Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living.

Karl Marx, The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte (1852)

This course provides an analytical overview of the comparative politics of East Asia, focusing on Northeast Asia (China, Taiwan, Korea, and Japan) with some emphasis on Southeast Asia. This course has at least three goals: 1) to understand important political issues, political institutions, political behaviors, contentious politics, and political economies of East Asia, 2) to provide a theoretical framework to understand important historical events that have shaped the current politics of East Asia, and 3) to overcome an ethnocentric provincialism by making explicit and implicit comparisons (e.g., China, Korean and Japan; East Asia and Euro-America). To do so, this course is divided into three parts.

In Part I, we will begin with a session that equips students with a theoretical framework of comparative politics and introduces this region more generally. By focusing on the modern capital-nation-state formation in the context of colonialism and imperialism, the following sessions in Part I will provide significant historical facts and issues of China, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, and Southeast Asian countries to properly understand the substantive topics in the following parts.

The first part in Part II will deal with political regimes (democracies and dictatorships), social movements, regime dynamics, and the relationships between cultures and democracies in East Asia. In the second part of Part II, we will study two divergent political systems: Japan’s parliamentary democracy and China’s communist dictatorship. The topics are political institutions (party systems, parliamentarism and presidentialism, electoral systems, Leninist party-state) and political changes (elections, selections, and successions).

In Part III, we will examine the political economy of East Asia, highlighting East Asia’s phenomenal economic growth, globalization, and the financial crises that have transformed the nature of the East Asian accumulation strategies. We will explore the various conditions under which the economic “miracles” happened and the socio-political consequences of rapid growth. We will also investigate the economic “crises” that have ended the miracles. Finally, we will evaluate the rise of China and the re-emergence of East Asia from a long historical perspective, and we will ruminate over what these phenomena mean to the global politics that have been dominated by the West for centuries.
### SCHEDULE/OUTLINE OF TOPICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1-2</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>10-15</th>
<th>Introduction and Analytical Framework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### I. MODERN CAPITAL-NATION-STATE FORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2-3</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>17-22</th>
<th>The Emergence of Modern East Asia: A Bird’s Eye View</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>24-29</td>
<td>China and Taiwan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>5-12</td>
<td>Korea and Japan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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#### II. POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS, CULTURES, AND PEOPLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>19</th>
<th>Democracies and Dictatorships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>21-26</td>
<td>Democratic Transitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>28</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mar</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Mardi Gras Holiday – No Class Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mar</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Midterm Examination, 1:30 – 2:50 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mar</td>
<td>12-14</td>
<td>Cultures and Democracies: “Asian Values”?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Mar</td>
<td>19-21</td>
<td>Hegemonic Party and the Politics of Complacency: Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Mar</td>
<td>26-28</td>
<td>Politico-Economic Machine and Its Sustainability: China</td>
</tr>
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</table>

#### III. POLITICAL ECONOMY: MIRACLES AND CRISSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>13</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>2-4</th>
<th>The Developmental State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Apr</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>The Rise (?) of China and the Reorientation of the World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Apr</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>“Futures Past” of East Asia: A Tentative Conclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Apr</td>
<td>16-18</td>
<td>Spring Break – No Class Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Apr</td>
<td>23-25</td>
<td>Conference – No Class Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Apr</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Final Examination, 3:00 – 5:00 pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
READES

Each student is expected to read (before class) all the required readings for each session (see the reading assignments below). All of these readings are posted on Moodle. All students should have a LSU e-mail account for access to Moodle.

Students need to purchase and read the following book to write a final paper (see the course requirements below): Joe Studwell’s How Asia Works (Grove Press, 2014).

Recommended/background books:

If you are serious about studying East Asia, read these three monumental books on the history of political thoughts: Feng Yulan’s A History of Chinese Philosophy [中國哲學史], Masao Maruyama’s Studies in the Intellectual History of Tokugawa Japan [日本政治思想史研究], and Joseph Needham’s Science and Civilization in China (esp. Volume 2). For an important intellectual history on the formation of Asia in the 20th century, see Pankaj Mishra’s From the Ruins of Empire: The Revolt against the West and the Remaking of Asia (2012), Picador.

East Asia and Southeast Asia in general

China

Taiwan

Korea

Japan
REQUIREMENTS

Basically, classes will involve lectures and discussions of the reading material assigned for each session. But, I will introduce and explain some issues and concepts that are not in the readings, so attendance is crucial. This means that a significant amount of material on the examinations will come from class lectures presenting information not discussed directly in the text and other readings. Participation from students is important and will count toward the final grade. At the end of each week, I will distribute a memo (posted on Moodle) that contains important points of my lecture.

Students are expected to complete:

1) Midterm examination (25%)
The emphasis is on important concepts and competing explanations of various political phenomena. Knowledge of some relevant historical facts is required as well. The format of the exam will be discussed in class.

