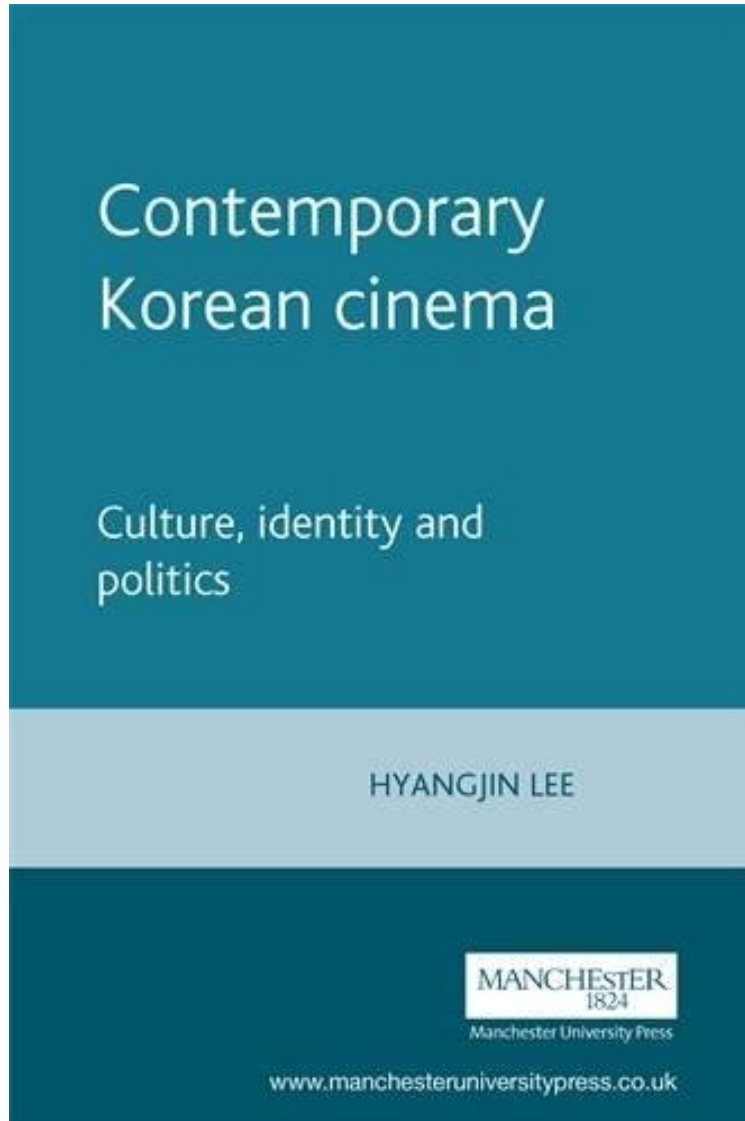


Contemporary Korean cinema: Culture, identity and politics

Hyangjin Lee

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Hyangjin Lee : Contemporary Korean cinema: Culture, identity and politics before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Contemporary Korean cinema: Culture, identity and politics:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. ReviewBy Eclectic Bookworm 'Contemporary Korean Cinema' is a valuable contribution to the development and history of Korean cinema up to 1990. However, I was continually frustrated that the majority of the seventeen films examined in the book were no longer accessible. It would have been beneficial to see Lee's observations and insights firsthand. The book does include twenty-four plates of still images from the films allowing you to visualize some of the scenes. Additionally, the themes Lee identified and her framework

