

EAST MEETS WEST GLOBAL CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS



MOTIVATION AND OBJECTIVES

China was the leading world power until the nineteenth century and is set to regain this dominant status by the end of the twenty-first century. Beyond China, the other major East Asian countries — Korea, Japan, and Vietnam — all developed along Chinese cultural lines from early on. Taken as a whole, this Chinese sphere of influence (or Sinosphere) constitutes one of the most significant pieces in the puzzle of world history. Its history and culture should therefore be of interest to anyone curious about the world we live in.

This class is an invitation to discover China, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam through their historical encounters with the Western world. In looking at these encounters, the goal will be threefold:

1. to learn about the history and culture of these countries and to understand their relationship with the history and culture of Western countries;
2. to get acquainted with such historiographical debates as why the industrial and scientific revolutions did not take place in China or whether Japanese modernization can be equated with the straightforward application of Western models;
3. to gain a cross-cultural perspective informed by the concepts of Westernization and Easternization.

FORMAT, SKILLS AND ASSESSMENT

This course is structured as a flipped classroom, which means that you will do most of your work autonomously before class. This will involve studying textual and audiovisual documents on a website and reflecting on the issues raised by the documents. Class will then take place over a condensed time span, during which you will confront your thoughts with those of your classmates and build in the process a shared understanding of the issues at stake.

All the skills necessary to take the Cambridge English: C1 Advanced (CAE) exam will be reinforced during this class. Students will practice their listening skills by listening to extracts from documentaries and conferences, their reading skills by reading extracts from primary sources and research works, their speaking skills by interacting in pairs and in small groups, and their writing skills by writing reports and essays.

The continuous assessment and the final exams each make up 50% of the overall grade for this class. For the continuous assessment, students have to write a research paper and an opinion essay. For the final exam, students have to create a short video in which they present a case study of cultural interactions between East Asia and the West.

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The full contents of the course are accessible at this address:

<https://meetingofeastandwest.wordpress.com/>