Classical Asia

This course is designed to introduce students to the main themes of the classical age in Asian history. This semester, we will focus on East Asia - China, Japan, and Korea – during the period from 1000 BCE through 1300 CE. Throughout the course, we will discuss such topics as the rise of the state and social institutions and the formation of religious and philosophical beliefs, which left tremendous impact on the later history of East Asia. Besides the profound depth and richness of these topics, the classical age is an exciting field of study also because it provides people in the present not only with a set of culturally rooted repertoire with which to address current problems but also with sources of heated debates often fueled by contemporary nationalism and politics. Thus, many of the topics addressed in the course have perennial relevance to the present.

While the historical backgrounds of each week’s topic will be provided through lectures, students will be asked to read and think through primary sources in translation and to provide their insights on them in-class discussion and in written assignments.

Instructor: Sukhee Lee; email: sukhlee@rci.rutgers.edu There is no phone in my office. Email is the only way of contacting me outside the class. Use your Rutgers email account when you write to me. And please do not forget to start your subject line with “(Classical Asia).”

Office: Van Dyck 002E
Office hours: Thursday 10:00-12:00 a.m. and by appointment

Textbooks
Patricia Ebrey et al., Pre-Modern East Asia: A Cultural, Social, and Political History (Belmont: Wadsworth, 2009)
These books have been ordered at the Rutgers University Bookstore. But you can find cheaper (used) ones at online book sellers such as www.amazon.com or www.bookfinder.com. You can get a used copy of Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy, for example, at around $18.00 from amazon.com.

Additional readings which are under asterisk (*) will be posted at our SAKAI course website in time.

Learning Goals
Our course has two distinct learning goals. Throughout the course you will be asked and tested to learn how to:
1. Understand the bases and development of human and societal endeavors across time and place
2. Explain the development of some aspect of a society or culture over time, including the history of ideas
Grading
Class attendance and participation 10%
FIVE response paper based on primary text analysis 15%
Midterm exam 25%
One 5-6 page (typed, double-spaced) paper 20%
Final exam 30%

On academic integrity
Plagiarized paper or cheating in exams will result in, at least, “F” for the assignment. In addition, the cases will be reported to the university administration for sanctions. As for the Rutgers policies on academic integrity, see http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml

Other Class Policies
*Lecture and section attendance is your most basic responsibility. I will take attendance at every lecture and section. Unexcused absences, when they exceed twice, will affect your final grade. (e.g. 3 times, -10% from your “class attendance and participation”; 4 times, -20%; …) If you are absent from more than one third of the entire classes and sections, you will automatically get “F.”
*No make-up examinations will be provided except in cases of documented illness or family emergency. Please mark your calendar well!
*No entering the exam after 30 minutes.
*Late paper will be penalized by subtracting EIGHT points for every day past the due date. for the first FIVE days. No paper will be accepted after FIVE days past the due. Famous lines such as “I am pretty sure that I emailed that to you the other day” or “I certainly uploaded it at Sakai in time, but somehow can’t find it there now” will do no good unless you show me “hard evidence” of such claims (e.g. a print of your original sent mail showing the time of its sending).
*As a courtesy to others, please turn off your cell phones.

Weekly Schedule

WEEK 1
September 7 (W) Course Introduction
September 8 (Th) Birth of Civilization in China: The Shang and Zhou
Ebrey, pp. 15-19.

WEEK 2
September 12 Decline of Zhou Order
Ebrey, pp. 21-25, 32-34.
September 14 Intellectual Foundations of East Asian Civilization: Confucius, Mozi, and Laozi
Ebrey, pp. 26-32.
WEEK 3
September 19  Intellectual Foundations of East Asian Civilization: Mencius, Xunzi, and Han Feizi
September 21  DISCUSSION SECTION I on Confucius et al.

WEEK 4
September 26  The First Emperor and His Empire
   Ebrey, pp. 35-40.
   **“The Biography of Li Si (Li Ssu),” Records of the Grand Historian: Qin Dynasty, pp. 179-206.

September 28  Consolidation of Imperial Order: The Western Han
   Ebrey, pp. 41-48.
   de Bary, pp. 195-198.
   *Huan Kuan, Discourses on Salt and Iron: A debate on state control of commerce and industry in ancient China, chapter I-XXVIII, translated by Esson M. Gale (selected chapters)

WEEK 5
October 3  DISCUSSION SECTION II on the Salt and Iron
October 5  The Rise of Great Clans: The Eastern Han
   Ebrey, pp. 48-54.
   de Bary, pp. 174-78, pp. 202-03.
   **“The Biography of Po Yi (Bo Yi) and Shu Ch’i (Shu Qi),” Records of the Historian: Chapters from the Shih Chi of Ssu-ma Ch’ien, pp. 7-15.

WEEK 6
October 10  The Period of Disunion
   Ebrey, pp. 60-67.
October 12  Aristocracy, Arts, and Daoism
   Ebrey, pp. 67-68.
   de Bary, pp. 219-222.

WEEK 7
October 17  MIDTERM EXAM (in class)
October 19        Buddhist Conquest of China
Ebrey, 69-73.
de Bary, pp. 229-237.
*Ebrey (Sourcebook), pp. 97-104.
**The Great Maudgalyayana Rescues His Mother from Hell,” in Y.W. Ma and Joseph
Lau, eds., Traditional Chinese Stories, pp. 443-455.

WEEK 8
October 24       DISCUSSION SECTION III on Buddhism       Paper Due
October 26       Cosmopolitan Empire
Ebrey, pp. 74-83, 94-97.
de Bary, pp. 293-300.
*Charles Holcombe, The Genesis of East Asia 221 B.C.-A.D. 907 (Honolulu: University
*Ebrey (Sourcebook), pp. 112-19, 123-24.

WEEK 9
October 31       The Waning of the Chinese Middle Age
Ebrey, pp. 84-91, pp. 128-46.
November 2       DISCUSSION SECTION IV on Yingying’s story

WEEK 10
November 7       Early Korea
* M. Byington, “Control or Conquer,” Journal of Northeast Asian History, pp. 81-117.
*Yi Hyunhae, “The Formation and Development of the Samhan,” Early Korea 2, pp. 17-59
November 9       Three Kingdoms and the Unified Silla
de Bary, pp. 488-90.

WEEK 11
November 14      The Political and Social Foundation of the Koryō Dynasty
Ebrey, pp. 167-74.
de Bary, pp. 536-39, pp. 544-49.
November 16      Mongol Invasion and Confucianization of Korea
Ebrey, pp. 175-79.

WEEK 12
November 21      Early Japan
Ebrey, pp. 114-17.
November 23      Thanksgiving holiday       NO CLASS
WEEK 13
November 28   Japanese History to the Nara Period
            Ebrey, pp. 118-27
            de Bary, pp. 624-629.
November 30   Heian Japan: Courtiers, Warriors, and Peasants
            Ebrey, pp. 147-59.

WEEK 14
December 5   The Age of Warrior Rule
            Ebrey, pp. 180-94.
            de Bary, pp. 837-44.
December 7   DISCUSSION SECTION ON the recurrence of the past
            * Yonson Ahn, “Competing Nationalisms: The Mobilisation of History and Archaeology in the Korea-China Wars over Koguryo/Gaogouli,” Japan Focus, 1-17.

WEEK 15
December 12  Wrap-up