

POLI 4067 The Politics of Asia, Fall 2021

東亞政治 东亚政治 동아시아정치 東アジア政治

East Asian Politics

Instructor: Wonik Kim, wkim@lsu.edu

Class Meeting: 12:00 – 1:20 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays in 228 Coates
Virtual Office Hours: 10:00 – 11:00 am on Wednesdays, or by appointment

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 a critical analysis 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 three goals: 1) to study political institutions, social movements, political economies of East Asia, 2) to provide a theoretical framework to understand important historical events that have shaped the current affairs in East Asia, and 3) to understand East Asia explicitly from a **comparative and global perspective** so that we categorically reject an ethnocentric approach to other countries still pervasive in the American social science literature. This course is divided into three parts.

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

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 so-called communist dictatorship. The topics are political institutions (party systems, parliamentarism and presidentialism, electoral systems, the Leninist party-state) and political changes (social movements, elections, selections, and successions).

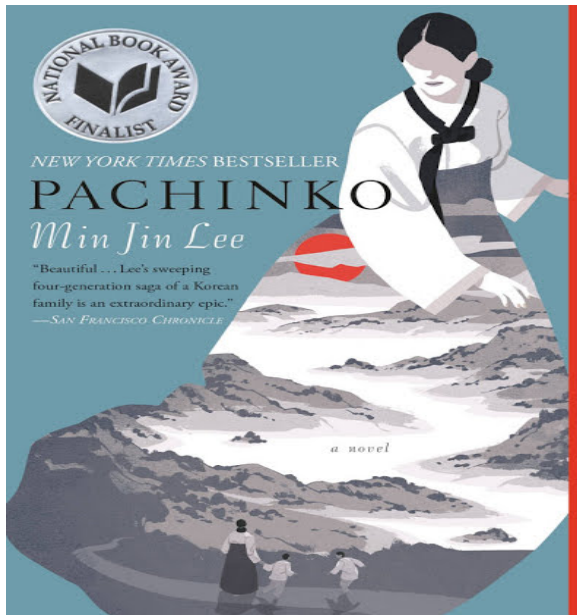
In Part III, we will examine the political economy of East Asia, highlighting East Asia's phenomenal economic growth, globalization, and the financial crises that have transformed the nature of the East Asian accumulation strategies. We will explore the various conditions under which the economic "miracles" happened and the socio-political consequences of rapid growth. We will also investigate the financial "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. We will critically reflect on what these phenomena mean to the global politics that the West has dominated for centuries.

REQUIRED READINGS

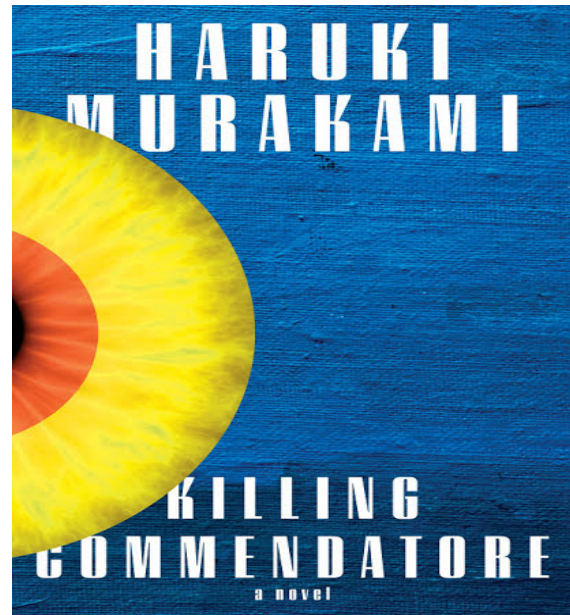
Students are expected to read the required readings (articles and book chapters) before class. All the required readings are posted as pdf files on the course Moodle. The reading assignments are listed in the course schedule below.

In addition to the required readings, students need to read one of these four novels to write a final critical review paper (see the course requirements below).

