

Spring term 2021, Master's Course Asian Studies: East Asian History

Literature

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Readings

- Lecture 1: Dirlik
Holcombe, pp. 1-11
Porter
Yun and Bell
- Lecture 2: Arirang TV
Editorial Board, ANU
Edström
Holcombe, pp. 183-186, 235-240, 273-278
House of Sharing
Hwang
Jonsson
Kim, 2015
Ng
Yuji
- Lecture 3: Glasserman & Snyder
The Korea Society
- Lecture 4: CGTN
Kim, 2010
Lee
Park
Snyder and Byun (2): should be read extensively

Stratfor
Thompson
Walia

Lecture 5: Akaha
Expert Interview: should be read extensively
Gustafsson
ISDP: should be read extensively.
Holcombe, pp. 399-400

Exam: Assignment should be sent to all teachers on April 20.

Summary lecture 1

- The economic rise of East Asia that began in Japan in the 19th century has been spectacular
- China and Japan are among the world's five largest economies
- A previous world order when China - the "Middle Kingdom" - was the leading power has been restored. China invented gunpowder, paper and printing
- Common characteristics of East Asian history are Chinese characters and Confucianism
- China is often supposed to be the oldest continuously existing civilization but "civilization" is not a fixed concept
- Following the Qin dynasty unification in 221 B.C., an ideal of a unified China was planted but present-day China has emerged gradually
- The nation-state is believed to be an invention of the modern West: the concept of a Chinese "nation" appeared only around 1900
- The establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949 was a sharp break in the continuity of history, but many revolutionary changes were not durable
- Japan has only had one ruling family and one dynasty but has been divided in history
- Korea unified in 668 and is an ethnically homogeneous nation
- *Eurocentrism* was the formative moment of the complex term *modernity*: the concepts cannot be separated from each other. Developmentalism is central to Eurocentrism
- Eurocentrism refers to economic, political and social aspects of power and contains the concepts globalism and post-colonialism
- However, modernity is not just Euro American but has dispersed globally in different forms
- Eurocentrism became important from the late 19th century to organize history in accordance with a European way and it has continued to affect the view of history also after 1945

- Questions to ask are: Can Eurocentrism be understood without the power structure it refers to? Can the present be understood without references to the past?
- Eurocentrism has become strong thanks to Euro American values, not least capitalism, but capitalism is not the only world history
- Yet, Euro American institutions and cultures exist everywhere, they are spread also by others and it is hard to find alternatives. Eurocentrism does not want to be challenged
- The present is not a break with the past but a reconfiguration
- History helps us to understand “other histories than our own” but there are problems in Great Britain with using history to teach “identity” that is a diverse concept
- Confucianism is now being revived in China in many spheres of social life but it is unclear what type of Confucianism should be revived
- Confucianism is strongly this-world-oriented and claims to be universal
- *Tianxia* is a Confucian ideal: a normative and political order of the whole world. It is the superior unit in the Confucian political order and is morally based on the belief that all human beings share the common human nature of compassion (*ren*)
- Tianxia creates rituals for hierarchical international relations such as the tribute system in Confucian countries in history. It argues that bonds between everyone creates solidarity
- East Asia has had strong bureaucratic states capable to promote relatively egalitarian forms of economic development
- China fulfills basic human needs and social media enables citizens to participate in politics
- The revival is led by the government but can also be seen through the establishment of Confucian academies, the boom of Confucian websites and organized worship ceremonies of Confucius (551-479 B.C)
- Confucianism and socialism have to jointly meet present challenges such as global justice, environmental issues and peace as well as domestic issues like economic development and social justice

Summary lecture 2

Question on Arirang TV: What are your reflections on the statements “The comfort women issue is a human rights issue rather than a bilateral issue” and that knowledge about the issue is poor in Japan? **Responses about one page should be submitted until February 7.**

- Korea was partly due to the Japanese invasions in 1592 and 1597 from the 17th century more isolated than China and Japan and was less commercially developed than both countries were
- The 19th century was a turbulent period in Korean history
- The ruling class failed to introduce reforms and suppressed Christianity
- Japan forced Korea to open its borders in 1875-1876
- Japan and China now became rivals over the influence on the Korean peninsula after a long period of dominating Chinese influence
- The Tonghak rebellion in 1894 caused the Sino-Japanese War that Japan won in 1895
- Japan and Russia subsequently struggled over influence on the Korean peninsula leading to the Russo-Japanese War 1904-1905 that Japan won
- Korea became a Japanese protectorate in 1905 and colony in 1910
- Japan suppressed political freedom and brutally crushed the 1919 March 1 independence movement that began with the reading of a Korean “Declaration of Independence”
- Political activities were suppressed and the Japanese controlled the Korean economy
- The Japanese colonization led to a modernization of Korea
- Opposition against the colonization emerged both within and outside Korea
- Anti-Japanese feelings are still strong in South Korea (Republic of Korea: ROK)
- Japan and the ROK signed a Normalization Treaty in 1965. No apology for the annexation of the Korean peninsula was made and economic aid was paid instead of reparations

