

Columbia-USC 2026 Pilot Graduate Conference

May 11-12, 2026

Columbia University, New York

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May 11-12, 2026

Monday, May 11

Location: International Affairs Building, Room 918

9:00 - 9:30 Breakfast Reception

9:30 - 9:45 Welcome Remarks

Lien-Hang Nguyen, Ruth Barraclough, and Sunyoung Park

10:00 - 10:50 Diagnostic Technologies: Psychometrics, Education, and Eugenics in South Korea, 1945-1975

Hetty Ye-Jae Lee (Columbia University)

Discussant: Sunyoung Park

11:00 - 11:50 Taxidermized Flâneur: 1930s Korean Surrealist Literature Through Yi Sang

Jaewuk Kim (USC)

Discussant: Ruth Barraclough

12:00 - 1:00 Catered Lunch

13:00 - 13:50 Layering "Return" in Kim Talsu's *My Family's Repatriation* (1959)

Iris Kim (Columbia University)

Discussant: Sunyoung Park

14:00 - 14:50 Disembodied Transcendence and Embodied Multiplicity: Buddhist Futurisms in Kim Boyoung's *The Prophet of Corruption*

Fiona Yuanjing Xu (USC)

Discussant: Ruth Barraclough

14:50 - 15:20 Afternoon Tea Break

15:20 - 16:10 Manufacturing Korean Home, Canning Kimchi for War and 軍 (Army): The Industrial Production of Canned Kimchi During the Vietnam War and Its Transpacific Processes

Kyu Dong Lee (Columbia University)

Discussant: Sunyoung Park

16:10 Closing Remarks

18:00 Dinner at Kunjip
(32 W 32nd St, New York NY, 10001)

Tuesday, May 12

Location: Kent Hall, Room 403

9:00 - 9:30 Breakfast Reception

9:30 - 10:20 Different Times, Same Heart: Historicizing the AI Image and Postcoloniality Within the Figure of Ahn Jung-geun
Jiwoong Choi (USC)
Discussant: Ruth Barraclough

10:30 - 11:20 Echoes of War: Acoustic Extraterritoriality in South Korea and Okinawa
James Gui (Columbia University)
Discussant: Jeongin Lee

11:20 - 11:50 Morning Tea Break

11:50 - 12:40 Surface as Symptom: The Vanishing Woman of Lee Chang-dong's *Burning*
Hyejoo Lee (USC)
Discussant: Ruth Barraclough

12:40 - 13:30 Catered Lunch

13:30 - 14:20 Affective Surface: Color and Sensation in North Korean Ink Painting
Suhyun Choi (Columbia University)
Discussant: Sunyoung Park

- 14:30 - 15:20** **Monsters in the Shadows: Queer Transnationalism and Korean Cinematic Origins as Portrayed in *Phantom* (2023)**
Caitlyn Chung (USC)
Discussant: Ruth Barraclough
- 15:20 - 15:50** **Afternoon Tea Break**
- 15:50 - 16:10** **Closing Discussion**
- 18:00** **Dinner at Prof. Barraclough's Residence**
(Details to be advised)

Discussants



Ruth Barraclough is a labor historian of modern Korea whose work focuses on gender, biography, and literature. Her award-winning first book, *Factory Girl Literature*, examines the working-class women and girls behind Korea's industrialization and their literary ambitions. Her recent co-edited anthology, *Island Ablaze and Other Stories* (Cornell University Press, 2025), explores Korea's relationship with the United States, and she is currently working on *Red Glamour: Korea's Early Communist Women*, based on extensive international archival research. Barraclough has also co-edited several volumes on gender and labor in East Asia. She is Faculty Director of the Dual Degree MA in International and World History with LSE and Director of the Center for Korean Research at Columbia University, where she joined in 2024 after teaching at the Australian National University.



