Mid-Autumn Festival
中秋節・추석・お月見
2020 VIRTUAL CELEBRATION

DC Fuyao Hanfu Association
GW Confucius Institute
GW Department of East Asian Languages & Literatures
GW East Asia National Resource Center
GW Institute for Korean Studies
GW Language Center
GW Sigur Center for Asian Studies
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON, DC
Opening Remarks

By Dr. Ben Hopkins

Director of Sigur Center for Asian Studies
Co-Director of East Asia National Resource Center
Associate Professor of History and International Affairs
Chuseok 추석/秋夕

By Dr. Immanuel Kim
Korea Foundation and Kim-Renaud Associate Professor of Korean Literature and Culture Studies
Chuseok (추석 / 秋夕)

Chuseok (Autumn Eve) is a three-day holiday and a major harvest festival in both South and North Korea. It is on the 15th day of the 8th month of the lunar calendar. It is considered as one of the major national holidays along with Seoulnal (Korean New Year).

What do Korean do?

During the holiday, people visit their ancestral hometowns and share Korean traditional food with family.
Ancestral memorial Ceremony

With the celebration of good harvest, people pay respect to the sprites of their ancestors.

Songpyeon

Songpyeon is one of the traditional food that represent Chuseok. It is a rice cake made with the new crop of grain.
Ganggangsullae (강강술래) Ceremonies at the Grave (성묘)

Ganggangsullae is an ancient Korean dance performed with singing. This dance was performed to wish for an abundant harvest, usually on the evening of Chuseok. Dozens of participants would dance under the brightest full moon of the year.

During the holiday, people visit their ancestors’ grave to show their respect. Families get together to trim and tend the grave.
中秋節 in Taiwan

By Shruthi Nagarajan

Curriculum Developer for East Asia National Resource Center
The Mid-Autumn Festival in Taiwan falls on the 15th day of the 8th lunar month. Most of the customs and activities of the Mid-Autumn Festival in Taiwan are related to the moon, including worshipping the moon and tutelary deity Tudigong, BBQ under the moonlight and eating mooncakes and pomelos.
Some popular activities in Taiwan on Mid Autumn Festival

- Outdoor Barbeque
- Eating Mooncakes
  - Mooncakes are a rich pastry filled with sweet bean or lotus seed paste
- Eat Pomelo
- Offer Sacrifices to Ancestors
- Worship the Moon
- Worship Tudigong, a tutelary deity
Celebrations in Taiwan

Also popular:
- Appreciating osmanthus flowers
- Drinking osmanthus wine
- Sky lanterns
- Solving puzzles written on lanterns
- Wearing Pomelo Skin as a Helmet or Hat
お月見 in Japan

By Cassidy Charles

Project Assistant for East Asia National Resource Center
Celebrations in Japan

Otsukimi (お月見, moon viewing) or Jūgoya (十五夜, night of the full moon) is a Japanese festival celebrating the autumn harvest that dates back to the Heian Period (794 - 1185). It’s typically celebrated on the 15th day of the 8th month of the lunar calendar.

During *otsukimi*, people offer *tsukumidango* (round rice balls shaped like the full moon), *susuki* (薄, pampas grass) and seasonal produce to the moon. *Susuki* is said to be a representation of the moon spirit on Earth and wards off bad spirits.

Rabbits are a large part of *otsukimi* as well! There is an old folktale that a virtuous rabbit offered itself as food to a Buddhist deity dressed as an old man. The deity was so touched that he drew the rabbit’s shape on the moon.

Japanese people refer to this as *tsuki no usagi* （月の兎), a rabbit pounding rice into mochi on the surface of the moon!
Tsuki no Usagi

Other than the rabbit from the folktale, some of you might know of another famous “moon rabbit”.

The popular Japanese anime, *Sailor Moon*, titular character, Sailor Moon, is named Tsukino Usagi in the original Japanese version.

Sailor Moon draws her power from the moon and is actually a reincarnation of a princess from the Moon Kingdom.
HISTORY

Ancient Chinese noticed the movement of the moon was closely related to changes in the season. In Autumn, they paid tribute to the full moon in thanks for harvest season.

MYTH

中秋节 pays tribute to 嫦娥 (Cháng'é), who became the Moon Goddess when she took the Immortality Elixir, her husband, 后羿’s (Hòu yì) award for being the great archer that shot down 9 suns. Ancient Chinese also believed the full moon’s craters created the image of a white rabbit, and believed that was 嫦娥’s pet, Jade Rabbit 玉兔 (Yùtù).
Mooncakes 蛋糕 are the representative festival delicacy. Shaped like the moon, they are usually filled with red bean, lotus seed paste, and/or egg yolk.

There are 4 main styles of mooncakes, with at least 17 sub variations by region.

More new flavors pop up as well, like the Sausage Mooncake (Yunnan Province 云南) and the Snow Skin Mooncake.

Luxurious mooncakes can be sold up to $1000 per box.
HOW IT’S CELEBRATED

While customs vary by ethnic minority in mainland China, most people celebrate by:

- Making and hanging lanterns
- Enjoying mooncakes
- Exchanging wishes for good fortune
- Family gathering for dinner
- Gazing upon the full moon
Q & A Session

Moderated by Dr. Ben Hopkins

Director of Sigur Center for Asian Studies
Co-Director of East Asia National Resource Center
Associate Professor of History and International Affairs
Closing Remarks

By Dr. Steven Balla 白君竹

Research Director of GW Confucius Institute
Associate Professor of Political Science, Public Policy
and Public Administration, and International Affairs
Performances & Mooncake Tutorial

With Lucy Qin 秦源

DC Fuyao Hanfu Association
Water Melody
《水调歌头》

By: Yingjia Liao 廖盈佳
Game of Thrones

《权利的游戏》

By: Bojie Li 李伯捷

Music Video
Mooncake Tutorial

By: Mengyao Chen 陈梦瑶
Thank you so much for coming!

Happy Mid-Autumn Festival!