- The majority of the estimated 70.000-200.000 "comfort women" from 1932-1945 were Koreans but in 2007 Prime Minister Abe Shinzo denied their existence
- The issue was long ignored both by the Japanese and ROK governments and the comfort women were not welcomed in the Korean society
- President Park Chung Hee (1963-1979) regarded Japan as a development model to emulate
- The issue became a more significant issue when the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan (KCWS) was formed in 1990, Kim Hak-sun spoke out in 1991 and evidence revealing the existence of comfort stations were discovered in Japan in 1992
- Reports were presented in the UN in 1996 and 1998. In 1998, it was concluded that the Japanese Army had committed crimes against humanity
- The KCWS has consistently pursued the issue, not least through the weekly Wednesday demonstrations held in Seoul since 1992, and urges an official Japanese apology
- Japan apologized in 1993 through the Kono Statement that South Korea has not accepted
- However, in 1998 Japan made an apology for the annexation that South Korea accepted
- The Asian Women's Fund raised by Japan in 1995 was criticized and was dissolved in 2007
- The two countries' standpoints are fixed making a solution difficult. However, opinions are divided within Japan
- The December 28, 2015 agreement is contested and the issue remains unresolved
- Japanese-Korean relations worsened in 2019 due to Japanese export restrictions in retaliation of the South Korean Supreme Court's ruling on forced labor during the colonial era. It is difficult to expect an improvement of relations
- How to write contemporary history in South Korea is a contested issue

Question lecture 3. Responses one-two pages should be submitted until February 14.

Characterize Japanese-South Korean relations through the concept of identity politics. Include relevant aspects of the two countries' views on China, the United States and North Korea.

Own comments to the book:

1. Page 61-62: "... the landmark inter-Korean summit on June 15, 2000, ...": it took place June 13-15, as recorded on p. 130.
2. Page 70: "... the killing of a South Korean tourist in 2009...": it was in 2008.
"... South Korea's National Assembly followed suit the following spring": Ratification took place in November 2011 and the agreement was effectuated in spring 2012.
3. Page 78-79: "... China will be South Korea's most important economic partner within a decade." China became the major export market in 2003 and the number one trading partner in 2005.

Summary lecture 4

Question on CGTN: What are your thoughts about the significance of the 25th anniversary of China-Republic of Korea diplomatic relations? **Responses about one page should be submitted until March 7.**

- China's significance for the world economy has continuously risen, not least after the 2008 global financial crisis. China weathered the storm well in 2008
- China became the world's second largest economy in 2010 overtaking Japan
- Sino-American economic relations are complementary but not without problems
- In 2010, China was far behind the United States in military capability
- Should China emphasize growth or growth with distribution?
- In 2010, China was too dependent on exports of labour-intensive goods and needed to upgrade its industrial structure toward technology- and capital-intensive industries. Service industries were underdeveloped compared to developed countries
- Rising wages were in 2010 a significant challenge for the Chinese economy
- China's economic rise has benefited the world, partly through investments in the country
- China aimed to enhance regional economic integration but security challenges remained, not least on the Korean peninsula
- China and South Korea established diplomatic relations in 1992 causing a rise in exchanges
- China became in 2003 South Korea's main export market
- South Korea's exports to China were dominated by producer goods
- Trade relationships were supplementary but the technological gap was shrinking raising competition in many areas. Economic dependence on China was expected to rise
- In 2010, China was the biggest threat and opportunity for the South Korean economy

- South Korea played an important role in investments in China
- In 2006, South Korean and Chinese students were the largest groups of foreign students in each country. Chinese students dominated in South Korea also in 2009
- In 2010, South Korea could not exert influence on Chinese policies on North Korea that showed limitations, as they did also in 2014 and 2015
- China and South Korea signed a Free-Trade Agreement (FTA) in 2015 at a time when competition has intensified
- The introduction of the anti-missile Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system in South Korea 2016-2017 has caused frictions in Sino-Korean economic cooperation
- Later, China's informal economic boycotts against South Korea were eased but regional cooperation is difficult to accomplish due to Sino-Japanese competition
- South Korea's economic dependence on China will continue creating a need for market diversification to India and Southeast Asia
- China was both in 2010 and 2014 North Korea's major trading partner but trade volume was very low. China was unable to curb nuclear tests in 2006 and 2009 as well as to act on the 2010 Cheonan incident
- In 2010, North Korea did not show signs of economic reforms and only limited afterwards
- There were fears of a North Korean collapse in China
- China will have to be involved in Korean reunification