Sunyoung Park is Associate Professor of East Asian Languages and Cultures in the USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences and the Director of the USC Korean Studies Institute. Her research areas include modern and contemporary Korean literature and culture; postcolonial studies; transnational anarchism and Marxism; feminism and gender studies; science fiction and technoculture studies. She teaches various courses on Korean literature and culture, gender and feminist theories, and East Asian science fiction. She received her Ph.D. from Columbia University, M.A. from SUNY at Buffalo, and BA from Seoul National University.



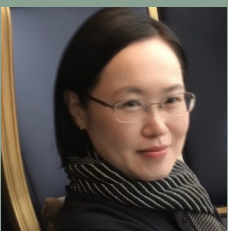
Jeongin Lee works at the intersection of sonic practice, embodied performance, and feminist inquiry, exploring how listening mediates political subjectivity, memory, and everyday life. Drawing on ethnomusicology and performance studies, her research examines the relational, affective, and sensory dimensions of sonic experience in militarized and contested spaces. She holds a PhD in ethnomusicology from the University of Texas at Austin, an M.A. in performance studies from Texas A&M University, and a B.A. in music from Ewha Womans University in Seoul. Her work has been

recognized with the Vida Chenoweth Prize, an Honorable Mention for the Seeger Prize from the Society for Ethnomusicology, and the Martin Hatch Prize from the Society for Asian Music.

Guests



Lien-Hang T. Nguyen specializes in the study of the United States in the world, with a spatial focus on Southeast Asia and a temporal emphasis on the Cold War. She is currently working on two major projects: a comprehensive history of the 1968 Tet Offensive and a study examining the role of gender, people's diplomacy, and transnational networks of anti-war activism during the Vietnam War. She is the author of *Hanoi's War: An International History of the War for Peace in Vietnam*, which received multiple honors, including the SMH Edward M. Coffman Prize, the SHAFR Stuart L. Bernath Prize, and the UKY Department of History Alice S. Hallam Prize; it was also a finalist for the Berkshire Conference of Women Historians First Book Prize and led to her participation in the 2012 Library of Congress National Book Festival. In addition, Professor Nguyen serves as the General Editor of the three-volume *Cambridge History of the Vietnam War* and, alongside Professor Paul T. Chamberlin, is Co-Editor of the "Cambridge Studies in U.S. Foreign Relations" series.



Jungwon Kim is King Sejong Associate Professor in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at Columbia University. A historian of early modern Korea with a particular focus on the Chosŏn dynasty (1392-1910), her research examines gender and sexuality, law and justice, crime and punishment, ritual and emotion, women's writing, and the history of knowledge. She is the author of *Virtue That Matters: Chastity Culture and Social Power in Chosŏn Korea, 1392-1910*, co-author of *Wrongful Death: Selected Inquest Records from Nineteenth-Century Korea*, and co-editor of *Beyond Death: The Politics of Suicide and Martyrdom in Korea*. She also edited the special issue "Archives, Archival Practices, and the Writing of History in Premodern Korea" in the *Journal of Korean Studies*. She is currently working on a book manuscript tentatively titled *Families in Trials: Local Courts and Legal Culture in Chosŏn Korea*. She received her PhD from Harvard University.

Presenters



Jiwoong Choi is a PhD student in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of Southern California. His research interests include East Asian cinemas and literatures in a transnational context, particularly as the articulations of resistance, collaborations, and intimacies between Korea and Japan from the colonial era to present day.



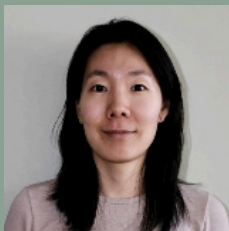
Suhyun Choi is a PhD candidate in the Department of Art History and Archaeology at Columbia University. Her dissertation, “Styling Socialism: The Politics of Ornamentality and the Creation of Modern Socialist Visual Culture in North Korea, 1950s-1960s,” theorizes ornamentality (*changsiksŏng*) as a key conceptual framework for understanding socialist art and visual culture in postwar North Korea. The project foregrounds formal innovation, aesthetic pleasure, and theoretical reflections on ornament and beauty as constitutive of—rather than antagonistic to—socialist culture by demonstrating how they proved essential to navigating the often contradictory demands of nation-building, decolonization, and socialist revolution in the early years of North Korea. At this workshop, Suhyun will be presenting her second chapter on ink painting; her other chapters examine decorative design, dress, and rural housing.



