

HIST 106/ASIA 106

Samurai and Gongfu Heroes: Masculinity in East Asia

This class deals with masculinity in East Asia (mostly Japan and China), through film. People often use stories to understand how they ought to behave, and for modern people this often means movies. We will be looking at a series of Chinese and Japanese films and stories and how they explain the models of behavior that were held up to Chinese and Japanese people.

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The syllabus and pretty much everything you will need for the class are on D2L

Units This class is divided into 7 units of about 2 weeks each. In each unit we will be watching at least one film, having some lectures and in and out of class discussions, and doing some readings.

Unit 1 8/28 Self cultivation and service to the Emperor From Confucius on, self-cultivation and duty (to the Emperor or the cosmos) were key concepts in East Asian societies. We will discuss some of the key stories about duty and heroism that would be referred to over and over through East Asian history. Also, Watching Movies Part I.

Film. Each unit will involve watching at least one film. This unit's film is *Hero* (2002)

Primary source reading. At least once during the semester you will need to contribute something on one of our optional readings to the on-line discussion. For this unit the readings are:

-“Jing Ke” from Sima Qian *Biographies of the Assassin-retainers* from Sima, Qian. *Records of the Grand Historian: Qin Dynasty*. Translated by Burton Watson. New York: Columbia University Press. 1995

-“Self-Cultivation” from John Knoblock, trans *Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works* Stanford: Stanford University Press. 1988.

You will each write about one of these.

Unit 2 9/11 Bandits Not everyone served the Emperor, at least not directly We will look at the “Men of Rivers and Lakes” who defied state power but also claimed to be upholders of justice. They were even more important in popular culture than the more orthodox heroes from the last unit. Also, Watching Movies Part II.

Film *Water Margin* (1972)

Primary source reading

-Selections from *Water Margin* (Dent-Young trans.)

-“Black Whirlwind Li Spurns Riches out of Righteousness” from West, Stephen H., and Wilt L. Idema, trans. *Monks, Bandits, Lovers, and Immortals: Eleven Early Chinese Plays*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2010

Secondary reading -“Violence, Honor and Manhood” from Boretz, Avron Albert. *Gods, Ghosts, and Gangsters: Ritual Violence, Martial Arts, and Masculinity on the Margins of Chinese Society*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2011.

Unit 3 9/25 Creating the Samurai While Japanese people borrowed many of their heroes and ideas from China, they also developed their own, and we will look at the *bushi*, how they became the samurai, and how they fit into Japanese culture.

Films: Up to now we have all been watching and discussing the same films, starting with this unit we will sometimes have multiple films. This week you can choose *Sansho the Bailiff* (1954) OR Samurai Fiction (1998) OR *Seven Samurai* (1954) OR *Chushingura* (1962)

Primary source readings

-Jokabo Koa "The Spirit of Kuo Suketsune Criticizes the Theater" from Shirane, Haruo, ed. *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology, 1600-1900*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.

-Selections from "Chushingura" from Shirane, Haruo, ed. *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology, 1600-1900*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.

-*Death of Yoshitsune* from McCullough, Helen, trans. *Yoshitsune: A 15th Century Japanese Chronicle*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966.

Secondary reading -Karl Friday "Bushidó or Bull? A Medieval Historian's Perspective on the Imperial Army and the Japanese Warrior Tradition" *The History Teacher* 27:3 May 1994. 339-349.

Unit 4 Frontiers 10/9 Many modern stories about being a good person are frontier stories. Leaving home and going to a new world (even if it is in your own country) and understanding that place and deciding what parts of your old behavior to keep and which to leave behind, are all great questions to build a story around.

Films: *Dersu Uzala* (1975) OR *The Sand Pebbles* (1966) OR *Mr. Canton and Lady Rose/Miracles/Black Dragon* (1989) OR *Once Upon a Time In China II* (1992)

Primary source readings:

- Kunkkada Doppo "Meat and Potatoes" From Gessel, and. Rimer. *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Japanese Literature: From Restoration to Occupation, 1868-1945*. Columbia University Press. 2007

-Alai "Fish!" from Lau, Joseph S. M., and Howard Goldblatt, eds. *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature*. 2nd ed. Columbia University Press. 2007.

5 Modernizing the hero 10/23 Both in China and in Japan modern nationalism meant re-casting the hero (male or female) and we will look at both a film and a memoir that deal with this.

