

University of North Carolina at Greensboro

HIS 215-01: Civilizations of Asia
TR 2:00-3:15pm MCVR 232

Fall Semester 2004

Instructor: James A. Anderson

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Course web site: <http://www.uncg.edu/%7Ejaander2/HIS215/index.htm>

Office Hours: TR 11:00-11:50am, and by appointment

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the pre-modern history of Asia. We will focus on the following Asian countries: China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. Most students in the West may only be familiar with these nations in the context of the traumatic episodes of war and violence and revolution that swept the region throughout the twentieth century. However, these countries are heirs to long histories of cultural brilliance and diversity. In this class we will first explore how the history of this region has shaped the common bonds that bring this part of the world together as a whole. Secondly, we will consider how the literary traditions of these various societies depict the social and political conditions from which modern Asian nations would later emerge.

Students taking this course should reach the following goals by the end of the semester:

- Construct persuasive written arguments concerned with historical topics.
- Learn of the fundamental historical development of ancient Asian societies in the regions of modern-day China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam from earliest times to ca. 1800.
- Understand better the effect the ancient past has had on the modern world.
- Exhibit self-motivation and self-expression by exploring and asking questions regarding historical topics beyond personal life experiences.

Course Requirements

There will be a take-home final exam, six in-class quizzes (including a skills quiz), and a 5-7 page (12-point font *Times New Roman* font, double-spaced, 1" margins, paginated) "think piece" paper. The paper will be due in class on **Tuesday, November 23rd**. The schedule for the six in-class quizzes is noted in the lecture schedule. The take-home final exam will be handed out in class on **Tuesday, November 30th** and it must be turned in to me in class on **Thursday, December 2nd**. Attendance during all lecture and discussion sections is expected. Moreover, the completion of all required written assignments is necessary for a passing grade.

E-mail Accounts

I will require that all students establish e-mail accounts with Internet access. This course will occasionally involve interaction between the instructor and students outside of the lecture period. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Grading

"Half-hourly" quizzes	40% (8% each)
Skills Quiz	Ungraded
Paper	20%

Final Exam	20%
Class Participation	20%

Quizzes

The quizzes will cover materials from the assigned readings, lectures, films, and other in-class presentations. I will go over all assigned readings, either during lectures or during discussion sections. You are responsible for anything that is covered in class, whether or not you were present for a given class period.

No Make-up Quizzes

No make-up quizzes will be offered for this class. Instead, you may drop one of your five graded quizzes, **only** if you have taken the ungraded skills quiz at the beginning of the semester. Once you have missed one quiz, all subsequent missed quizzes will be graded at 0% credit.

Final Take-home Examination

There is a four (4)- page, typed take-home exam. I will distribute the questions two days before the exam due date. The exam will be due in class on **Thursday, December 2nd**. We'll talk more about this exam later in the course.

Classroom Discussions

Discussion and the exchange of ideas are very important components of this course, especially this semester. Everyone will be required to participate, and you should feel free to ask questions in every class during lecture. When a film is shown in class, we will follow the presentation with a short discussion. Due to the size of the class, students will be divided into ten (10) formal discussion groups (**Groups A-J**). These groups will usually lead class discussions on Thursdays.

Each week's group will submit five (5) questions to the class for discussion. Following class each discussion group member will also submit their own two (2) questions to me. The first formal discussion will be held on **Thursday, September 2nd**. Students must sign up for their preferred group by **Tuesday, August 31st**. I will take attendance for each discussion group, and students may not switch groups without my prior permission. General instructions regarding the classroom discussion format may also be found at the course web site.

Students will be graded on their contribution to the formal discussion groups and on their participation in informal class discussions. Each student will come to class having read the texts and prepared to discuss them. I will not hesitate to call on all students to participate. However, you should feel free to speak with me before class, if you find it difficult to speak in a public setting. In that case, you may submit your questions before each class in writing. **Any student with more than five unexcused absences from their discussion group will receive "0%" for the class participation portion of their final grade.**

Short Discussion Response Exercises

Following discussions led by student discussion groups, I will require that you submit a two (2)-paragraph response to the five questions posed by that week's discussion group. One (1) paragraph will be a response to one of the five questions submitted by the group. One (1) paragraph will be a personal reflection on the whole classroom discussion that week. Was anything left out of the general discussion? Do you have an observation that you wish to offer in greater detail? These exercises will be graded on a check, check-plus, or check-minus scale. If you receive straight "checks" for all exercises, you will have earned a "B" for this part of the course. To earn a "check-plus" you need to demonstrate that you have thought imaginatively about the question and have put some genuine effort into your answer. The purpose of these

exercises is to gain experience in writing, and they should therefore help prepare you for the paper and the take-home exam. Please include your name with each submission. You will be required to submit at least **five** (5) responses this semester.

“Think Piece” Paper

The “think piece” paper, to be written on assigned topics, will be based on your readings, section discussions, and the lectures. This paper is not a research paper; therefore, no outside reading is required. However, the quality of your writing, particularly the clarity and persuasiveness of your argument, will factor into the final grading. Late papers will be penalized half a letter grade for each day beyond the original due date.

Web-site

I have created a web site for this classroom, which I will continue to expand as the quarter progresses. Here students can access course information, such as scheduled events (i.e. the syllabus you now hold in your hand), as well as terms mentioned in lecture. I will also list links to web sites of interest to our class. Moreover, I will include additional materials on the library's Electronic Reserve list. The library's URL is http://dra.uncg.edu/web2/tramp2.exe/log_in?setting_key=english&servers=1home&guest=guest&screen=ReserveRoom.html. Please refer to the class Web site periodically for such materials.

