

University of North Carolina at Greensboro

HIS 215-01: Civilizations of Asia
12:30 pm - 1:45 pm MHRA 1214

Fall Semester 2008

Instructor: James A. Anderson

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

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

Graduate Assistant: Jonathan Fowler

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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 25th**. 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 4th** and it must be turned in to me in class on **Thursday, December 11th**. 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:

Skills Quiz	<i>Ungraded</i>
5 Graded Quizzes	30%
Class Participation (film responses, group discussion, general participation)	30%
*Film Responses	(15%)
*Blackboard Discussion Questions	(10%)
*General Participation	(5%)
Paper	20%
Final Exam	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 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 11th**. We'll talk more about this exam later in the course.

Blackboard Assignments**WEEKS FEATURING FILMS:**

Assignment Dates. Discussion questions to consider will be posted the Friday prior to the related week. Films will almost always be screened on Thursdays. Written responses will always be due the Monday evening at midnight following the film.

Instructions. Students must submit a written response to each of six (6) films screened during class. Answer all questions posted. Consider these questions throughout the week, incorporating class lecture material into your reflection upon the film. Provide two (2) paragraphs for questions. You are not required to comment upon the work of a classmate during weeks featuring films.

Example. Questions posted on Friday, 22 August for class week 25-29 August. Film screening on Thursday, 28 August. Written response due Monday, 1 September.

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

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

* Twice during the semester, during the weeks October 28-30 and November 4-6, students will have both film responses and reading responses due.

WEEKS FEATURING READINGS:

Assignment Dates. Discussion questions to consider will be posted the Friday prior to the related week. Written responses will always be due Wednesday evening at midnight during the related week. Your comments upon the work of a classmate will always be due the Monday evening at midnight following the related week.

Instructions (1). Students must submit a written response to five (5) weekly reading-sets of your choice, drawing from a pool of ten (10) weeks. Answer two (2) of three (3) questions posted. Consider these questions throughout the week, incorporating class lecture material into your reflection upon the reading-sets. Provide two (2) paragraphs of summary about the readings, plus two (2) paragraphs each answering your choice of two of three questions—total of six (6) paragraphs per response paper.

Instructions (2). You are also required to comment upon the work of a classmate during the same five (5) weeks chosen above. Use the forthcoming “Rota” document to determine which classmate’s work you will read and comment upon in the appropriate week. If the designated student has not posted work by the Monday evening response deadline, then you may choose someone else instead.

Example. Questions posted on Friday, 5 September for class week 8-12 September. Response to reading-set due Wednesday, 10 September. Comment upon classmate’s work due Monday, 15 September.

Administrative questions? Contact your instructor or History 215 graduate assistant Jonathan Fowler at jmfowler@uncg.edu for additional information.

General instructions regarding the Blackboard assignments 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.

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.**

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, 11 December**. We'll talk more about this exam and specific requirements later during the semester. The take-home exam will be evaluated by the Professor. **Late papers will receive no credit.**

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.

Attendance Policy:

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*. 4th Edition. New York: Addison-Wesley Longman, 2007.
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, 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 26-28: A Look at Asia as a Region. Origin Myths in East Asia.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 1-18.
EARLY IMPERIAL CHINA	
September 2-4: China's Prehistory and the Legendary Shang Dynasty. Social change during China's Xia and Zhou dynasties.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 19-30. Film: <i>Mandate of Heaven</i>
SKILLS QUIZ, Tuesday 9/2	
September 9-September 11: The "One Hundred Schools" Period.	Readings: 1) Murphey, pp. 31-53. 2) Spence article, "Confucius" (e-reserve)
September 16-18: Rise and Fall of Asia's First Imperial Order (the Qin), Han Meritocracy and Statecraft Confucianism.	Readings: 1) Murphey, pp. 54-73. 2) Birch Readings, "Biographies" (e-reserve)
GRADED QUIZ #1, Tuesday 9/16	
September 23-25: China's Period of Disunion.	Readings: 1) Murphey, pp. 74-82 2) Tu chapter, "Probing the Three Bonds and the Five Relationships" (e-reserve)
September 30- October 2: China's Tang Dynasty and its Neighbors, the Silk Road.	Readings: 1) Murphey, pp. 82-97. 2) Shafer chapter, "The Glory of The Tang" (e-reserve)
GRADED QUIZ #2, Tuesday 9/30	
October 7-9: The Spread & Adaptation of Buddhism in East Asia.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 74-78, 91-97. Film: <i>The Dalai Lama - The Four Noble Truths</i>
October 14-16: The Glory of China's Song Dynasty. Mongol (Yuan) Rule in East Asia. Ming China.	Readings: 1) Murphey, pp. 98-146. 2) Holcombe, pp. 78-108.
GRADED QUIZ #3, Tuesday 10/14	

FALL BREAK: October 17, Friday - Instruction Ends for Fall Break 6:00 p.m

October 22, Wednesday - Classes resume after Fall Break 8:00 a.m

WEEK'S TOPIC	READINGSS AND DISCUSSION
October 23: World Exploration during the Ming. The Manchus' Imperial Order.	Reading: Murphey, pp. 147-162. Film: <i>1421: the Year China Discovered America-Part 1</i>
JAPAN: EARLIEST TIMES TO FEUDAL AGE	
October 28-30: Foundations of Pre-modern Japanese Society.	Readings: 1) Holcombe, pp. 203-225. 2) Murphey, pp. 203-225. 3) <i>Kojiki</i> selection (on e-reserve) Film: <i>Classical Japan and the Tale of Genji</i>
November 4-6: Medieval Japan.	Film: <i>Medieval Japan and Buddhism</i> Readings: 1) Murphey, pp. 226-244. 2) deBary Chapter, "Women's Education" (on e-reserve)
GRADED QUIZ #4, Tuesday 11/4	
November 11-13: Tokugawa Japan. Origins of Shinto Belief.	Films: <i>Tokugawa Japan</i> Reading: Murphey, pp. 265-285.
PRE-MODERN KOREA	
November 18-20: Korea.	Readings: 1) Murphey, pp. 170-186. 2) Cho Chapter, "Male Dominance and Mother Power" (on e-reserve)
GRADED QUIZ #5, Tuesday 11/18	
PRE-MODERN VIET NAM	
November 25: Legacy of the Nam Viet Kingdom.	Readings: 1) Murphey, pp. 187-202. 2) Holcombe, pp. 145-164.
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25th	
NOVEMBER 27th – NOVEMBER 30th	
PAPER DUE IN CLASS	
THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY	
December 2-4: Sino-Vietnamese Relations. Vietnamese Acculturation, Adaptation and Resistance. Concluding Points and Review	Readings: 1) Murphey, pp. 187-202. 2) Nguyen & Sachs. <i>Two Cakes Fit for a King</i> 3) Balaban Readings, "Spring Essence" (on e-reserve)
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4th	
TAKE HOME EXAM QUESTIONS DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS	
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4th	
LAST DAY OF HIS 215 CLASSES	
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11th	
TAKE HOME EXAM DUE BY 3PM in MHRA 2111	

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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