Premodern Korean History (IEE 3107)
Summer 2013

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Course Description:

This course covers Korean history from the ancient and medieval periods through the end of the 19th century. The issues we will discuss include the emergence of the state, the state vs. society, the evolution of class (birth vs. merit), competing religious and philosophical systems, political ideologies and social thought, cosmopolitanism vs. nativism, etc. We will also discuss the constitutive elements of the changing construction of Korean identity first within the East Asian context and then, in the 19th century, in confrontation with the West and other nations. We will read materials in primary as well as secondary sources written by Korean and Western scholars. We will link the texts we analyze to their historical context, noting how representations of people, places, and ideas change over time. We will also discuss changing perceptions and definitions of “self” and “other.” All readings will be in English and no prior knowledge of or experience in Korea is required.

The class is structured through lectures and class discussions. Informed and active participation is required of all students. It is therefore crucial that you keep up with your assignments, attend class regularly, and complete all assignments on time.

Course Goals:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify, recognize, and memorize major figures, dates, and events, and make sense of Korean history.
2. Have a deeper understanding of the important trends and processes of Korean history as well as a greater comprehension of how that history influenced and was influenced by other nations and peoples.
3. Critically examine historical materials and methodologies.
4. Think and write about major issues in Korean history in critical and compelling manner.
5. Learn how to interpret Korean history from various perspectives.

Course Requirements and Expectations

Each student is required to do all readings for the course and is expected to participate in class discussions. The course grade will take into account the following:

1. Attendance (10%)
2. Discussion (10%)
3. Field Trip Review (10%)
4. Quiz (20%)
5. Mid-term Exam (20%)
6. Final Exam (30%)

Required Texts

Peter H. Lee and W. T. de Bary eds., Sources of Korean Tradition vol. 1 (Columbia University Press, 1997)

Yongho Ch'oe, Peter Lee and W.T. de Bary, Sources of Korean Tradition vol 2 (Columbia University Press, 2002)

Carter Eckert et al., Korea Old and New: A History (Seoul: Ilchogak, 1990)

WEEKLY TOPICS AND READINGS

Week 1: 7/2-4
State Formation: Early Korea and the Three Kingdoms

2 T. Introduction

3 W. The Foundation Myth of Korea
Gina Barnes, State Formation in Korea (Curzon, 2001), 1-48, 80-90.
Sources of Korean Tradition vol. 1 (hereafter Sources), 3-6

4 Th. The Three Kingdoms
Korea Old and New, 24-41.
Sources vol.1, 18-33, 66-67.
Week 2: 7/8-11

8 M. Religion and Thought in Early Korea


9 T. Unified Silla: Unification or Conquest?

*Korea Old and New*, 42-56.

Richard Rutt, “Flower Boys”

*Sources* vol. 1, 54-73

10 W. Silla to Koryŏ: From Fragmentation to Unification

*Korea Old and New*, 57-85.

Sources vol. 1, 118-120, 141-170.

11 Th. Koryŏ: Family, Society, and Religion


Week 3: 7/15-18

15 M. Civilian to Military Rule

*Korea Old and New*, 86-94.


16 T. Mongol Rule and Collapse

*Korea Old and New*, 96-106.

Sources vol. 1, 200-215.


18 Th. Mid-term Exam
**Week 4: 7/22-25**

22 M. Early Chosŏn and Neo-Confucianism: Kingship, Government, and Political Culture

Sources vol.1, 258-292.


23 T. Economy, Education and Language

Sources vol. 1, 285-310, 327-341.

Yongho Ch’oe, “Private Academy,” in Haboush and Deuchler eds., *Culture and the State in Late Chosŏn Korea*, 15-45.

24 W. Confucian Patriarchy and Ritual


25 Th. Field Trip: Kyŏngbokgung

**Week 5: 7/29-8/1**

29 M. Imjin War/Manchu Invasions

*Korea Old and New*, 143-151.


30 T. Postwar Searches for a New Identity and Social Changes

*Korea Old and New*, 155-164.

J. Haboush, Constructing the Center,” in Haboush and Deuchler eds., *Culture and the State*, 46-90.

31 W. The Confucianization of Korea


Recommended:


1 Th. Field Trip: Chosŏn Royal Tombs

**Week 6: 8/5-8**

5 M. Gender, Sexuality, and Law


6 T. Late Choson: Marginalized Groups and Regional Identity


7 W. Encounter with the West

*Sources* vol.2, 117-142, 212-244.

Don Baker, *Silk Letter* (Manuscript)

8 Th. Final Exam