Summary lecture 5

- Japanese national intellectuals want to restore pride in their nation by promoting patriotism, consolidating a state-centric view of Japan and pursuing an assertive foreign policy. Both China and Korea play an important role in this context
- In Japan, nationalism and patriotism can be equalized and Japanese nationalists argue that post-war national identity must reject what wartime Japan had represented
- The defeat in World War II unraveled the idea of Japan as a modern state with sufficient capacity to defend itself
- De-militarization took place, a new constitution was established in 1947 and a Security Treaty was signed with the United States. For nationalists the 1947 peace constitution is a reminder of Japan's defeat in World War II
- A difficult question was: Who was responsible for warfare? Who should be brought to trial for the atrocities committed against neighbors?
- Contested issues in Japanese-Korean relations are comfort women, politicians' visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, revision of history textbooks and the Dokdo/Takeshima issue
- Visits to the Yasukuni Shrine have repeatedly created tensions with China and Korea, particularly from 2001-2006, but the issue is also contested within Japan
- The more critical Chinese and Korean criticism is, the more determined Japanese nationalists are to reject their objections
- The 1937 Nanjing massacre is highly contested in Sino-Japanese relations
- In 1982, history textbooks replaced "invasion" with "advance" causing criticism from China and Korea whose opinions later were considered
- Reasons for wanting a revision are the threat from North Korea and the rise of China that opposes Japan as permanent member of the UN Security Council
- Japan adopted unilateral sanctions against North Korea in 2006 after the nuclear test and pursues a strict anti-North Korea policy due to unresolved kidnappings of Japanese citizens in the 1970s and 1980s, but five were allowed to return in 2002 after the first summit

- Japan and China fought wars in the 1930s and 1940s but Japan has since apologized and interdependence rose in the 1990s and 2000s whereas political relations deteriorated
- “Routinised recognition” refers to repeatedly performed acts of recognition contributing to resolve problems but it can be disrupted by misrecognition resulting from identity change
- One explanation of the deterioration is a changed balance of power in China’s favor creating fear and perceptions of mutual threat but Japan had facilitated China’s rise
- Negative perceptions of each other could have caused deteriorating relations: identity construction must consider both sides since it is interactive
- “Routinised recognition” characterized relations from mutual diplomatic recognition in 1972 until the mid-1990s and relations deteriorated in the 2000s
- Japan was for China originally an aggressor but also a model for economic development. Since Japan was superior to China, it provided official development assistance (ODA) and technical aid
- Japan recognized China as victim of warfare in the 1978 Treaty of Peace and Friendship
- In 1982, China criticized Japan for revision of history textbooks and Japan accepted it
- In 1985, China criticized Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro’s visit at the Yasukuni Shrine. Afterwards, he expressed contrition for the war
- Japan adopted no sanctions against China after the June 4, 1989 massacre
- The rise of the Chinese economy threatened Japan’s identity which in the 1970s and 1980s was based on its strong economic development and leadership position in Asia
- For Japan, prime ministers’ visits at the Yasukuni Shrine from 2001-2006 and in 2013 can be interpreted as an alternative that disrupted routinised recognition in Sino-Japanese relations
- Chinese identity came to focus more on humiliation: China had been weak but must be strong
- Incidents in 2005, 2010 and 2012 worsened relations

- We are living in the Age of Globalization led by the US but China is a challenge
- Multiple layers of culture and identity still coexist: Taiwan is one example
- East Asian nations are each other's largest trading partners but are also often each other's worst enemies with rivalries such as China-Japan, Korea-Japan and North-South Korea

Questions for study

1. What are the historic and present characteristics of East Asia? Include globalization.
2. What does the term “Eurocentrism” mean and how should it be interpreted?
3. How has Confucianism been revived in China and what is its impact on society?
4. What characterized internal and external developments in 19th century Korea?
5. How has the annexation of the Korean peninsula (1910-1945) affected Japan-ROK relations, including the comfort women issue?
6. What is the significance of the rise of the Chinese economy for South Korea?
7. What are the main characteristics of China-ROK economic relations?
8. What are the main characteristics of China-DPRK economic relations?
9. What are the issues of national discourse in Japan and what role play China and Korea here?
10. How can we understand the deterioration of Sino-Japanese relations through identity politics?