

HISTORY 280

5 credits

INTRODUCTION TO EAST ASIAN CIVILIZATION

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Humanities 267

650-3448 (mornings, some afternoons & recorded messages)

734-3927 (some afternoons & evenings until 10)

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HISTORY OF EAST ASIAN CIVILIZATION

THE COURSE:

For the purposes of this course, East Asia comprises China, Japan, Korea and the Chinese-influenced parts of Northern Asia (mainly Mongolia, but also Manchuria and Chinese Turkestan). While the course traces the origins and evolution of East Asia's civilization primarily in terms of its political, economic and social history, I try to show the religious roots of the changes on the political side and the subsequent influence of the resulting material forms on religion, philosophy and literature.

TEXTS:

The three required texts for the course are:

Edward Kaplan. *An Introduction to East Asian Civilizations: The Political History of China, Japan, Korea and Mongolia From An Economic and Social History Perspective* (Version 3.5, Spring 1997). May be downloaded, chapter by chapter from my web site (see title page of this syllabus). I recommend that you download chapters as needed so as not to miss out on mid-course revisions. The chapter files can be read and printed out from Adobe Acrobat Reader, a free copy of which can be downloaded via my web site. Those without access to the Web may obtain a printout of the text from the Distance Learning Office or may download and print out the chapter files on all on-campus WWU computer lab computers..

Jonathan D. Spence. *The Death of Woman Wang* (Penguin paperback, 1979).

Oliver Statler. *Japanese Inn* (University of Hawaii paperback, 1961).

The Spence and Statler books are available in the WWU Bookstore, from WWU's Distance Learning Office (see the lavender forms included with the paper version of this syllabus), in many bookstores and from the publishers.

TianXia Tutorial Program and tutorial files for each chapter of my text and the Spence and Statler paperbacks. May be downloaded from my web site (see title page of this syllabus). Optional as a way to confirm the knowledge obtained from text and to become aware of important points you may have missed while reading. TianXia is also available on most WWU on-campus computers.

COURSE FORMAT:

The Kaplan (i.e. my) text plays the role of spoken lectures in a lecture course. The two paperbacks are designed to supplement the Kaplan text and provide a contrasting perspective. Once you have read chapter two of my text you should be able to place

me, Spence and Statler where we belong on the intellectual-political spectrum and discount the biases of the three of us accordingly. I am available for tutorial aid and individual discussion on campus in HU 267 every day from c. 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM, and by phone at other times. Phone: 360-650-3448 during office hours and to leave messages; 360-734-3927 some afternoons after 2:00 PM and evenings. (All times are Pacific time zone.) Please also feel free to send me queries by email (kaplan@cc.wvu.edu).

The Kaplan text is printed (and I recommend you print out the downloaded files and not attempt to read them on screen) on only one side, so you may take notes on the blank sides. If you are right-handed, you might consider punching holes on the *right* side of the printed sides so the blank sides will be on the right when you place the text in a loose-leaf binder. If you are left-handed punch holes on the left side. I recommend you use a highlighter pen sparingly on the text. Use your notes on the blank sides to epitomize in a sentence what you take to be the key point of a page or section of a page. Link your note to the text by placing a number next to the relevant section on the printed page and at the beginning of your note on that section. Your notes may be of some practical use on the quizzes (see below), but they should be brief and to the point, as the proctor will give you only two minutes to consult them before starting to write your quiz essay.

EXAMINATIONS & GRADE:

The average of the ten quizzes constitutes your grade. The tenth quiz counts twice the weight of the previous nine because it also asks you to systematically compare the current aspect of Chinese life it first asks you to explain with analogous events earlier in Chinese history. Eight of the quizzes each cover four chapters from the Kaplan text (chapters 1-4, 5-8, etc.). The fourth quiz deals with the Spence book. The eighth quiz deals with the Statler book. The Kaplan text questions appear at the beginning of each chapter. There are two questions per chapter. So there are eight essay questions to prepare for each quiz on the Kaplan text. There are also eight questions for the Spence and Statler texts. Files containing the Spence and Statler questions are placed after chapters 12 and 24 respectively on my web site. You can also ask the Distance Learning Office to give or mail you paper copies of these. The Independent Learning Office will select one question at random from the eight questions relevant to that group of four chapters or individual paperback text.

Though all quizzes are closed book, you may request the proctor to allow you to examine your notes (including those taken on the backs of the Kaplan text sheets) for two minutes before putting them aside and beginning to write your essay. You may take as much time as you need to write your essay. Normally, however, you should expect to spend 30-40 minutes on each quiz, except for the tenth quiz which might take you as long as an hour to write.

As an option, on-campus students may take quizzes during my office hours (12:30-1:30 PM, daily), or at other mutually agreeable times. You may do quizzes early—e.g. by doing two or more quizzes per week—but to keep up momentum and use new knowledge to reinforce old knowledge (and vice-versa) it is not recommended that you prepare for any fewer than one quiz per week.