Web-based exercise

During the first weeks of classes I will ask you to visit the web site *Sacred Sites of Asia* at the URL <http://www.sacredsites.com/explore/asia.htm>. Please choose a sacred site from this list. In a short three-sentence response please describe the kind of pilgrim that might visit this site. Use the e-mail address you will most often access during the semester, and send the responses to jamie_anderson@uncg.edu.

Required Texts

The following books are required readings for this course, and may be purchased at the UNCG Bookstore:

1. Holcombe, Charles. *The Genesis of East Asia: 221 B.C.-A.D.907 (Asian Interactions and Comparisons)* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001. ISBN: 0824824652
2. Nguyen Du. *The Tale of Kieu*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987. ISBN: 0300040512.
3. Murphey, Rhoads. *East Asia: A New History*. 2nd Edition. New York: Addison-Wesley Longman, 2000. ISBN: 0321078012.

All other materials for this course will be available on reserve (and on electronic reserve) at the library.

Lecture Schedule:

WEEK'S TOPIC	READINGSS AND DISCUSSION
East Asia: Geography, Prehistory, And Earliest Times	
August 17-19: A Look at Asia as a Region. Origin Myths in East Asia.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 1-19.
EARLY IMPERIAL CHINA	
August 24-26: China's Prehistory and the Legendary Shang Dynasty. Social change during China's Xia and Zhou dynasties.	Film: <i>Mandate of Heaven</i> Reading: Murphey, pp. 20-34.
“Practice” Map Quiz #1, Tuesday 8/24	
August 31-September 2: The "One Hundred Schools" Period.	Film: <i>Confucius</i> Readings: 1) Murphey, pp. 35-55. 2) Spence article, “Confucius” (e-reserve) Questions from Group A
September 7-9: Rise and Fall of Asia's First Imperial Order (the Qin), Han Meritocracy and Statecraft Confucianism.	Film: <i>The Emperor’s Shadow</i> Readings: 1) Murphey, pp. 56-75. 2) Birch Readings, “Biographies” (e-reserve) Questions from Group B
QUIZ #2, Tuesday 9/7	
September 14-16: China's Period of Disunion.	Readings: 1) Holcombe, pp. 1-29. 2) Murphey, pp. 76-83. Questions from Group C
September 21-23: China's Tang Dynasty and its Neighbors, the Silk Road.	Film: <i>Poetry of the Tang and Later Dynasties</i> Readings: 1) Holcombe, pp. 30-52. 2) Murphey, pp. 83-97. Questions from Group D
QUIZ #3, Tuesday 9/21	
September 28-30: The Spread & Adaptation of Buddhism in East Asia.	Film: <i>Buddhism: Footprints of the Buddha- India</i> Readings: 1) Holcombe, pp. 53-77. 2) Murphey, pp. 76-79, 92-95. Questions from Group E
October 5-7: The Glory of China’s Song Dynasty. Mongol (Yuan) Rule in East Asia.	Readings: 1) Holcombe, pp. 78-108. 2) Murphey, pp. 98-121. Questions from Group F
QUIZ #4, Tuesday 10/5	

FALL BREAK: October 8, Friday - Instruction Ends for Fall Break 6:00 p.m

October 13, Wednesday - Classes resume after Fall Break 8:00 a.m

WEEK'S TOPIC	READINGSS AND DISCUSSION
October 14: Ming China.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 122-145
October 19-21: China's Last Imperial Order, Qing China.	Film: <i>The Emperor's Eye</i> Readings: 1) Holcombe, pp. 109-144. 2) Murphey, pp. 146-162. Questions from Group G
JAPAN: EARLIEST TIMES TO FEUDAL AGE	
October 26- 28: Foundations of Pre-modern Japanese Society. Medieval Japan.	Films: <i>Classical Japan and the Tale of Genji</i> <i>Medieval Japan and Buddhism</i> Readings: 1) Holcombe, pp. 183-214. 2) Murphey, pp. 188-208. Questions from Group H
QUIZ #5, Tuesday 10/26	
November 2-4: Tokugawa Japan. Origins of Shinto Belief.	Films: <i>Shinto: Nature, Gods and Man in Japan</i> <i>Tokugawa Japan</i> Reading: Murphey, pp. 209-227.
PRE-MODERN KOREA	
November 9-11: Korea.	Readings: 1) Holcombe, pp. 165-182. 2) Cho article, "Male Dominance" (on e-reserve) 3) Murphey, pp. 174-187. Questions from Group I
PRE-MODERN VIET NAM	
November 16-18: Legacy of the Nam Viet Kingdom. Sino-Vietnamese Relations. Acculturation and Adaptation and Resistance.	Readings: 1) Holcombe, pp. 145-164. 2) <i>The Tale of Kieu</i> , pp. xi-xl 3) Murphey, pp. 168-174. Questions from Group J
QUIZ #6, Tuesday 11/16	
November 23: Late Imperial Viet Nam.	Readings: 1) Balaban Readings, "Spring Essence" (on e-reserve) 2) Murphey, pp. 168-174. Questions taken from class
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23rd	
NOVEMBER 23rd - NOVEMBER 28th	
THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY	
EAST ASIA: LATE IMPERIAL AGE	

November 30-December 2: Arrival of the West in Asia. East Asia at ca. 1800. Concluding Points and Review.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 228-246
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30th	TAKE HOME EXAM QUESTIONS DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2nd	LAST DAY OF HIS 215 CLASSES
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2nd	TAKE HOME EXAM DUE IN CLASS

