

Program in Transnational Korean Studies

Presents:

Hyung Ki Shin

Professor, Korean Literature
Yonsei University
Visiting Scholar, Literature,
UC San Diego

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4:00 – 6:00pm
Science Studies Room, HSS 3027



North Korean Literature and the Pitfalls of Sovereignty

Abstract: This presentation examines North Korean literature’s collusion with and contribution to DPRK’s enduring authoritarian grip on its population over the last several decades, despite/due to its isolation from the rest of the world and its ongoing confrontation with its archenemy, the United States. By analyzing both earlier founding epics and more contemporary novels and in particular their narratological structure, Prof. Shin explores how the state and its state-controlled literary institution were able to successfully make an exclusive linkage between, first, Kim Il-Sung and, then later, Kim Jeong-il, on the one hand and a narrow and problematic definition of “national sovereignty,” or otherwise known as “Juche ideology,” on the other, as the most important premise of its defensive nationalism vis-à-vis the United States.

Bio: Hyung-ki Shin is Professor of Korean Literature at Yonsei University where he has taught since 1998. Professor Shin received his B.A. and Ph.D. from Yonsei University. He was the Director of *BK 21 Plus Program* (“Task force to train international specialists in Korean language, literature & culture”) and the Head of the Writing Program at Yonsei. His areas of expertise are North Korean literature, communist literary movements and narratology among others. He is the author of numerous books. His representative monographs include the following: *A Study on Literary Movements after Liberation of Korea* (1988); *Understanding the North Korean Fiction* (1996); *History of North Korean Literature; From Anti-Japanese Revolutionary Literature to ‘Juche’ Literature* (2000); *Fascism in Literature* (2001); *Beyond the National-ist Narrative* (2003); *Narrated History—A Criticism on the Historical Figures in Literary Narratives* (2005); *Narratives of the Age, the Age of Narratives* (2015).