

HISTORY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT IN MODERN EAST ASIA – A THEMATIC INTRODUCTION

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Course overview

This course, a seminar for advanced undergraduates and M.A. students, explores themes in the intellectual history of modern East Asia (mainly China and Japan), with an emphasis on political thought. It focuses on the period from the 1870s to the 1960s. A core question for this course concerns the way East Asian thinkers dealt with the incorporation of their societies within a Western-dominated globalization process at the end of the 19th century. The Eurocentric narrative of East Asia's "response to the West" has been profoundly qualified over the past decades: the intellectual endeavors of modern Chinese and Japanese thinkers must be considered on their own terms, not as mere reactions to an external impulse. However, there is no denying that the late 19th and early 20th centuries marked an epochal transformation of the questions they felt compelled to answer, of the intellectual tools at their disposal, and of the global context they had to come to terms with. The 1860s-1870s will therefore be our starting point. East Asian thinkers faced these challenges in very different ways, by tapping into and adapting rich and diverse intellectual traditions, and by creating new, indigenous lineages of thought over the decades. This process took shape through domestic and cross-Asian discussions as much as through a dialogue with the West – itself a heterogeneous entity.

The course is built around a number of political problems East Asian thinkers grappled with in the modern era, and around the competing solutions they proposed. Four major topics will be addressed in particular: debates over the definition and value of modernity; debates over the continued relevance of East Asian intellectual traditions (mainly through the case of Confucianism); the introduction and uses of Marxism, in social science and political action; China's and Japan's redefined places in a world of nations.

Course goals

Given the economic and political significance of East Asian countries, and their intellectual pluralism (even under authoritarian conditions), a basic knowledge of their recent intellectual past is crucial in making sense of today's world. This course aims at providing the students with such knowledge. Rather than seeking to provide an exhaustive overview, it focuses on selected, key authors and questions, and should be considered an introduction. Students will also be familiarized with the discussions surrounding the nature and method of intellectual history, particularly of transnational and global intellectual history, and will develop their critical reading and argumentative writing skills.

Previous basic knowledge of the overall history of modern East Asia is highly recommended. Students who are unfamiliar with general narratives of Chinese or Japanese history are advised to read Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, Norton, 2012, and Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, Oxford University Press, 2013.

Course Policies

- **Attendance and participation**

Attendance is compulsory. If a student finds it necessary to miss one class for exceptional reasons, she or he must discuss it with the instructor beforehand.

Since this is a seminar course, it is indispensable that students read the texts assigned each week and participate actively in class discussions, which will be based on the readings.

- **Disability Accommodation**

Students with disabilities are entitled to receive reasonable accommodations necessary for their full participation in the course and all of its requirements. If you are a student with a disability and have a DS-certified 'Accommodation Letter' please come to my office hours to confirm your accommodation needs. If you believe that you might have a disability that requires accommodation, you should contact Disability Services at 212-854-2388 and disability@columbia.edu. For more information about accommodations and the process for acquiring them please see the following website: <http://www.college.columbia.edu/rightsandresponsibilities>.

- **Academic Integrity**

The academic integrity standards applied to this course will mirror those outlined in the University's official policy statements regarding intellectual honesty. These policies are listed here: <http://www.college.columbia.edu/academics/integrity-statement>. Any violations will be reported to the Office of Judicial Affairs and Community Standards.

Requirements and grading

- 1) **24 hours before each class**, every student will upload on Canvas a **short post** (300-500 words) summarizing the main takeaways of the week's readings. Posts will be used by the students and myself to help prepare for discussion. **Each week, one or two students** (depending on the size of the group) will also **present** the compulsory readings and start the discussion. Oral participation, presentations and weekly posts will make up **35% of the final grade**.
- 2) Each student will write a **critical book review** (ca. 1500 words), **due on week 8**. The book will be agreed on with the lecturer **by week 5**. A list of suggested works will be provided on the first day, but students are free to come forward with other ideas. The review should synthesize briefly the book's argument(s) and compare it with divergent views, as well as discuss its contribution to the field as well as any limitations (**20% of the final grade**).
- 3) Each student will write a **research paper, due on week 13**. The paper will address a question of the student's choice after approval by the lecturer. A list of suggested topics will be provided on the first day. Students are welcome to make other suggestions. The research paper should tackle a specific historical question based on diversified and up to date scholarship. Students are expected to confront points of view and defend their own position in a balanced, well-argued and organized manner. A bibliography must be included, as well as detailed references to the works used and cited. Using primary sources (historical documents) is welcome but not required. The expected length of the paper is 12-15 pages for undergraduate students and 15-20 pages for MA students (Times New Roman 12, double spaced). **The topic must be set by week 5, a bibliography provided by week 7 and a first draft (at least half the length of the**

final paper) by week 10, so that feedback can be given in time. The research paper accounts for **45% of the final grade**.