for analyzing Korean cinema remain relevant today and can be further expanded to Korean drama and documentary style work with director, Kim Dong-won immediately coming to mind. (If interested see Korean Film Directors: Kim Dong-won. A collection of his films by the Korean Film Archive Collection is also currently available via YesAsia)The list of films examined by chapter are:GENDER AND CINEMATIC ADAPTATION OF THE FOLK TALE, CH'UNHYANGJONSouth Korean Films:Song Ch'unhyang directed by Shin Sangok (1961)The Tale of Song Ch'unhyang directed by Pak Taewon (1976)Song Ch'unhyang directed by Han Sanghun (1987)North Korean Films:The Tale of Ch'unhyang directed by Yu Wonjun and Yun Ryonggyu (1980)Love, Love, My Love directed by Shin Sangok [same director noted above - he was kidnapped by North Korea] (1985)NATIONHOOD AND THE CINEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF HISTORYSouth Korean Films:A Stray Bullet directed by Yu Hyonmok (1960)A Banner Bearer Without a Flag directed by Im Kwon-taek (1979)Southern Guerilla Forces directed by Chong Chiyong (1990)North Korean Films:Ch'oe Hakshin's Family directed by O Pyongcho (1966)The Sea of Blood directed by Ch'oe Ikkyu(1969)Wolmi Island directed by Cho Kyongsun (1982)CLASS AND CULTURAL IDENTITIES IN CONTEMPORARY KOREASouth Korean Films:A Nice Windy Day directed by Yi Changho (1980)Kuro Arirang directed by Pak Chongwon (1989)Black Republic directed by Pak Kwangsu (1990)North Korean Films:The Untrodden Path directed by O Pyongcho (1980)The Brigade Commander's Former Superior directed by Ch'ae Punggi (1983)Bellflower directed by Cho Kyongsun (1987)As the other reviewer, Merrily Baird, noted, the inclusion of the North Korean films really sets this study apart from others.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. contemporary korean cinema: a rosetta stone for decoding north koreaBy Merrily BairdHyangjin Lee's "Contemporary Korean Cinema: Identity, Culture, Politics" has a main text less than 200 pages in length and devotes only 50 percent of its space to North Korea. Even so, the book is one of the most valuable studies available on North Korea, for Lee demonstrates throughout the book how "film is essentially a construct....a creation reflecting salient aspects of a prevailing ideology." That this is especially important in the case of North Korea is due to the fact that all movies in this tightly-controlled state are produced and scripted by the government and that the guiding hand behind cinema since the late 1960s has been none other than Kim Chong-il's.It is clear from the introduction to "Contemporary Korean Cinema" that Lee has been classically trained in the theory of cinematic studies. The chapters that follow, meanwhile, indicate that she has a superb ability to analyze the aesthetics and symbolism of individual films. At the same time, she traces, with a most laudable economy, changing trends in North Korean ideology. This last feature, in particular, makes this book a must-read for all those tracking the arcana of P'yongyang politics."Contemporary Korean Cinema" is also a welcome introduction to the film of South Korea, with which audiences in the West, Asia, and the Middle East are more familiar. As South Korean film and television gain ever greater popularity overseas, Lee's book itself should merit increasing consideration and study.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very Interesting PresentationBy Cammie KimModern Korea is a complicated culture. This is particularly emphasized in Korean cinema and in its filmmaking tradition. In many cases, Korean cinema is propaganda based, as it attempts to present a very sterile view of how the countries inhabitants interact with each other, their society and their allegiance to the country. But there is a secondary breed of Korean cinema, where the characters are more deranged and live outside of the accepted cultural identity. This book identifies both elements of the cinema that comes from Korea and the foundational factors, such as Japanese occupation, that have given birth to modern cinema in this country.Overall this is a very good book as it presents aspects of the foundations and the application of modern Korea filmmaking.

The first in-depth, comprehensive study of Korean cinema offering original insight into the relationships between ideology and the art of cinema from East Asian perspectives. Combines issues of contemporary Korean culture and cinematic representation of the society and people in both North and South Korea. Covers the introduction of motion pictures in 1903, Korean cinema during the Japanese colonial period (1910-45) and the development of North and South Korean cinema up to the 1990s. Introduces the works of Korea's major directors, and analyses the Korean film industry in terms of film production, distribution and reception. Based on this historical analysis, the study investigates ideological constructs in seventeen films, eight from North Korea and nine from South Korea.

"Lee's book does an excellent job of clearly organizing the films so that they reflect how Koreans have seen themselves..." -- Korean Quarterly