

COURSE OUTLINE

Foundations of Social and Political Thought in Early Modern East Asia

The collapse of the Tang empire in 907 marked a sea change in East Asian societies previously under its hegemony. The ensuing social, political, and diplomatic challenges prompted intellectuals to produce a wealth of writings reinterpreting the classical Confucian tradition in novel ways. This body of work, in turn, laid the intellectual foundation for discussions on the nature of good government, the social order, diplomatic relations, as well as culture and the arts in East Asia between 1100 and 1800.

This course provides an overview of major works in neoclassical Confucian thought including Han Yu, Ouyang Xiu, Su Shi, Zhu Xi, and their intellectual heirs in China, Korea, and Japan. We will read closely a selection of important writings organized by theme, while paying attention to historical contexts, conceptual frameworks, and rhetorical strategies. Students are expected to write a short interpretive essay on each of the three major subject areas.

Nativism

- (C) Buddha and Laozi as foreign deities: 韓愈, 原道, 論佛骨表; 石介, 中國論。
- (C) taming “the barbarian heart”: 陳黯, 華心; 程晏, 內夷檄。
- (C/K) “self-reliance”: 蘇軾, 王者不治夷狄論; 蘇轍, 王者不治夷狄論; 金富轍, 論邊事奏。
- (K/J) tripartite division of native history: 李克墩, 東國通鑑 序; 熊沢蕃山, 泰伯。
- (K) how Koreans differ from the Chinese: 梁誠之, 上書; 成倪, 慵齋叢話。
- (J) decentering ‘China’: 山崎闇齋, 中国弁; 佐藤直方, 中国論集; 徳川光圀, 大日本史。
- (J) rediscovery of Japanese ways: 山鹿素行, 武教小学, 士道。

Social Order

- (C) natural order as a creative force: 蘇軾, 文與可畫篔簹谷偃竹記。
- (C) natural order as the source of human morality: 周敦頤, 太極圖說; 張載, 西銘。
- (C) bureaucratic order as artificial construct: 柳宗元, 封建論; 蘇軾, 韓非論。
- (C/K/J) institutional reforms: 王安石, 萬言書; 梁誠之, 上書; 荻生徂徠, 政談。
- (C) recruitment of talent: 王安石, 材論, 進說;
- (K) proposal to monetize the economy: 大覺國師 義天, 鑄錢論。
- (K/J) institutionalizing moral order: 李珣, 聖學輯要 序; 熊沢蕃山, 大學或問。
- (C/J) roots of romanticism: 程顥, 識仁篇; 王守仁, 大學問; 中江藤樹, 翁問答。

Learning

- (C) ambiguities of human nature: 張載, 正蒙; 朱熹, 大學章句 序。
- (C) “nature” and “talent”: 韓愈, 原性; 王安石, 性說; 蘇軾, 楊雄論。
- (K) a lineage of heroes: 徐居正, 東文選 序。
- (C/K) impermanence of the world: 蘇軾, 中庸論; 李承召, 太平廣記詳節 序。
- (C) to surpass the ancients: 王安石, 夫子賢於堯舜。
- (C/K) sublimity of moral goodness: 朱熹, 中庸章句集注 序; 李滉, 天命圖說 後序。
- (C/J) a standardized lexicon: 陳淳, 北溪字義; 伊藤仁齋, 語孟字義。
- (C/J) overcoming self-doubt: 朱熹, 大學或問; 貝原益軒, 大疑錄。