

## University of North Carolina at Greensboro

HIS 215-01/ IGS 223-14: Civilizations of Asia  
MWF 11:00am - 11:50am GRAM 307

Fall Semester 2009

Instructor: James A. Anderson

Telephone: (336) 334-5209

Office: MHRA 2111

E-mail: [jamie\\_anderson@uncg.edu](mailto:jamie_anderson@uncg.edu) (This is the best way to contact me throughout the week.)

Course web site: <http://www.uncg.edu/~jaander2/HIS215>

Office Hours: MW 10-10:50am and by appointment

Graduate Assistant: Perry McKenzie

E-mail: [pamckenz@uncg.edu](mailto:pamckenz@uncg.edu)

### 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 **Friday, November 20<sup>th</sup>**. 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 **Monday, December 7<sup>th</sup>** and it must be turned in to me in class on **Monday, December 14<sup>th</sup>**. Attendance at **all** lecture and discussion sections is expected; an attendance list may be compiled at the start of each class meeting. 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:

<b>Skills Quiz</b>	<i>Ungraded</i>
<b>5 Graded Quizzes</b>	<b>30% (6% each)</b>
<b>Class Participation</b> (film responses, group discussion, general participation)	<b>30%</b>
*Film Responses	(10%)
*Blackboard Discussion Questions <u>and</u> Reflections	(15%)
*General Participation	(5%)
<b>Paper</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>20%</b>

## 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 6-8 page, typed take-home exam. I will distribute three or four questions on the last day of the course, and you will be required to construct an essay that clearly answers two of these questions while using the primary and secondary sources provided for the class. **The exams will be due in my office (2111 MHRA) no later than 3pm on Monday, December 14<sup>th</sup>.** We'll talk more about this exam later in the course.

## BLACKBOARD ASSIGNMENTS

### Weeks Featuring Films:

Five in-class film screenings will take place throughout the semester. Films will almost always be screened on Fridays. Written responses will always be due the Sunday evening at 11:59pm following the film. (Example. For the film shown on Friday, 28 August, the written response is due Sunday, August 30 by 11:59pm.) Prior to each screening, you will receive a film-guide handout featuring questions which address the film in terms of weekly course readings. You are expected to prepare a well-written and thoughtful response to each film guide, taking care to thoroughly answer all questions. A thorough response requires a minimum of one well-developed paragraph for each question. These responses must be posted to the appropriate forum on Blackboard. These due dates are listed on the Blackboard forums themselves. Film Responses will be evaluated by the Graduate Assistant. **Late film responses will be penalized half a letter grade for each day beyond the original due date. All film responses are required assignments.**

\*If you miss an in-class film screening, the films are located on reserve at the Teaching and Learning Center in McIver Hall.

\* Several times during the semester, students will have both film responses and reading responses due.

### **Weeks Featuring Readings:**

Each Friday you will splinter into several smaller groups to discuss primary sources and articles illustrative of themes in this course. In preparation for these activities, you are expected to read the assigned sources and prepare two well-considered discussion questions for presentation in class. **These questions must be posted to the appropriate forum on Blackboard by the preceding Thursday at 11:59pm. Print and bring these questions with you to present the following morning among your discussion group.**

Following each discussion you are responsible for submitting a one-paragraph (3-5 sentences) discussion reflection or summary. **These reflections must be posted to the appropriate forum on Blackboard by the following Sunday at 11:59pm.** Were there points in the text that you wish had been discussed or elaborated upon in greater depth? Have you come to a new understanding of the text since the Friday meeting? If so, please feel free to note those points here.

Discussion Questions and Reflections will be evaluated together as one assignment by the Graduate Assistant. **Late submissions will receive no credit. You are required to submit at least 10 (ten) Discussion Questions and Reflections during the semester to receive a passing grade.**

\*If you are unfamiliar with Blackboard, it is your responsibility to learn to use this online learning tool.

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.

### **Classroom Discussions:**

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.

### **“Think Piece” Paper**

The “Think Piece” Paper, a response to assigned topics from the required text *Two Cakes Fit for a King* and Balaban (trans.) “Spring Essence” readings (**on e-reserve**), 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. The “Think Piece” Paper will

be evaluated by the Professor. **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*. 5<sup>th</sup> Edition. New York: Pearson/Longman, 2010. ISBN-13: 978-0-205-69522-5.
2. De Bary, William Theodore. *Sources of East Asian Tradition*. Introduction to Asian civilizations. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008. ISBN: 978-0231143059.
3. Nguyen Nguyet Cam, Dana Sachs. *Two Cakes Fit for a King: Folktales from Vietnam*. University of Hawaii Press, 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:**