- **Deadlines and extensions**

Late work will be sanctioned (minus 5% for each day). Extensions will be granted only in exceptional cases, and only if requested at least 24 hours in advance of the deadline.

SCHEDULE AND WEEKLY READINGS

All the readings listed below are required unless otherwise indicated. The texts that can be accessed online via CLIO are followed by “(CLIO)”. The others will be uploaded on Canvas.

Week 1: Introduction and course administration

Week 2: How do we write (global) intellectual history?

Elias Jose Palti, “The “theoretical revolution” in intellectual history: From the history of political ideas to the history of political languages”, *History and Theory*, 53 : 3 (2014), pages 387-405 (CLIO).

Samuel Moyn and Andrew Sartori, eds., *Global Intellectual History* (Columbia University Press, 2013), pages 3-32, 134-158, 187-204.

Week 3: Translation, appropriation and power in the making of a global lexicon

Douglas Howland, *Translating the West : Language and Political Reason in Nineteenth Century Japan* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), pages 31-152.

Joël Thoraval, “The Appropriation of the Concept of “Liberty” at the End of the Qing Dynasty: Beginning with the Interpretation of Kant by Liang Qichao,” in Mireille Delmas-Marty and Pierre-Etienne Will, eds., *China Democracy and Law: A Historical and Contemporary Approach* (Brill, 2012), pages 211-227.

Lydia Liu, *The Clash of Empires : The Invention of China in Modern World Making* (Harvard University Press, 2004), pages 108-139 (CLIO).

Liang Qichao, “Renewing the People”, “The Consciousness of Rights”, “The Concept of the Nation”, in William Theodore De Bary and Richard Lufrano, eds., *Sources of Chinese Tradition. Vol 2* (Columbia University Press, 2000), pages 287-298.

Week 4 (February 6): Modernity as ideology in late 19th century Japan

William R. Braisted, ed., *Meiroku zasshi : Journal of the Japanese Enlightenment* (Harvard University Press, 1976).

Fukuzawa Yukichi, *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization* (Columbia University Press, 2010), pages 23-58 (CLIO).

Carol Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths : Ideology in the Late Meiji Period* (Princeton University Press, 1985), pages 3-101 and 247-278.

Week 5: The question of Chinese tradition 1 : the thesis of obsolescence

Joseph Levenson, *Confucian China and its Modern Fate : A Trilogy* (University of California Press, 1972), vol. 1 pages xxvii-xxxiii, 49-133, 156-163; vol. 2 pages 3-21, 119-139; vol. 3 pages 16-43.

Kang Youwei, "Confucius as a reformer"; Chen Duxiu "The Way of Confucius and Modern Life", in William Theodore De Bary and Richard Lufrano, eds., *Sources of Chinese Tradition. Vol 2* (Columbia University Press, 2000), pages 260-273 and 352-356.

Deadline for choosing a research paper topic and a book to review (on day of class)

Week 6: The question of Chinese tradition 2: conservative and radical alternatives

Edmund Fung, *The Intellectual Foundations of Chinese Modernity : Cultural and Political Thought in the Republican Era* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), pages 61-127.

Viren Murthy, *The Political Philosophy of Zhang Taiyan : The Resistance of Consciousness* (Brill, 2011), pages 135-222 (CLIO).

Liang Shuming, "Chinese Civilization vis-à-vis Eastern and Western Philosophies", "Reconstructing the Community", in William Theodore De Bary and Richard Lufrano, eds., *Sources of Chinese Tradition. Vol 2* (Columbia University Press, 2000), pages 379-386.

Week 7: The question of Chinese tradition 3: the Neo-Confucian path

Thomas Fröhlich, *Tang Junyi : Confucian Philosophy and the Challenge of Modernity* (Brill, 2017), pages 1-22 and 138-289 (CLIO).