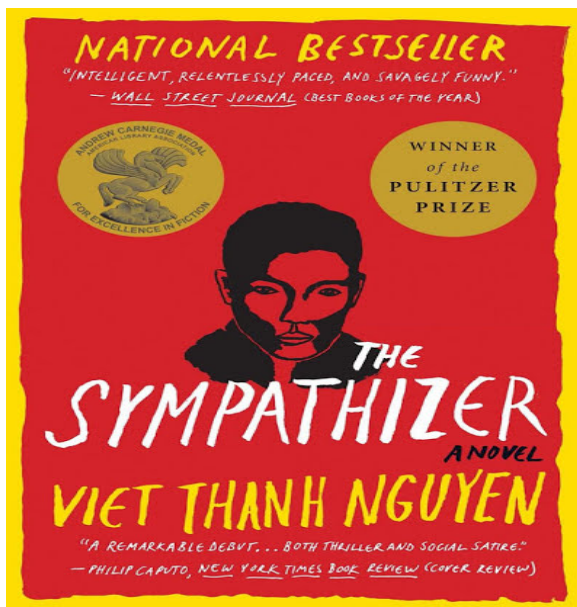
Pachinko by Min Jin Lee



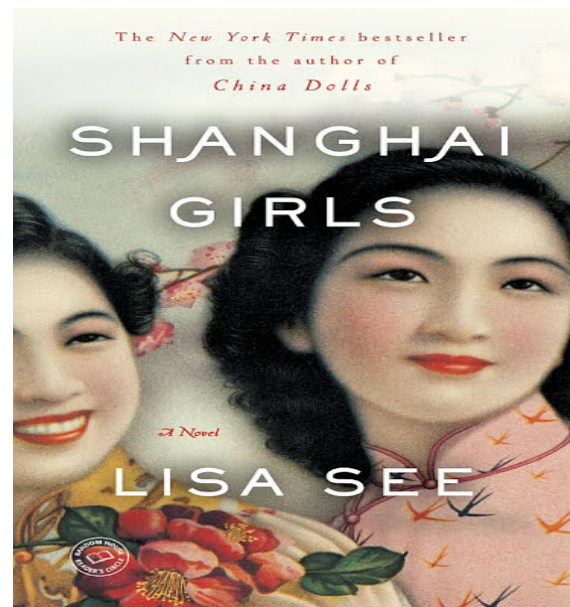
Killing Commendatore by Haruki Murakami



The Sympathizer by Viet Thanh Nguyen



Shanghai Girls by Lisa See



RECOMMENDED BOOKS

The most important aspect of one's intellectual life is reading books, for books are the only source of creativity and peace. "In omnibus requiem quaesivi, et nusquam inveni nisi in angulo cum libro." The following seven books have most influenced my thinking about East Asia, which is reflected mainly in my lecture, so I highly recommend these books if you are serious about studying East Asia.

1. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (Vintage, 1978). This is perhaps *the* most important book about the West's encountering "the Other," the European and American common approach to non-Western cultures and regions. It is a foundational text in postcolonial studies, but everyone should read it to avoid falling into the pitfall of ethnocentric provincialism. From Said's masterful analysis, you learn how seemingly innocuous discourses about "others" are deeply ingrained in historically embedded power relationships.
2. Feng Youlan (Fung Yu-lan), *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy* (Free Press, 1948). This classic is a short version of his monumental *A History of Chinese Philosophy* [中國哲學史]. Fung was a preeminent scholar in twentieth-century China and wrote this profound interpretation of various Chinese schools of philosophy in a clear and concise manner. This is a must-read to comprehend (or at least to feel) the vast spiritual world of East Asia.
3. Masao Maruyama, *Thought and Behavior in Modern Japanese Politics* ([現代政治の思想と行動] Oxford, 1963), and *Studies in the Intellectual History of Tokugawa Japan* [日本政治思想史研究] (Princeton, 1974). Maruyama's influence was so absolute when he was still in the University of Tokyo that people often called him a "Tennō (emperor) of the Japanese academics." These two books are erudite, rigorous, and insightful, indispensable to understand the crux of modern and contemporary Japan. You also learn about great Western thinkers, such as Karl Marx and Max Weber, in a new way from his recondite but interesting interpretations.
4. Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton, 2001). Pomeranz's study has changed the direction of economic history, pioneering a new empirical critique of Eurocentrism. A critical implication from his work is that the historical origin of capitalism is contingent, neither European nor Asian.
5. Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce*, two volumes (Yale, 1988 and 1995). This is a landmark study of Southeast Asia from the 15th to 17th centuries. In a very Braudelian style, Reid presents a vivid picture of rich cultures and material conditions under which most people had prospered in Southeast Asia before Europeans came.
6. Paul Cohen, *Discovering History in China* (Columbia, 1996). In the same vein as Said, Cohen reveals ideological assumptions immanent in academic writing about China and East Asia. He also criticizes cultural essentialism that exaggerates the difference between the West and Asia.
7. R. Taggart Murphy, *Japan and the Shackles of the Past* (Oxford, 2014). This is the most acute analysis in English about Japanese politics. Murphy's explanations are brutally perceptive and very Orwellian. What does the Japanese ruling elite (or any ruling elite) do when it rules?

