecture will do the best.

I: Descriptive Essay. Using material from the readings and lecture write a well-organized essay describing one of the following phenomena or institutions in South Korea. Be sure to answer all parts of the question citing the readings and lecture.

- A. Describe the kinship and gender organization of San'gongni farm households 1977-83 as described in *Over the Mountains*. What makes these households "peasant" according to anthropological definitions? (Consider energy flow and allocation of household labor, cropping patterns, forms of cooperation, and the relationship to the outside world). Why would the farmers of rural Korea **not** be considered peasants today (2021) (considering what Sorensen and Joohee Kim have said about social change)?
- B. Jiyeon argues that the candlelight protests of the early 2000s in South Korea were ignited by a new cultural process that she calls "captivation." What is captivation? How did these candlelight protests differ from the minjung protests of the 386 generation? Given Jiyeon Kang's conclusions, do you think internet politics has been beneficial or damaging for South Korea?

II: Interpretive Essay. This essay has no single right or wrong answer; I'm looking for a good argument rather than for a "right" answer. Thus, formulate a thesis, and then argue for it in well-organized paragraphs that give persuasive examples and evidence from the readings and lecture. Don't be afraid to state out a bold position. Be sure to answer all parts of the question.

- A. How absolute do you think the patriarch's authority was in village families as described by Sorensen, Chun, and/or Joohee Kim? Was it the same among farmers and fishermen? Why or why not? Can you discern norms that might have limited the arbitrary authority of the father and given wives and mothers significant power and authority? Do you think the rural family division of labor has any relationship to militarized modernity?
- B. When we look back at South Korean political development, we see that elections and legislation seems to have a more limited place than in many democratic societies, and that street protest—whether minjung/labor protest, or youth candlelight protest—has a more important place than in many societies. Use your knowledge of Korean socio-political development from 1961 through 2008 to discuss how social protest

has changed during this period. How democratic do you think Korea is today? (In addition to Jiyeon Kang's book you may find the readings by Hagen Koo, Seungsook Moon, Yoonkyung Lee or Eric Mobrand helpful).