Caitlyn Chung is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of Southern California. Her research lies in cinema and media studies, gender and sexuality studies, and archival studies. Specifically, she analyzes the cinematic representations of queer women in contemporary South Korean film, examining how these representations critique the memory of national traumas and the lasting legacies of gendered and sexual violence. She is also interested in cinematic representations of space and architecture, with a specific focus on how these portrayals affect memorial and archival processes.



James Gui is a third year PhD student in the Department of Ethnomusicology at Columbia affiliated with the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society. His research focuses on the sonic experience of militarization and demilitarization in South Korea and Okinawa. Before Columbia, James received an A.B. in Computer Science at Harvard University in 2020 and later studied traditional Korean percussion in Seoul for two years. He also works as a freelance music critic and DJ, with words in Bandcamp Daily, The Wire Magazine, Pitchfork, and more.



Iris Kim is a PhD candidate in modern Korean literature and cultural studies at Columbia University. Her research interests lie in kinship and gender, language and diaspora, and discourses of reconciliation in East Asia. She is currently writing her dissertation titled “Entanglements of Kinship: Zainichi Koreans, Diaspora, and Cold War Division in East Asia, 1960s to 1990s,” which reconsiders dominant narratives of the “separated family” (isan kajok) by foregrounding the interconnected position of zainichi Koreans vis-à-vis the divided Korean peninsula.



Jaewuk Kim is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of Southern California. His research interests lie in modern and contemporary South Korean avant-garde literature and film, particularly with a focus on international surrealism. He is the author of “Surrealistic Science Fiction in South Korean Film and Fiction” (part of USC Libraries’ Digital Exhibition, Science Fiction in Korea: Between History, Genre, and Politics). His translation of Yi Seong-bok’s poetry appears in *Azalea: Journal of Korean Literature and Culture* 15 (University of Hawai’i Press, 2022), and he is currently translating a volume of South Korean science fiction with Kaya Press. He has also published his own fiction and poetry in *PRISM international* and *Volume Poetry*.



Hetty Ye-Jae Lee is a third-year PhD student in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at Columbia University, studying the history of forensic psychiatry and psychology in modern South Korea. Her research examines how the medical-legal categories of “mental incapacity,” “deception,” and “trauma”—as well as the diagnostic technologies that produced them—took shape at the intersection between the psy sciences and criminal and civil law, amid postcolonial technology transfer, national security legislation, and democratization movements. Her dissertation is titled “Between Medicine and Law: Diagnostic Objects, Technologies, and the Making of Forensic Psychiatry and Psychology in South Korea, 1945-1987.”



Hyejoo Lee is a PhD Candidate in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of Southern California. Her research interests lie in Korean film and media studies, specifically at the intersections of South Korean cinema, online cultures, and gender since the turn of the millennium. Her dissertation reconciles the motif of vanishing women in contemporary film, on one hand, and the explosion of feminine images online, on the other, theorizing how this seeming paradox reveals the ways in which media and technological change inform newly gendered subjectivities to navigate our ubiquitous computerized age.



Kyu Dong Lee is a PhD student in the Department of History at Columbia University. His research interests concern Cold War history and memory, with regional focus on transpacific spaces, exploring how racial imagination shapes historical and aesthetic representations of the past and public memory.



Fiona Yuanjing Xu is a second-year Ph.D. student in East Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of Southern California. Her research interests include modern Korean literature, Buddhist studies, science fiction, and gender and sexuality studies. Her recent projects have focused on modern and contemporary cultural representations of Buddhism in South Korea, particularly the way female monastics, lay communities, and popular cultural imaginations engage with Buddhist thought to rearticulate gender norms and seek liberation. She is also developing a research focus on Buddhist speculative fiction, examining how speculative narratives reimagine Buddhist thought in relation to embodiment and marginalized identities.