History is the cornerstone. For the succinct history of East Asia, read excellent Holcombe's *A History of East Asia* (Cambridge, 2017). For China, Fairbank's *China: A New History* (Harvard, 2006) is a classic; Spence's *The Search for Modern China* (Norton, 2017) is comprehensive. For Japan, Marius Jansen's *The Making of Modern Japan* (Harvard, 2002) is magisterial; Andrew Gordon's *A Modern History of Japan* (Oxford, 2020) is an ideal textbook; John Dower's *Embracing Defeat* (Norton, 2000) is a *tour de force*. For Korea, read thought-provoking Cumings's *Korea's Place in the Sun* (Norton, 2005).

LSU STATEMENT OF COVID-19

LSU strongly encourages all students, faculty and staff to get vaccinated for COVID-19. Visit www.lsu.edu/roadmap/vaccines/ to learn how to get vaccinated on campus. Vaccination helps keep our campus community safe, helps protect those among us who are most vulnerable to COVID-19, and is our path back to more normal operations and the full college experience that our students deserve.

REQUIREMENTS

1) **Attendance** (not required but strongly encouraged)

Due to the ongoing global pandemic of COVID-19, attendance is not required and will not be taken for your grade. However, it is vital to participate in class meetings regularly in which the texts, topics, and categories are discussed, problematized, and critiqued. Do not record a class meeting under any circumstances without permission. I will hold virtual Zoom office hours for 10:00-11:00 am on Wednesdays or by appointment. You are more than welcome to meet with me virtually if you have any questions or concerns. If you cannot come to a class meeting due to COVID-related issues, you need to see me virtually to discuss your missed class materials. The best way to contact me for a short question is by email. I will make every effort to answer your question promptly.

2) **Weekly quiz** (30% = 10 weekly quizzes × 3% for each quiz)

A weekly quiz consists of three short questions about concepts, theories, historical events, etc. Each question requires an answer with two to five sentences. It will be posted on Moodle after the Thursday class, and students have approximately three days to complete and turn it in by 6:00 pm on Sunday.

3) **Three examinations** (45% = three exams × 15% for each exam)

An exam consists of four or five essay questions. Each question requires an answer with four to seven sentences. The first exam will be an in-class test on Thursday, September 23, during our class time, 12:00 – 1:20 pm, in our classroom. The second exam will be an in-class test on Thursday, October 14, during our class time, 12:00 – 1:20 pm. Midterm-semester grades will be reported on Tuesday, October 19. The third exam will be an online test on Moodle on Thursday, December 9, during the official final exam day – you have 24 hours to complete the third exam.

4) **Final critical review paper** (25%)

Students will write a final critical paper about one of the four novels (see above). It is a “critical” review of the novel in that you present *your own thought* about the book, based on your own reconstruction as to how a political event(s) is involved in the story. The text should be no longer than six single-spaced pages. The deadline for the paper is Tuesday, December 2 (or any time before this date). I strongly urge you to take some of the following suggestions. 1) First and foremost, read the novel thoroughly. 2) Summarize the plot and the main theme. 3) Take note of the political stories (political events or political issues) addressed in the book; pay attention to how they are discussed, e.g., in what context they are addressed and described; discuss how the political stories affect the overall storyline and narrative and how the protagonist’s way of thinking, behavior, and life has changed or not changed due to politics. 4) Link the past political stories to contemporary politics. 5) Reflect upon *the politics of memory*. 6) **Problematize the master narrative**. 8) Relate your paper to what you have learned in class. Don’t write a paper totally independent of this course. More details of the paper will be discussed in class later.

GRADING SCALE

A+	100 ~ 97	B+	89 ~ 87	C+	79 ~ 77	D+	69 ~ 67	F	59 ~ 0
A	96 ~ 93	B	86 ~ 83	C	76 ~ 73	D	66 ~ 63		
A-	92 ~ 90	B-	82 ~ 80	C-	72 ~ 70	D-	62 ~ 60		

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All students are expected to read and be familiar with the LSU Code of Student Conduct and Commitment to Community, found online at www.lsu.edu/saa. It is your responsibility as a student at LSU to know and understand the academic standards for our community. Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to: cheating on exams, plagiarizing, buying or selling assignments, altering grades, intentional deception, and collaborating with others without permission. Posting test answers on social media or any internet sites during and after the test and emailing others with test answers during and after the test are strictly prohibited. A student suspected of violating the Code of Conduct will be referred to the Office of Student Advocacy and Accountability.

