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| Yu, Hyun-mok (1925-2009) |
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| Yu Hyun-mok (2 July 1925-28 June 2009) belonged to the first generation of post-liberation filmmakers in South Korea, and is known for films inspired by Italian neorealism that unsparingly depict postwar social problems. His 1961 film *Obalt’an* [*Aimless Bullet*] is regarded as one of the great Korean films of the era. The film was made during a brief relaxation of censorship following the April Revolution and the 1960 resignation of president Syngman Rhee. Allegorising Korean society, *Aimless Bullet* portrays a frustrated patriarch whose meagre salary cannot support his dysfunctional family. It famously makes the protagonist’s decaying tooth a metaphor for festering social ills. After Park Chung-hee seized power in 1961, *Aimless Bullet* was suppressed. The regime instituted a film policy aimed at controlling film as propaganda in the service of its economic growth and national security agendas. When Yu later publicly objected to political censorship under an anti-communism law, obscenity charges were brought against his 1965 film *Ch’unmong* [*Empty Dream*], a remake of a controversial Japanese film from 1964. In 1968, Yu remade Na Woon-gyu’s legendary anti-colonialist allegory *Arirang*. Many of his films realistically portray social upheavals caused by industrialisation and urbanisation. Yu was also a professor at Dongguk University, where he taught a new generation of filmmakers. |
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| Further reading:  (Cho)  (Kim)  (Lee)  (Lee and Lee) |