

## 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

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### **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 20<sup>th</sup> Century?
5. Compare the history of women and China, Japan and Korea during the 20<sup>th</sup> 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:**

- Charles Holcombe, *A History of East Asia: From the Origins to the Twenty-First Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

- 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

Holcombe, 1-11

Jan. 23 East Asian Writing Systems and Confucianism

John De Francis, *Chinese Language: Fact and Fantasy*, Chapter 3

Holcombe, 30-42

Confucius, *The Analects*, D. C. Lau Trans., 59-80

**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 Kingdoms

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 10<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> 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 10<sup>th</sup> 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

Takeshi Hamashita, “The Tribute System and Modern East Asia,” and *China, East Asia and the Global Economy*, edited by Linda Grove and Mark Seldon, 12-29.

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 19<sup>th</sup> 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.

Watsuji Tetsuro, "The Japanese Spirit," *Sources of the Japanese Tradition*, 285-288

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

Mao Zedong, "On Practice," "On Contradiction"

**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.

Sarah Soh, *The Comfort Women: Sexual Violence and Postcolonial Memory in Japan and Korea*, Introduction

### **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**