POLICY ON DEADLINES

The course takes deadlines seriously, so everyone must adhere to this policy. I recognize, however, that there are legitimate reasons for missing a deadline. If you encounter a problem that prevents you from meeting a deadline, please contact me. I understand that problems can arise, and I will accommodate difficulties that you may encounter. But please be prepared to provide appropriate documentation, such as a doctor's note. Makeup exams will not be given unless the instructor is notified in advance and agrees that the absence is a university-excused absence (Note PS-22).

DISABILITY

The University is committed to making reasonable efforts to assist individuals with disabilities in their efforts to avail themselves of services and programs offered by the University. To this end, LSU will provide reasonable accommodations for persons with documented qualifying disabilities. If you have a disability and feel you need accommodations in this course, you must present a letter to me from Disability Services in 115 Johnston Hall, indicating the existence of a disability and the suggested accommodations.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Diversity is fundamental to LSU's mission and the University is committed to creating and maintaining a living and learning environment that embraces individual difference. Cultural inclusion is of highest priority. LSU recognizes that achieving national prominence depends on the human spirit, participation, and dedicated work of the entire University community. LSU strives to create an inclusive, respectful, intellectually challenging climate that embraces individual difference in race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, age, spirituality, socio-economic status, disability, family status, experiences, opinions, and ideas. LSU proactively cultivates and sustains a campus environment that values open dialogue, cooperation, shared responsibility, mutual respect, and cultural competence – the driving forces that enrich and enhance cutting edge research, first-rate teaching, and engaging community outreach activities.

THE COURSE SCHEDULE AND THE READING ASSIGNMENTS

I. MODERN CAPITAL-NATION-STATE FORMATION

Week 1: August 23-29 Introduction

What is East Asia? What are the important issues at stake? Objectives of the course. Comparative and global perspective. Organization of the course.

- Read the syllabus carefully.
- Read: Holcombe, Charles. 2017. *A History of East Asia*, Introduction “What Is East Asia?”

Week 2: August 30-September 5 Theoretical Framework

Role of theory. Three research positions. Structure-agency problem. Rational actor vs. reflective agent. The 18th Brumaire model. Importance of history. Historiography. *Problématisation*.

- Read: Carr, E. H. 1961. *What Is History?* Chapter 1 “The Historian and His Facts.”
- Quiz 1

Week 3: September 6-12 The Emergence of Modern East Asia: A Bird’s Eye View

Asia before Europe. “Chinese world order.” Tributary system. “Biological old regime.” Polycentric world. Capital-nation-state. Modernity. 19th century as the most important turning point in history. Nation as an imagined community. Print capitalism. Colonialism and imperialism. A hundred years of turmoil: the formation of Asian modernity, 1839 – 1945.

- Read: Anderson, Benedict. 1983. *Imagined Communities*, pp. 1-9.
- Quiz 2

Week 4: September 13-19 How to Study East Asia

Romanization. Conventional approaches: modernization theory and impact-response framework. Eurocentrism. Sinocentrism. Pitfalls of cultural essentialism. New Qing history. *Global* history. Modern state and civil service exam.

- Read: Cohen, Paul. 1996. *Discovering History in China*, Chapter 2 “Moving Beyond Tradition and Modernity.”
- Quiz 3

Week 5: September 20-26 China: The Greatest History Drama Unfolded

Canton trade system. Macartney Mission. China’s frontier expansion. Three motifs in 19th century China. Opium War. Taiping Rebellion. *Xinyou* coup of 1861. Sino-Japanese War. *Xinbai* 1911 Revolution. Communists vs. Nationalists. Chinese Revolution of 1949.

- Read: Memo on China taken from East Asian Curriculum Project of Columbia University.
- First In-class Exam: 12:00-1:20 pm on Thursday, September 23

Week 6: September 27-October 3 Taiwan: (R)Imagining

KMT (or the GMD). February 28 Incident. Why did the Nationalists fail? National identity.

- Read: Memo on Taiwan taken from East Asian Curriculum Project of Columbia University.
- Read: Fairbank. 2006. *China: A New History*, pp. 331-341.
- Quiz 4.

Week 7: October 4-10 Korea: How Was It Divided?