"Manifesto For A Reappraisal Of Sinology And The Reconstruction Of Chinese Culture", in William Theodore De Bary and Richard Lufrano, eds., *Sources of Chinese Tradition. Vol 2* (Columbia University Press, 2000), pages 550-555.

Research paper bibliography due on day of class

Week 8: Marxism and social science in Japan

Andrew Barshay, *The Social Sciences in Modern Japan : The Modernist and Marxian Traditions* (University of California Press, 2007), pages 1-174 (CLIO).

Kawakami Hajime, "A Letter from Prison", "Concerning Marxism"; Yamada Moritarō, "Analysis of Japanese Capitalism"; Uno Kōzō, "The Essence of Capital"; Tosaka Jun, "The Japanese Ideology", in William Theodore De Bary, Carol Gluck and Arthur Tiedemann, eds., *Sources of Japanese Tradition. Vol 2* (Columbia University Press, 2001), pages 920-936.

Book review due on day of class

SPRING RECESS

Week 9: Marxism and revolution in China

Arif Dirlik, *Marxism in the Chinese Revolution* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2005), pages 1-150 (CLIO).

Liu Shipei, “Anarchist Revolution and Peasant Revolution”; Li Dazhao, “The Victory of Bolshevism”; Mao Zedong, “Report on an Investigation of the Hunan Peasant Movement”, “The Question of Land Redistribution”, “The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party”, “The Mass Line”, “On New Democracy”, “The Dictatorship of the People’s Democracy”, “On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Within the People”, in William Theodore De Bary and Richard Lufrano, eds., *Sources of Chinese Tradition. Vol 2* (Columbia University Press, 2000), pages 399-425 and 459-464.

Prospectus and bibliography due on day of class

Week 10: Overcoming (Western) modernity in Japan

Harry Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity : History, Culture and Community in Interwar Japan*, Princeton University Press, 2000, pages ix-xxxii, 3-94 (CLIO).

David Williams, *The Philosophy of Japanese Wartime Resistance : A Reading, with Commentary, of the Complete Texts of the Kyoto School Discussions of "The Standpoint of World History and Japan"* (Routledge, 2014), pages 109-181.

Week 11: The question of colonial modernity in Korea

Henry Em, *The Great Enterprise : Sovereignty and Historiography in Modern Korea* (Duke University Press, 2013), pages 1-137 (CLIO).

Gi-Wook Shin, “Agrarianism : A Critique of Colonial Modernity in Korea”, *Comparatives Studies in Society and History*, 41 : 4, 1999, pages 784-804.

Vladimir Tikhonov, “The Controversies on Fascism in Colonial Korea in the early 1930s”, *Modern Asian Studies*, 46 : 4, 2012, pages 975-1006 (CLIO).

Syngman Rhee, “The Spirit of Independence”, Sin Ch’aeho, “What is History? What shall we study in Korean history?” and “Declaration of Korean Revolution”, in Peter H. Lee and William Theodore De Bary, eds., *Sources of Korean Tradition. Vol 2* (Columbia University Press, 1997), pages 299-301, 317-319 and 346-349.

Draft of research paper due on day of class

Week 12: Postwar modernism in Japan

Andrew Barshay, *The Social Sciences in Modern Japan : The Modernist and Marxian Traditions* (University of California Press, 2007), pages 175-256 (CLIO).

Maruyama Masao, *Thought and Behavior in Modern Japanese Politics* (Oxford University Press, 1969), pages xi-xvii, 1-24 (CLIO).

Maruyama Masao, *Studies in the Intellectual History of Tokugawa Japan* (Princeton University Press, 1974), pages 323-367 (CLIO).

Week 13: Debating Politics in Post-revolutionary China

Timothy Cheek, *The Intellectual in Modern Chinese History* (Cambridge University Press, 2015), pages 217-332 (CLIO).

Zhang Xudong, ed., *Whither China : Intellectual Politics in Contemporary China* (Duke University Press, 2001), pages 79-102, 161-198.

Week 14: Locating Japan

Takeuchi Yoshimi and Richard Calichman, *What Is Modernity? Writings of Takeuchi Yoshimi* (Columbia University Press, 2005), pages 56-81, 139-153 (CLIO).

Naoki Sakai, *Translation and Subjectivity : on "Japan" and Cultural Nationalism* (University of Minnesota Press, 1997), pages 40-176 (CLIO).

Research paper due on day of class