

University of North Carolina at Greensboro

HIS 215-01: Civilizations of Asia
12:30 pm - 1:45 pm TR Bryan Building 112

Fall Semester 2007

Instructor: James A. Anderson

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Course web site: http://www.uncg.edu/his/docs/Anderson_index.html

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, seven 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 20th**. The schedule for the seven in-class quizzes is noted in the lecture schedule. The take-home final exam will be handed out in class on **Thursday, December 6th** and it must be turned in to me in class on **Thursday, December 13th**. 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 (approx.):

"Half-hourly" quizzes	30%
Skills Quiz	Ungraded
Paper	20%

Final Exam	20%
Class Participation	30%

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 six 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 6 page, typed take-home exam. I will distribute three or four questions one week before the exam due date. The exams will be due in my office (MRHA 2111) no later than 3pm on **Thursday, December 13th**. 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 generally follow the presentation with a short discussion. I will also hand out film guides with questions for your completion. Due to the size of the class, students will be divided into five (5) formal discussion groups (**Groups A-E**). These groups will usually engage in class discussions on Thursdays.

Each week by Friday at midnight I will post three (3) questions on Blackboard for the following week's discussion. By the following **Monday** at midnight each student will submit on Blackboard a short (two paragraph) summary of the week's discussion reading (not the textbook) and short responses (two paragraphs each) to two of the three questions. By **Wednesday** at midnight, each student will submit a two-paragraph comment on one of the responses made by a classmate.

The first film will be shown on Thursday, August 30 and the first formal discussion will be held on Thursday, September 8th. Students must sign up for their preferred group by **Thursday, August 30th**. General instructions regarding the classroom discussion format may also be found at the course Blackboard site.

The written 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.

Students will be graded both on their spoken and written contributions to 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.**

“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

This class is served by a companion Blackboard site, through which you may access all the on-line e-reserves. I also 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. Please refer to the class site periodically for such materials.

Required Texts

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

1. Murphey, Rhoads. *East Asia: A New History*. 3rd Edition. New York: Addison-Wesley Longman, 2004.
2. 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.
3. Nguyen Nguyet Cam, Dana Sachs. *Two Cakes Fit for a King: Folktales from Vietnam*. University of Hawaii Press (October 1, 2003). ISBN-10: 082482668X, ISBN-13: 978-0824826680.

All other materials for this course will be available on electronic reserve at the course Blackboard site.

Lecture Schedule:

WEEK'S TOPIC	READINGSS AND DISCUSSION
East Asia: Geography, Prehistory, And Earliest Times	
August 21-23: A Look at Asia as a Region. Origin Myths in East Asia.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 1-19.
EARLY IMPERIAL CHINA	
August 28-30: China's Prehistory and the Legendary Shang Dynasty. Social change during China's Xia and Zhou dynasties.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 20-34. Film: <i>Mandate of Heaven</i>
“Practice” Map Quiz #1, Tuesday 8/28	
September 4-September 6: The "One Hundred Schools" Period.	Readings: 1) Murphey, pp. 35-55. 2) Spence article, “Confucius” (e-reserve)
September 11-13: Rise and Fall of Asia's First Imperial Order (the Qin), Han Meritocracy and Statecraft Confucianism.	Readings: 1) Murphey, pp. 56-75. 2) Birch Readings, “Biographies” (e-reserve)
QUIZ #2, Tuesday 9/11	
September 18-20: China's Period of Disunion.	Readings: 1) Murphey, pp. 76-83 2). Holcombe, pp. 1-29.
September 25-27: China's Tang Dynasty and its Neighbors, the Silk Road.	Readings: 1) Murphey, pp. 83-97. 2) Holcombe, pp. 30-52.
QUIZ #3, Tuesday 9/25	
October 2-4: The Spread & Adaptation of Buddhism in East Asia.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 76-79, 92-95. Film: <i>The Dalai Lama - The Four Noble Truths</i>
October 9-11: The Glory of China's Song Dynasty. Mongol (Yuan) Rule in East Asia. Ming China.	Readings: 1) Murphey, pp. 98-145. 2) Holcombe, pp. 78-108.
QUIZ #4, Tuesday 11/9	

FALL BREAK: October 12, Friday - Instruction Ends for Fall Break 6:00 p.m

October 17, Wednesday - Classes resume after Fall Break 8:00 a.m

WEEK'S TOPIC	READINGSS AND DISCUSSION
October 18: World Exploration during the Ming.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 122-145. Film: <i>1421: the Year China Discovered America-Part 1</i>
October 23-25: China's Last Imperial Order, Qing China.	Readings: 1) Holcombe, pp. 109-144. 2) Murphey, pp. 146-162.
JAPAN: EARLIEST TIMES TO FEUDAL AGE	
October 30- November 1: Foundations of Pre-modern Japanese Society. Medieval Japan.	Films: <i>Classical Japan and the Tale of Genji</i> <i>Medieval Japan and Buddhism</i> Reading: Murphey, pp. 188-208.
QUIZ #5, Tuesday 10/30	
November 6-8: 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 13-15: Korea.	Readings: 1) Murphey, pp. 174-187. 2) Holcombe, pp. 165-182.
QUIZ #6, Tuesday 11/13	
PRE-MODERN VIET NAM	
November 20: Legacy of the Nam Viet Kingdom.	Readings: 1) Murphey, pp. 168-174. 2) Holcombe, pp. 145-164.
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 20th	
NOVEMBER 22nd - NOVEMBER 25th	
PAPER DUE IN CLASS	
THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY	
November 27-29: Sino-Vietnamese Relations. Vietnamese Acculturation and Adaptation and Resistance	Readings: 1) Murphey, pp. 168-174. 2) Nguyen & Sachs. <i>Two Cakes Fit for a King</i>
EAST ASIA: LATE IMPERIAL AGE	
December 4-December 6: One Woman in Late Imperial Viet Nam. Concluding Points and Review.	Readings: 1) Murphey, pp. 228-246. 2) Balaban Readings, "Spring Essence" (on e-reserve)
QUIZ #7, Tuesday 12/4	
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6th	
TAKE HOME EXAM QUESTIONS DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS	
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6th	
LAST DAY OF HIS 215 CLASSES	
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13th	
TAKE HOME EXAM DUE BY 3PM in MHRA 2111	

