

**University of North Carolina at Greensboro**  
**HIS 588: East Asian History Selected Topics - The Viet Nam Wars**

Spring Semester 2002

T R 2:00pm- 3:15pm

MCVR 325

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Course web site: <http://www.uncg.edu/~jaander2/HIS588>

Office Hours: MW 1:00-1:50 p.m., and by appointment

**Introduction:**

In the eyes of many Americans, there is little separation between the image of “Vietnam” and the tragic outcome of US involvement in the Second Indochinese War. However, Viet Nam as a nation and the Vietnamese as a people have existed in the region for over two thousand years, fighting during much of this time for both political autonomy and cultural self-identity. During the course of its history, Viet Nam’s military adversary and cultural ally has often been China. Conversely, Chinese leaders have long believed that their empire shared a special bond with Viet Nam, which at times promoted the impulse to subjugate their smaller neighbor. This course will consider the history of wars fought on Vietnamese soil within the larger context of political, social and cultural change. The course themes include; resistance of foreign aggression as an integral part of the Vietnamese nationalist narrative, Vietnamese self-identity in the shadow of Chinese domination, the anti-colonial origins of the Vietnamese nationalist and Communist movements, and Vietnamese government’s uneasy relations with border ethnic groups. It is my desire that, after the completion of this seminar course, we will have a larger historical context in which we can more clearly evaluate the events of the last 50 years.

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

- ≪≪ Construct persuasive written arguments regarding issues of historical interpretation.
- ≪≪ Utilize the latest methods of Web-based technology to communicate with fellow students.
- ≪≪ 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**

I expect all students to attend and participate in all discussion sections. Moreover, the completion of all written assignments is necessary for a passing grade. No "incompletes" will be given for this class. Please remember to plan ahead! I will also 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. Please set up these accounts as soon as possible. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

### **Grading (Undergraduates)**

Annotated bibliography (4-5 pages)	20%
Class presentation	10%
Historiographical essay (6-7 pages)	30%
Class participation	30%

### **Grading (Graduate students)**

Historiographical essay (15-20 pages)	50%
Class presentation	20%
Class participation	30%

### **Annotated bibliography**

All undergraduate students will produce short annotated bibliographies as their first written assignments. All graduate students will supply annotated bibliographies with their final historiographical essays. An annotated bibliography is a list of books, articles, and documents, in which each entry is followed by a brief description of the source itself. These descriptions, or annotations, are provided to advise the reader on the accuracy and usefulness of the materials you have cited in your bibliography. For a better sense of what it entails to create an annotated bibliography, I urge everyone to visit the Cornell University Library's web site at <http://www.library.cornell.edu/okuref/research/skill28.htm>. This page contains a very good overview of the process.

### **Web Site contributions**

I have created a Web site for this classroom, which you and I will continue to expand as the semester progresses. Together we will discuss options for the expansion of the course web site during the first weeks of class. Students also 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. I urge everyone to visit the site *Critical Thinking on the Web: A Directory of Quality Online Resources* (<http://www.philosophy.unimelb.edu.au/reason/critical/>) before "surfing" through these on-line materials. Moreover, I may include additional materials on the library's Electronic Reserve list. Please refer to the class Web site periodically for such materials.

### **Class presentations**

All students will be required to present to the class a short summary and salient points from their final essays. We will discuss the nature of these presentations later on in the course.

## **Historiographical Essay**

An historiographical essay is a critical overview of a variety of historical interpretations of an oftentimes narrowly focused topic. Such essays can take different forms, and we will discuss these forms during this course. As an example, I will place one of my own historiographical essays from graduate student days on reserve at the library.

Please remember that 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.

## **Classroom Discussions**

Discussion and the exchange of ideas are very important components of this course. Everyone will be required to participate, and you should feel free to ask questions in every class. 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.

## **Required Reading**

1. Walzer, Michael. *Just and Unjust Wars: a Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations*. 3rd edition New York: Basic Books, 2000. ISBN: 0465037054.
2. Hue-Tam Ho Tai (Editor). *The Country of Memory: Remaking the Past in Late Socialist Vietnam* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001. ISBN: 0520222679.
3. Qiang, Zhai. *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950-1975*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000. ISBN: 0807848425.
4. Duiker, William J. *Ho Chi Minh: A Life*. New York: Hyperion, 2001. ISBN: 078688701X.
5. Bradley, Mark Philip *Imagining Vietnam and America: The Making of Postcolonial Vietnam, 1919-1950*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000. ISBN: 0807848611.

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

<b>READING SCHEDULE</b>	
<b>WEEK'S TOPIC</b>	<b>READINGS AND DISCUSSION</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	
<b>January 15-17:</b> Course “nuts and bolts” and topical introduction	<b>Reading:</b> Hue Tam Ho Tai’s Introduction to <i>The Country of Memory</i>
<b>WAR AND THE MORAL DEBATE</b>	
<b>January 22-24:</b> Warfare and its Moral Arguments	<b>Reading:</b> Walzer’s <i>Just and Unjust Wars</i>
<b>WARFARE IN VIET NAM’S HISTORICAL NARRATIVE</b>	
<b>January 29-31:</b> Defining Characteristics of Vietnamese Society	<b>Readings:</b> Taylor, <i>The Birth of Vietnam</i> , pp. 1-44 ( <b>on reserve</b> ). Whitmore, <i>JSEAS</i> article, pp. 296-306 ( <b>on reserve</b> ).
<b>February 5-7:</b> Chinese Domination and Local Rebellion in Viet Nam	<b>Readings:</b> Jennifer Holmgren, <i>Chinese Colonization of Northern Vietnam</i> , pp. 1-22 ( <b>on reserve</b> ). Truong Buu Lam, <i>Resistance, Rebellion, Revolution</i> pp. 1-15 ( <b>on reserve</b> ).
<b>February 12-14:</b> Chinese Domination and Local Rebellion in Viet Nam (cont.)	<b>Readings:</b> Whitmore, <i>Ming Studies</i> article, pp. 51-92 ( <b>on reserve</b> ). R.B. Smith, “The Cycle of Confucianization in Vietnam” article, pp. 1-29 ( <b>on reserve</b> ).

