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-Title and abstract:

First Love and the Lingering Pain: The Collective Memory of the Park Chunghee's Regime in Contemporary Korean Melodrama Film *The Classic* (2003)

The Classic (Kwak Jaeyong, 2003), a South Korean romance film featuring first-love stories, is notable for its unique combination of two modes of time – the 1960s and 70s as past and the early 2000s as present – and socio-political history with the conventions of popular melodrama. This paper analyzes the intersection of romantic melodrama and historical representation while also considering the intense pleasure of genre film, which remains its primary purpose. I will rely on multiple theoretical arguments on temporality and spatiality in melodrama to examine how first love in the film symbolizes the regret of losing one's origins and true self under heavy pressure from the Vietnam War and the Park Chunghee era. I will also bring trauma theory to argue how unconsciously the main character in the film retrieves one's lost innocence and departs from the traumatic past with the melodramatic imagination of a love story spanning from parents to offspring.