Syllabus subject to change: last updated 3-16-20

Empires of East Asia (HIST S306)
Summer Session B, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:00-12:15

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For a taste of the architecture of China’s Tang Dynasty (618-907), you have to visit the eighth-century Japanese capital of Nara; in the Tang capitals of Chang’an and Luoyang, nothing comparable remains. When the Japanese warlord, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, dreamed of building a World Empire in the 1590s, his plan included moving the Japanese Emperor to Beijing and himself retiring to Ningbo, near present-day Shanghai. In 1700, Korean ambassadors and their Japanese hosts would converse by exchanging poems in Classical Chinese. In 1900, nine out of ten young Chinese who studied abroad enrolled at Japanese universities. Today, East Asia is a region of tense diplomatic relations and unresolved historical resentments, but its internal flows of popular culture, power, trade, and technology are adding the latest layer to fifteen centuries of interaction.

In this course, we seek to understand the history of East Asia in a wider regional context. This subject matter is vast, comprising somewhere between a quarter and a third of human history over the past 1500 years. As such, we will not attempt comprehensive coverage; rather, we will cross this vast stream of history by a number of steppingstones, loosely grouped under the headings of three separate empires.

The Tang dynasty (618-907) unified China, occupied Korea briefly, and provided a model of empire combining Confucian and Buddhist traditions that all subsequent rulers throughout the region emulated. The land-based empire of the Qing (1644-1911) built an even larger state than the Tang by granting individual peoples a measure of autonomy. Forced to abandon its policies of national seclusion in the 1850s, Japan soon built its own colonial empire (1895-1945). In East Asia, the age of formal empires came to an end in the aftermath of World War II, but their legacies continue to shape the present. In this course, we will read memoirs by the Japanese monk Ennin (794-864), the Dutch shipwrecked sailor Hendrick Hamel (1630-1692), the Taiwanese journalist Wu Zhuoliu (1900-1976), and the Korean professor Richard Kim (1932- ) to learn what it was like to live under these different empires.

Each class session will be divided into time for lecture, class discussion, and additional interactive activities noted below. We will have the opportunity to learn hands-on how historians engage with documents, through field trips to the Yale University Art Gallery and Yale’s Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Through other classroom activities, we will interact with digital archives as well.

Like other history classes, Empires of East Asia emphasizes the analysis of primary documents, reading with skepticism, and presenting tightly written arguments. It is designed for anyone who seeks to acquire a fundamental historical understanding of East Asia, whether as a first introduction or as the only class you will take in this field. Likewise, students who have studied one or more East Asian countries will find that this course, with its focus on connections between national histories, will offer new perspectives on what they have learned elsewhere.

Here is the grading formula (improvement will be rewarded):

- 20% class participation and short assignments (including map quiz July 7)
- 20% first paper (due July 10, 5 pm)
- 20% midterm exam (July 14)
- 20% second paper (due July 27, 5 pm)
- 20% final exam (July 30)

Students are expected to attend every class session and to participate actively.

Books You Should Buy (all other readings will be available in pdf form on the course website):

Class Schedule:

Tuesday, June 30: Introduction to the Class
- **Class activities:** course introduction, getting to know each other, Confucius’s *Analects*
- **To prepare for next class:**
  - Read Holcombe p. 72-93, read Keown p. 1-83 (okay to skim p. 14-55); prepare for East Asia in the News activity

Thursday, July 2: Early East Asian Buddhism
- **Class activities:** East Asia in the News, Buddhism in Early East Asia, visual sources activity
- **To prepare for next class:**
  - Read Ennin readings (pdf on course website); study for map quiz tomorrow (list of terms will be distributed in class)

Tuesday, July 7: The Tang Dynasty
- **Map quiz in class**
- **Class activities:** The Tang Dynasty, in-class writing workshop on Ennin’s diary
- **To prepare for next class:**
  - Work on paper on Ennin readings (1000 words, see separate handout); prewriting assignment due Thursday at 5pm; final paper due Friday, July 10 at 5pm

Thursday, July 9: The Song and Yuan Dynasties
- **Class activities:** The Song and Yuan Dynasties, field trip to Yale University Art Gallery (tentative date)
- **To prepare for next class:**
  - Finish Ennin paper (due tomorrow at 5pm); read Hamel’s journal selections (pdf on course website); study for midterm exam on Tuesday morning

Tuesday July 14: The Qing Empire and Early Modern East Asia
- **Midterm exam (1 hour)**
- **Class activities:** The Qing Empire and Early Modern East Asia
- **To prepare for next class:**
  - Read Holcombe, p. 217-258; read articles by Hotta and Okakura (pdfs on course website)

Thursday, July 16: Japan and East Asia in the Late Nineteenth Century
- **Class activities:** The Late Nineteenth Century, activity on Visualizing Cultures
- **To prepare for next class:**
  - Readings from *The Fig Tree*; read Holcombe p. 259-287

Tuesday July 21: The Japanese Empire
- **Class activities:** The Japanese Empire, film screening: *Under the Flag of the Rising Sun*
- **To prepare for next class:**
  - Readings from *Lost Names*

Thursday, July 23: The Second World War
- **Class activities:** World War II, in-class writing workshop, oral history activity
- **To prepare for next class:**
  - Work on paper comparing *Lost Names* and *The Fig Tree* (1000 words. See separate handout for details. Due Monday at 5pm); Prepare for group presentations on Chapter 10, 11 or 12 of Holcombe

Tuesday, July 28: East Asia Today
- **Class activities:** East Asia Today, group presentations, course wrap-up
- **To prepare for next class:** Study for final exam
Thursday, July 30: Final Exam
  • Final exam
  • Field trip to Beinecke Rare Books and Manuscript Library (tentative date)

A Note on Academic Integrity:
No plagiarism will be tolerated in this class. Plagiarism is the use of another person’s words or ideas without proper attribution, and is a serious offence. If you have questions about this, please feel free to ask me. The Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning offers resources to learn more about proper citation (https://poorvucenter.yale.edu/using-sources).