<b>THE WEST IN VIET NAM'S WARS</b>	
<b>February 19-21:</b> Vietnamese Society Under the French. Early Vietnamese Radicals.	<b>Readings:</b> Hue-Tam Ho Tai, <i>Radicalism and the Origins of the Vietnamese Revolution</i> , pp. 10-56 ( <b>on reserve</b> ).
<b>February 26<sup>th</sup>:</b> Early Vietnamese Radicals. (Cont.)	David Marr, <i>Vietnamese Tradition on Trial, 1920-45</i> , pp. 288-326 ( <b>on reserve</b> ).
<b>No class meeting on February 28<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Day reserved for undergraduate student conferences regarding annotated bibliographies</b>
<b>March 5-7:</b> The US in Vietnamese Eyes; Viet Nam in American Eyes	<b>Reading:</b> Bradley, <i>Imagining Vietnam &amp; America</i>
<b>THURSDAY, MARCH 7<sup>TH</sup></b>	<b>UNDERGRADUATES' ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHIES DUE IN CLASS</b>

**SPRING BREAK (SATURDAY, MARCH 9<sup>TH</sup> - SUNDAY, MARCH 17<sup>TH</sup>)**

<b>WEEK'S TOPIC</b>	<b>READINGS AND DISCUSSION</b>
<b>March 19-21:</b> The Legacy of Ho Chi Minh	<b>Reading:</b> Duiker, <i>Ho Chi Minh</i>
<b>CHINA AND THE WARS OF VIET NAM</b>	
<b>March 26-28:</b> China and the Wars of Viet Nam	<b>Readings:</b> Lo Jung-pang, "Intervention in Vietnam" article, pp. 154-82 ( <b>on reserve</b> ) King C. Chen, <i>China's War With Vietnam, 1979</i> , pp. 69-117 ( <b>on reserve</b> )
<b>April 2-4:</b> China and the Wars of Viet Nam (cont.)	<b>Reading:</b> Qiang, <i>China and Vietnam</i>

<b>THE LEGACY OF WAR</b>	
<b>April 9-11:</b> Modern Viet Nam and the Historical Memory of War	Readings: Hue Tam Ho Tai, <i>The Country of Memory</i>
<b>April 16-18</b>	<b>Class Presentations</b>
<b>April 23-25</b>	<b>Class Presentations</b>
<b>No class meeting on April 25<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Day reserved for student conferences regarding historiographical essays</b>
<b>April 30- May 2</b>	<b>Class Presentations Film &amp; Final Discussion</b>
<b>THURSDAY, MAY 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>GRADUATE ESSAYS DUE</b>
<b>THURSDAY, MAY 9<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>UNDERGRADUATE ESSAYS DUE</b>

## WORKS CONSULTED

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso, 1983.

Buttinger, Joseph. *The Smaller Dragon: A Political History of Vietnam*. New York: Praeger Press, 1958.

Chapius, Oscar. *A History of Vietnam: From Hong Bang to Tu Duc*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1995.

Chen, King C. *Vietnam and China, 1938-1954*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969.

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Cleary, J.C. "Buddhism and Popular Religion in Medieval Vietnam." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, vol. 59, no. 1 (Spring 1991): 93-118.

Duiker, William J. *China and Vietnam: The Roots of Conflict*. Berkeley: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1986.

Higham, Charles. *The Bronze Age of Southeast Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Hodgkin, Thomas. *Vietnam: The Revolutionary Path*. London: the Macmillan Press, Ltd., 1981.

Holmgren, Jennifer. *Chinese Colonization of Northern Vietnam*. Canberra: Australia National University Press, 1980.

Lawson, Eugene K. *The Sino-Vietnamese Conflict*. New York: Praeger Pub., 1984.

Lo, Jung-pang. "Intervention in Vietnam: A Case Study of the Foreign Policy of the Early Ming Government." *Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies*. 8, nos. 1-2 (August 1970): 154-82.

Marr, David G. *Vietnamese Tradition on Trial, 1920-1945*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981.

Schwartz, Benjamin I. *The World of Thought in Ancient China*. Cambridge: The Belknap Press (Harvard U. Press), 1985.

Smith, R.B. "China and Southeast Asia: The Revolutionary Perspective, 1951." *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* vol. 19, no. 1 (March 1988): 97-110.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Cycle of Confucianization in Vietnam" pp. 1-29 in Walter F. Vella (ed.) *Aspects of*

*Vietnamese History*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1973.

Tai, Hue-Tam Ho. *Radicalism and the Origins of the Vietnamese Revolution*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992.

Truong Buu Lâm. *Resistance, Rebellion, Revolution: Popular Movements in Vietnamese History*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1984.

Whitmore, John. "Chiao-chih and Neo-Confucianism: The Ming Attempt to Transform Vietnam." *Ming Studies*, vol. 3 (Spring 1977): 51-92.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Social Organization and Confucian Thought in Vietnam." *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, vol. 15, no. 2 (September 1984): 296-306.