2) Final examination (25%)
The format of the final exam is the same as the midterm exam.

3) Critical review paper (25%)
You will write a critical review of Studwell’s How Asia Works. The text should be no longer than six single-spaced pages. The format and guide of the paper will be discussed in class. You should submit a hard copy due in our last class on Thursday, the 26th of April (or anytime before this deadline).

4) Attendance and participation (25%)
It is virtually impossible for you to receive a satisfactory grade if you miss several classes. Attendance will be taken for each session. Students may earn credit for their attendance at each class session, while repeated and unexcused absence will cause deduction in student’s total grade. In addition to attending class, students are highly encouraged to ask and answer questions, and to make appropriate comments on issues covered in class.

GRADING SCALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Midterm</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Mardi Gras</th>
<th>Spring Break</th>
<th>Conference</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>100 ~ 97</td>
<td>89 ~ 87</td>
<td>79 ~ 77</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>69 ~ 67</td>
<td>59 ~ 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>96 ~ 93</td>
<td>86 ~ 83</td>
<td>76 ~ 73</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>66 ~ 63</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>92 ~ 90</td>
<td>82 ~ 80</td>
<td>72 ~ 70</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>62 ~ 60</td>
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IMPORTANT DATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm exam</td>
<td>Thursday, March 7</td>
<td>1:30 – 2:50 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>Monday, April 29</td>
<td>3:00 – 5:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>Thursday, April 11</td>
<td>In class (or before)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mardi Gras Holiday</td>
<td>Tuesday, March 5</td>
<td>No class meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Break</td>
<td>Tue/Thu, April 16/18</td>
<td>No class meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference</td>
<td>Tue/Thu, April 23/25</td>
<td>No class meeting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
READING ASSIGNMENTS AND SPECIFIC TOPICS

I. MODERN CAPITAL-NATION-STATE FORMATION

Week 1-2 (Jan. 10-15) Introduction and Analytical Framework
Scope and roadmap of the course. Three research traditions or paradigms: structuralism, culturalism, and rationalism. Analytical framework. Role of theory. Importance of history.


Week 2-3 (Jan. 17-22) The Emergence of Modern East Asia: A Bird’s Eye View


Week 3-4 (Jan. 24-29-31) China and Taiwan


Week 5-6 (Feb. 5-7-12-14) Japan and Korea
the issue of historical continuity. Decolonization period and the Korean War. How was Korea divided? The world in 1945. Juche and the nature of the North Korean state.


II. POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS, CULTURES, AND PEOPLE

Week 7 (Feb. 19)  Democracies and Dictatorships


Week 7-8 (Feb. 21-26-28)  Democratic Transitions


Film: “The Tank Man.”

Week 9 (Mar. 5)  Mardi Gras Holiday
No class meeting.

Week 9 (Mar. 7)  Midterm Examination
1:30 – 2:50 pm in our classroom.

Week 10 (Mar. 12-14)  Culture and Democracy: “Asian Values”?
Conceptualization of political culture. Intersubjectivity. “Asian values.” Do we need democrats to have a democracy? Strongly culturalist vs. weakly culturalist vs. non-culturalist arguments. Culture as religion. Culture as the distribution of dispositions within society. Culture as an epiphenomenon. Is culture an independent or dependent variable? Is culture a variable?


**Week 11 (Mar. 19-21) The Hegemonic Party and the Politics of “Complacency”: Japan**


Cultural Revolution. Collectivization and de-collectivization. Deng’s reforms. “Socialism with Chinese characteristics.” “Lost hundred years.” Leninist party-state. PBSC – *imperium in imperio*. Selection vs. succession. “Fifth generation” of leadership. Factions – parties within the party. Corruption and pollution. The issues are: 1) communist state apparatuses, 2) power succession process, and 3) prospects for democratization – will China become a democracy?


**III. POLITICAL ECONOMY: MIRACLES AND CRISES**

**Week 13 (Apr. 2-4) The Developmental State**

Historical trend of economic growth throughout the world. Diminishing return. Import substitution vs. export orientation. “Embedded autonomy.” *Keiratsu* and *Chaebol*. The MITI and EPB. Is “the
Asian miracle” a miracle? Origins and the demise of the developmental state. Efficiency or collusion? Who guards the guardians? Can the East Asia’s success be emulated in other countries?


Week 14 (Apr. 9) The Rise (?) of China and the Reorientation of the World


Week 14 (Apr. 11) “Futures Past” of East Asia: A Tentative Conclusion

Your final paper is due in class (or before).


Week 15 (Apr. 16-18) Spring Break
No class meeting.

Week 16 (Apr. 23-25) Conference
No class meeting.

Week 17 (Apr. 29) Final Examination
3:00 – 5:00 pm in our class room.