Choson (or Joseon) dynasty and the issue of historical continuity. Decolonization. How was Korea divided? The world in 1945. Korean War (1950-3) in the so-called East Asian 'Thirty Years' War context. *Juche* and the nature of the North Korean state.

- Read: Memo on Korea taken from East Asian Curriculum Project of Columbia University.
- Quiz 5

Week 8-9: October 11-24 Japan: The Modern Construction

Tokugawa regime. *Sankin-kotai*. Origins of the Meiji *Ishin*. Oligarchs. Imperialism since the 1880s. Taisho Democracy. Japanization of the West/the world. Question of agency for change.

- Read: Memo on Japan taken from East Asian Curriculum Project of Columbia University.
- **Second In-class Exam: 12:00-1:20 pm on Thursday, October 14**
- Fall Break: No class meeting on Thursday, October 21

II. POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS, CULTURES, AND PEOPLE

Week 10: October 25-31 Democracy and Dictatorship

The state and society. Political regime. Meaning of contestation. Fragility of democracy. Miracle of democracy. "Waves" of democratization around the world. Democracy movements in East Asia.

- Quiz 6

Week 10: October 25-31 Culture and Democracy: "Asian Values"?

Conceptualization of culture. Intersubjectivity. "Asian values." Is there a causal relationship between culture and democracy? Strongly culturalist vs. weakly culturalist vs. non-culturalist arguments.

- Lee, Kuan Yew. 1994. "Culture is Destiny." *Foreign Affairs*.
- Inglehart, Ronald. 2000. "Culture and Democracy." In Lawrence Harrison and Samuel Huntington (eds.) *Culture Matters*.
- Przeworski, Adam, et al. 1998. 'Culture and Democracy.' *World Culture Report*.
- Quiz 7

Week 11: November 1-7 Democratic Transitions: A Tragic Case of 天安门大屠杀

Modernization theory. Strategic interaction model. Great Leap Forward. Cultural Revolution. Tiananmen Square in 1989. Role of political contingency. Capitalism and democracy.

- Read: Nathan, Andrew. 2001. *The Tiananmen Papers*, excerpts.
- Quiz 8
- Film: The Tank Man (2006 PBS documentary)

Week 12: November 8-14 The Hegemonic Party and the Politics of “Complacency”: Japan US occupation as a reverse course. Question of the “emperor.” Parliamentary politics. The 1955 system. Radical social movements in the 60s. Empire (the LDP) strikes back, again, and again. *Nippon kaigi* and the rise of ultra-rightist nationalism. Doublethink. Politics of “complacency?”

- Read: Bix, Herbert. 2015. “Showa History, Rising Nationalism, and the Abe Government.” *The Asian Pacific Journal* Vol. 13, Issue 2, No. 4.
- Quiz 9

Week 13: November 15-21 The Politico-Economic “Machine” and Its Sustainability: China “Socialism with Chinese characteristics.” Leninist party-state. PBSC – *imperium in imperio*. “Fragmented authoritarianism.” *Tiao-kuai guanxi*. Selection vs. succession. Generations of leadership. Will China become a democracy?

- Read: McGreor, Richard. 2010. *The Party*, pp. 1-33.
- Read: Liu, Xiaobo. 2013. “Changing the Regime by Changing Society,” and “Can It Be That the Chinese People Deserve Only ‘Party-Led Democracy?’” In Andrew Nathan, Larry Diamond and Marc Plattner (eds.), *Will China Democratize?* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 289-302.
- Quiz 10

Week 14: November 22-28 Conference and Thanksgiving Holiday

No class meeting.

III. POLITICAL ECONOMY: MIRACLES AND CRISES

Week 15: November 29-December 5 The *ReOrientation* of the World?

Is the so-called Asian miracle a miracle? Developmental state vs. *guanxi* capitalism. Can East Asia’s success be emulated in other places? The Belt and Road Initiative. Neoliberal globalization and the end of the miracle. Politics of memory. Future past of East Asia.

- Read: Doner, Richard et al. 2005. “Systemic Vulnerability and the Origins of Development States.” *International Organization* 59(2): 327-361.
- Read: Bardhan, Pranab. 2010. *Awakening Giants, Feet of Clay: Assessing the Economic Rise of China and India*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, Introduction and Chapter 2, pp. 1-39.
- Read: Arrighi, Giovanni. 2007. “States, Markets, and Capitalism, East and West.” *Positions: Asia Critique* 15(2): 251-284.
- Final paper is due in class (or before) on Tuesday, December 2.
- Third Online Exam on Thursday, December 9, during the official final exam day