Film: *Woman Knight of Mirror Lake* (2011)

Read Shiba Goro *Remembering Aizu* (We will all read this)

Primary source readings:

Selections from Tokai Sanshi *Strange Encounters with Beautiful Women*. From Gessel and Rimer, eds. *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Japanese Literature: From Restoration to Occupation, 1868-1945*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007.

6 11/6 Propaganda man and propaganda women Many of the stories we have talked about are things that people were supposed to read or watch on their own. Those in power could also be pretty blatant about pushing their vision of what you were supposed to be on people, and we will look at some of these here.

Films: *The Big Road* (1934) OR *Momotaro's Sea Eagles* (1943) OR *Children of Troubled Times* (1935) OR *Farewell My Concubine* (1993)

Primary source readings:

-Liu Shaoqi *How to be a Good Communist*. <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/liu-shaoqi/1939/how-to-be/>

He Yin Zhen "On Feminist Anti-Militarism" from Liu, Lydia H, Rebecca E Karl, and Dorothy Ko. *The Birth of Chinese Feminism: Essential Texts in Transnational Theory*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2013. (via library)

7 11/27 Cops and bureaucrats Today the heroes are likely to be policemen or other government officials, and we will look at how they draw on earlier ideas, and how service to the state and rebellion are both valorized and condemned.

Films: *A Taxing Woman's Return* (1988) OR *A Better Tomorrow* (1988) OR *Forbidden City Cop* (1996) OR *Stray Dog* (1949)

Primary source readings:

-Selections from Qiu Xiaolong *Death of a Red Heroine*

-Selections from Kidō, Okamoto. *The Curious Casebook of Inspector Hanshichi: Detective Stories of Old Edo*. Translated by Ian MacDonald. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007. This is available on the library database page. (Let me know if you can't find it.) You can use any of the stories you like, but you may want to read the introduction to the volume first.

-If you want you can read some of the Judge Dee or Judge Bao stories. Let me know and I will make some recommendations.

Final presentations These will be in the last week of class and in the final exam period.

Grades

Quizzes/participation in on-line discussion. 40 % We will have frequent on-line discussions and assignments, and it is important to keep up with these, as they are a major part of your grade. Each assignment is worth points, and at the end of the semester I will add up all the points and set the highest amount anyone got as 100% of this category.

Reading essay 15% Once during the semester, whenever you like, you will write a brief essay analyzing one of our primary source readings. If you like you can do more than one and keep the high grades. These will need to be posted to the discussion list in the first week of each unit. Guidelines for this are on D2L.

Remembering Aizu paper 15% Each of you will write a paper on this book and what it shows us about Japanese ideas about proper behavior. I will pass out guidelines for this later.

Final presentation 30% Each of you will do a final presentation on a movie that you select. This is a big part of your grade, and you will have to put a good deal of thought into what movie you want to do, how to understand it and how to explain it. We will talk about how to do this later in the semester, but final grading guidelines are D2L.

Attendance policy-- You are expected to come to class every day, but the point is not just to come to class, but to come having done your reading and being ready to talk about it. That said there is no penalty for not coming to class besides the fact that you will not learn anything. If you are not in class it is your responsibility to get the notes and find out what we did and be ready for any upcoming assignments.

-All work is due in class on the date announced. Late work may be turned in without penalty with a medical or other excuse. Unexcused late work will be marked down one grade a day (A- becomes a B+, etc.)

Academic dishonesty-- All students are required to abide by the University's policies on Academic Integrity, as found in the catalog.

Indiana University of Pennsylvania and its faculty are committed to assuring a safe and productive educational environment for all students. In order to meet this commitment and to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and guidance from the Office for Civil Rights, the University requires faculty members to report incidents of sexual violence shared by students to the University's Title IX Coordinator. The only exceptions to the faculty member's reporting obligation are when incidents of sexual violence are communicated by a student during a classroom discussion, in a writing assignment for a class, or as part of a University-approved research project.

Faculty members are obligated to report sexual violence or any other abuse of a student who was, or is, a child (a person under 18 years of age) when the abuse allegedly occurred to the Department of Human Services (1-800-932-0313) and University Police (724-357-2141).

Information regarding the reporting of sexual violence and the resources that are available to victims of sexual violence is set forth at: <http://www.iup.edu/social-equity/policies/title-ix/>