History/EA 255: East Asian Civilization

Instructor: Viren Murthy
Meeting Times: MWF 1:20—2:20
Place: Ingram 22
Office: Mosse 4108
Office Hours: Wednesday 2:30-4:30
Email: vmurthy2@wisc.edu

Course Description:
This course is an introduction to the political, intellectual and cultural transformations in East Asia from Ancient times to the present. We will draw on resources from the disciplines of philosophy, history, political science, anthropology and international relations to examine the changes taking place in this region, often referred to as East Asia. Throughout this course, we will examine why and to what extent it makes sense to think of East Asia as having a unity. During different times, the area has been seen to be unified based on different characteristics, such as Confucianism and Chinese writing system, tribute system, trading, Buddhism and numerous other factors. We will study each of these aspects and understand how in this region people themselves grasped their identity and also interrogate the benefits and drawbacks of thinking about East Asia as a geographical entity today.

The learning goals of the course include being able to understand in depth a major geographical region of the world, one that is becoming increasingly prominent in recent years. Perhaps more importantly, a key objective of the course and the themes of the lectures concern understanding how regions and geographical boundaries are imagined differently in various historical periods. In this way, the course engages perhaps the most important learning goal of the history major, namely to develop a critical perspective on the past. However, by enabling students to analyze writings about the historical construction of East Asia, the course brings various disciplines, including history and geography together. Students will also learn about how interdisciplinary thinking can help conceive problems in new ways. For example, through examining how political ideologies change through time, students will be able to think about politics and philosophy historically. At the same time, by studying how people wrote history in different epochs for different purposes, we will learn to understand the political implications of writing history.

Requirements:

Attendance and Participation: 20%
Exam 1 20%
Exam 2 20%
Exam 3 20%
Paper: 20%
All students will write a paper, (5-7 pages, Times Roman Font 12) on one of the following topics or a topic of their choice:

1. How did Confucianism change when it was introduced into Japan and Korea?

2. What was Lao Zi’s critique of Confucianism? How would you respond to this critique?

3. How would you think about the contemporary Chinese or Japanese economic and political policies or economic policies historically?

4. Why Does Japan still have an Emperor System? What is its function and how did it change during the 20th Century?

5. Compare the history of women and China, Japan and Korea during the 20th Century.

6. What were the origins of the Korean War?

7. The North Korean economy seemed to be doing well during the 1950s, why is it in so much trouble now?

- You should definitely do some outside research for this paper, but the bulk of the project can be based on secondary works, i.e, books and articles about the topic. Students should attempt to formulate their own thesis about the topic and defend their position with an argument. It is highly advised that students consult the TA or the Instructor as they are developing their ideas for the paper.

- Students will also be allowed to do extra-credit assignments, which will largely consist of attending a specific talk on East Asian Studies and then writing a paper (2-4 pages) discussing the talk.

**Required Texts:**


- Other essays will be available on the Learn@UW website.

**Tentative Schedule:**
(Instructor may alter dates and readings during the course of the semester)

**WEEK 1 Introduction: What is East Asia?**

Jan. 21 Discuss Syllabus and Defining a Region
Jan. 23 East Asian Writing Systems and Confucianism
   John De Francis, *Chinese Language: Fact and Fantasy*, Chapter 3
   Holcombe, 30-42

**WEEK 2 The Formative Era and the Philosophical Classics**

Jan. 26 Daoism
   Lao Zi, Tao Te Ching, D. C. Lau Trans., 57-87.
   Legalism

Jan. 28 The First Empire
   Holcombe, 44-55.

Jan. 30 China in Division and Cosmopolitanism
   Holcombe, 58-70.

**Week 3 Buddhism and the Creation of Community in East Asia**

Feb. 2 Buddhism in East Asia and the Emergence of Korean Kingdom
   Holcombe, 71-79.

Feb. 4 The Birth of Korea and Imperial Japan
   Holcombe, 109-120.

Feb. 6 Chinese Imperial Restoration: The Sui and Tang Dynasties
   Holcombe, 91-109.