<b>WEEK'S TOPIC</b>	<b>READINGSS AND DISCUSSION</b>
<b>East Asia: Geography, Prehistory, And Earliest Times</b>	
<b>August 24-28:</b> A Look at Asia as a Region. Origin Myths in East Asia.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 1-19. Discussion: March, "The Myth of Asia" (e-reserve)
<b>EARLY IMPERIAL CHINA</b>	
<b>August 31- September 4:</b> China's Prehistory and the Legendary Shang Dynasty. Social change during China's Xia and Zhou dynasties.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 20-30. Film: <i>Mandate of Heaven</i> Discussion: deBary, Chapter 1 (pp. 13-21)
<b>"Practice" Skills/Map Quiz, Monday 8/31</b>	
<b>September 9-September 11:</b> The "One Hundred Schools" Period.	Readings: 1) Murphey, pp. 31-53. 2) Spence, "Confucius" (e-reserve) Discussion: deBary, Excerpts from Chapters 3-5 (pp. 29-40, 48, 67-68 )
<b>Monday September 7<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Labor Day Holiday</b>
<b>September 14-18:</b> Rise and Fall of Asia's First Imperial Order (the Qin), Han Meritocracy and Statecraft Confucianism.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 54-73. Discussion: Birch, "Biographies" (e-reserve)
<b>GRADED QUIZ #1, Monday 9/14</b>	
<b>September 21-25:</b> China's Period of Disunion.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 74-81 Discussion: deBary, Chapters 13-14 (pp. 211-222)
<b>September 28- October 2:</b> China's Tang Dynasty and its Neighbors, the Silk Road.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 81-98. Discussion: deBary, Chapter 18 (pp. 290- 307)
<b>GRADED QUIZ #2, Monday 9/28</b>	
<b>October 5-9:</b> The Spread & Adaptation of Buddhism in East Asia.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 74-78, 91-98. Film: <i>The Dalai Lama - The Four Noble Truths</i> Discussion: deBary, Chapter 15 (pp. 223- 237)

**FALL BREAK: October 9, Friday - Instruction Ends for Fall Break 6:00 p.m**

**October 14, Wednesday - Classes resume after Fall Break 8:00 a.m**

WEEK'S TOPIC	READINGS AND DISCUSSION
<b>October 14-16:</b> The Glory of China's Song Dynasty. Mongol (Yuan) Rule in East Asia. Neo-Confucianism.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 99-122. Discussion: deBary, Chapter 21 (pp. 361- 386)
<b>October 19-23:</b> First Ming rulers. World Exploration during the Ming.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 123-147. Film: <i>1421: the Year China Discovered America-Part 1</i> Discussion: 1. Gavin Menzies's official website <a href="http://www.gavinmenzies.net/pages/evidence-1421/index.asp">http://www.gavinmenzies.net/pages/evidence-1421/index.asp</a> 2. The "1421 Myth Exposed" web-site: <a href="http://www.1421exposed.com/">http://www.1421exposed.com/</a>
<b>GRADED QUIZ #3, Monday 10/19</b>	
<b>JAPAN: EARLIEST TIMES TO FEUDAL AGE</b>	
<b>October 26-30:</b> Foundations of Pre-modern Japanese Society.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 203-224. Discussion: deBary, Chapter 42 (pp. 630- 639)
<b>November 2-6:</b> Medieval Japan.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 225-243. Film: <i>Medieval Japan and Buddhism</i> Discussion: deBary, Chapter 50 (pp. 754- 772)
<b>GRADED QUIZ #4, Monday 11/2</b>	
<b>November 9-13:</b> Tokugawa Japan. Origins of Shinto Belief.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 264-284. Film: <i>Tokugawa Japan</i> Discussion: deBary, Chapter 57 (pp. 845- 861)
<b>PRE-MODERN KOREA</b>	
<b>November 16-20:</b> Korea.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 171-187. Discussion: deBary, Chapters 36 &37 (pp. 573- 589)
<b>FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>THINK PIECE PAPER DUE</b>
<b>PRE-MODERN VIET NAM</b>	
<b>November 23:</b> Legacy of the Nam Viet Kingdom.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 188-196. Discussion: Nguyen & Sachs. <i>Two Cakes Fit for a King</i>
<b>GRADED QUIZ #5, Monday 11/23</b>	
<b>NOVEMBER 25<sup>TH</sup> - NOVEMBER 29<sup>TH</sup></b>	<b>THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY</b>

<p><b>November 30- December 4:</b> Sino-Vietnamese Relations. Late Imperial Vietnam.</p>	<p>Reading: Murphey, pp. 196-202. Discussion: Balaban Readings, “Spring Essence” (<b>on e-reserve</b>)</p>
<p><b>December 7: Concluding Points and Review</b></p>	
<p><b>MONDAY, DECEMBER 7<sup>th</sup></b></p>	<p><b>TAKE HOME EXAM QUESTIONS DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS</b></p>
<p><b>MONDAY, DECEMBER 7<sup>th</sup></b></p>	<p><b>LAST DAY OF HIS 215 CLASSES</b></p>
<p><b>MONDAY, DECEMBER 14<sup>th</sup></b></p>	<p><b>TAKE HOME EXAM DUE BY 3PM in MHRA 2111</b></p>

**MAP:** (Please note the location of the following countries; China, North Korea, South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Laos, Thailand, Myanmar or Burma, Vietnam, Cambodia, Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, East Timor, and the Philippines.)



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