Imperial Asia

This research seminar will examine the modern history of the Asia/Pacific region from the perspective of one of its most salient features: empire. If imperial conquest shaped the contours of modern Africa, it was no less significant in nineteenth and twentieth century Asia. As in Africa, conquest in Asia/the Pacific was a critical means by which nations came to define their global status. And the legacy of colonialism was central to the disastrous series of wars that plagued twentieth century Asia. We will highlight the three empires in modern Asia/the Pacific with the most profound long-term effects—French Indochina, the Philippines under American rule and the Japanese empire—to shed light upon twentieth century Asia and the nature of modern empire building. Special attention will be paid to comparative themes (conquest, governance, local identity, etc.) and cross-border (“transnational”) linkages.

Objectives

This course is divided into three chronologically distinct parts. Part I highlights the early years of colonial rule in Asia/the Pacific from the 19th through early 20th centuries. Part II covers the 20th century until the fall of the Japanese empire. Part III focuses on the legacy of empire after 1945.

We are concerned in this course with three types of historical inquiry: history, historiography and primary source research. Readings in each of the three chronological periods are designed to make you think about these three approaches to history. As you engage each period, please try to:

1) obtain a general historical narrative (outline) of the era (history)
2) understand different ways in which historians treat the history of empire in Asia (historiography)
3) judge ways in which voices of contemporaries (primary sources) confirm or challenge narratives of empire written by scholars (secondary sources)

Texts

Please purchase at the Pennsylvania Book Center, 130 S. 34th Street (215-222-7600):

Vincente L. Rafael, White Love and Other Events in Filipino History (2000)
Leo T. S. Ching, Becoming Japanese: Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation (2001)

A good portion of our readings are in article form, accessible on the course website.

Requirements

There are two components of your grade, which break down as follows.

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<td>80 pts</td>
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1) Class attendance and participation:
   (5 pts X 10; 1 discussion = 20; 1 news article 10)
2) Papers
   a) One 6-8-page historiographical paper
   b) one 15-page research paper (blurb 5; historio 10; outline 10, present 15; paper 40)
Course itinerary

Week I
1/13  Intro

Part I: Early Empire in Asia
Week II
1/20  Viewing Asia from 21st Century U.S.
*Kien Nguyen, The Unwanted

Week III
1/27 Imperial Overview
Wesseling, The European Colonial Empires, chps. 1-4 (pp. 1-146)

Week IV
2/3  French Colonization of Vietnam
Wesseling, The European Colonial Empires, pp. 191-220
*Elliott, The Sacred Willow, chps. 1-5 (pp. 1-102)

Week V
2/10 Spanish and US Empire in the Philippines
Wesseling, The European Colonial Empires, pp. 220-4
Rafael, White Love, chps. 1-3 (pp. 1-102)

2/12 Research Paper blurb due

Week VI
2/17 Japanese Empire
Wesseling, The European Colonial Empires, pp. 224-7
Peattie, “Japanese Attitudes Toward Colonialism,” pp. 80-127
Ching, Becoming Japanese, Intro, chps. 1-2 (pp. 1-88)

2/19 Paper #1 due

Part II: Living with the Japanese Empire

Week VII
2/24 Philippines
Theodore Friend, Blue-Eyed Enemy, chps. 6-8 (pp. 121-184)
Rafael, White Love, chp. 4 (pp. 103-121)

Week VIII
3/3 Vietnam
*Elliott, The Sacred Willow, chps. 6-10 (pp. 103-242)

3/5 Research Paper intro (including historiography) due

Week IX
3/10  Spring Break
Week X
3/17 Taiwan, Korea
   Ching, *Becoming Japanese*, chps. 3-5 (pp. 89-210)
   *Sunny Che, *Forever Alien: A Korean Memoir, 1930-1951*, pp. 3-37

Week XI
3/24 Transnational ties in Imperial Asia
   Richard Jose, “Test of Wills: Diplomacy between Japan and the Laurel Govt.,” pp. 185-222
   Tran My-Van, “The Japanese occupation and independence for Vietnam,” pp. 159-77
   *Miyazaki Torazo, Our Activities in the Troubled World of Southeast Asia* (1903), pp. 173-85
   *Manuel Luis Quezon, The Good Fight* (1946), chps. 3, 10 (pp. 42-59; 174-80)
   *Phan Boi Chau, “Prison Notes”* (1914), pp. 3-8; 21-4; 28-33; 36-9

3/26 Research Paper outline due

Part III: Legacy of Empire in Asia
Week XII
3/31 Philippines
   “Ken’ichi Goto, “Decolonization and the Formation of an Asia-Pacific Regional System in
   Southeast Asia,” pp. 245-53
   Rafael, *White Love*, chps. 5-8 (pp. 122-227)
   *Vicente Rivera, Jr., et al., short stories

Week XIII
4/7 Presentation of papers

Week XIV
4/14 Vietnam
   *Elliott, The Sacred Willow*, chps. 11-epilogue (pp. 243-474)

Week XV
4/21 Japanese empire
   Kobayashi Hideo, “The Postwar Economic Legacy of Japan’s Wartime Empire,” pp. 324-34
   Leo Ching, “Imaginings in the Empire of the Sun: Japanese mass culture in Asia,” *Boundary, 2*,
   21, pp. 198-219

4/23 Research Paper due