**WEEK 4 Transformations from the 10th to 16th Centuries**

Feb. 9 Esai and Dogen, Zen Buddhism in East Asia
   Dogen, Shobozenzo and Genjo Koan,
   T.P Kasulis,, *Zen Action/Zen Person*, 1-25

Feb. 11 China from the 10th Century
   Holcombe 126-140

Feb. 13 Song Intellectual and Cultural Trends
   Hoyt Tillman, “Zhu Xi and the Heavenly Principle”

**WEEK 5 Early Modern East Asia (1600-1860)**
Feb. 16 Medieval Japan and the Samurai
   Holcombe, 148-160.

Feb. 18 The Tribute System
   Timothy Brook, Confusions of Pleasure, Introduction

Feb. 20 Tokugawa Intellectual Trends and East Asian Imaginations of Gender
   Holcombe, 179-190.
   Dorothy Ko, “Footbinding”

WEEK 6 The 19th Century: Encounter with Western Imperialism

Feb. 23 Exam 1

Feb. 25 Opium War and Its Aftermath
   Holcombe 190-207.
   Lin Zexu’s Moral Advice to Queen Victoria, in Teng and Fairbank, China’s Response to the West, 24-28.

Feb 27 The Nineteenth Century Opening of Korea
   Holcombe, 207-213.

WEEK 7 Westernization in East Asia

March 2 Japan Leaves Asia: The Meiji Restoration
   Holcombe, 213-230

March 4 Japanese Responses to Leaving Asia
   Fukuzawa Yukichi, An Outline of a Theory of Enlightenment, 2—50
   Essay on Okakura Tenshin,
   Chelsea Foxwell, “Merciful Mother in Painting”

March 6, (1) The End of Empire in China: 1911 Revolution
   Holcombe, 230-244.
   (2) HE Zhen and The Birth of Chinese Feminism
   He Zhen readings and Peter Zarrow essay on He Zhen

WEEK 8 Japanese Imperialism

March 9 Korea under Japanese Rule
   Holcombe, 244
March 11 The Rise of Chinese and Japanese Nationalism: Imagining India
Holcombe 255-263.
Brian Tsui, “Ghandism in China”

March 13 Japanese Pan-Asianism and the Pacific War
Arata Hachiro, “The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere,” 308-309.
Holcombe, 270-277

WEEK 9 Chinese Communism

March 16 May Fourth and Lu Xun
Lu Xun, Readings

March 18 The Rise of Mao Zedong
Holcombe, 262-270

March 20 Mao Zedong Thought

WEEK10 Post-war Japan

March 23 Postwar Allied Occupation
Holcombe, 277-283

March 25 Japan and Asia in the Postwar
(Guest Presentations by Christian Uhl and Saul Thomas on Lu Xun, Venue TBA)

March 27 Film: Devils at the Doorstep

WEEK 12 Spring Break

WEEK 13 Postwar Korea: South and North

April 6 The Korean War (Discussion of Film)
Holcombe, 295-302

April 8 China and the Korean War Contd.
Wang Hui “China’s Entry into the Korean War”
(Talk by Harry Harootunian, April 9 and/or April 10)

April 10 Mao’s China, South Korea and the Comfort Women Controversy
Holcombe, 304-311.

WEEK 13 Revolutionary China and Postwar Japan

April 13 Exam 2

April 15 Mao’s Cultural Revolution
Yiching Wu, Revolution at the Margins, Chapter 2

April 17 Japanese Asianism in the Postwar
Taizo Miyagi, “Postwar Japan and Asianism”

WEEK 14 Visions of Asia and the Future in Contemporary East Asia

April 20 North Korea
Bruce Cumings, North Korea: Another Country, chapter 1.

April 22 Globalization and Visions of Asia in Japan
Leo Ching, “Mass Culture and Asianism in the Age of Late Capital”

April 24 Alternative Visions of Asia in Japanese Popular Culture
Koichi Iwabuchi, “Nostalgia for a (Different) Asian Modernity”

WEEK 15 East Asian Visions of Asia and Gender

April 27 Tani Barlow, “Funu Guojia, Jiating,” (Talk by Tani Barlow, Time TBA)

April 29 Korean and the Problem of Unification
Paik Nak-Chung, “Barriers to Reconciliation in East Asia”

May 1 Asia and Europe
Wang Hui, “The Politics of Imagining Asia”

WEEK 16 The Rise of the New Left and International Relations Perspectives on Regions

May 4 Wang Hui and the New Left, Neo-Liberalism and the New Left in Contemporary China
    Essay by Wang Hui
    Joseph Fewsmith, China After Tiananmen, “Introduction”

May 6 Regional Identities: East and West
Peter Katzenstein, *A World of Regions: Asia and Europe in the American Imperium*, 43-69

May 8 Final Paper Due, Overview

May 10-17 Final Exam: Exam 3