Course Description: This course explores Asian societies in historical perspectives. It introduces students to a variety of important issues: the imaginative geographies of the landscape; the impact of the world economic system and colonialism; the social and political formations of cultural groups and their transformation into ethnic and national communities; the role of gender and religion; the impact of development policies; the importance of religion; and the overwhelming influence of media. The course will also consider diverse influences from the west and the locally-specific responses to these changes.

Course Goals:
The goals of this course are to establish 1) a basic ethnographic familiarity with several contemporary societies and cultures of Asia; 2) a broad comparative understanding of the historical processes that have influenced their 'modern development' and how legacies of those histories have shaped important issues facing such peoples today; and 3) a capacity for critical reading and analytical scrutiny of ethnographic texts.

Required Readings:
The following books have been ordered through the Wellesley College bookstore. Additional readings on the syllabus will be made available through a course conference. All assigned readings will be placed on reserve at the Wellesley College library.


Students with disabilities who are taking this course and who need disability-related accommodations are encouraged to work with Barbara Boger, the Director of Programs of the Pforzheimer Learning and Teaching Center (if you have learning or attention disabilities), and Jim Wice, the Director of Disability Services (if you have a physical disability or are uncertain) to arrange these accommodations. Their offices are located in the Pforzheimer Learning and Teaching Center in Clapp Library.
**Course Format**
Owing to scheduling and projected enrollments, this course will be conducted as a modified ethnological seminar. Each weekly three-hour session will open with my own remarks, introducing the particular theme of that session, highlighting key issues and objectives, and posing some general questions to reflect upon throughout the evening. This will be followed by a short Weekly Reading Quiz, a peer-based assessment designed by that week’s student Discussion Leader, who will then lead a one-hour discussion of the assigned readings (see below). Each weekly session will conclude with a more broader-ranging general discussion moderated by the instructor.

**Course Requirements and Grading:**
As class sessions will be based largely on in-depth discussion and critical review of course texts, regular attendance is expected. Absences will be excused (or extensions granted) only in special circumstance, judged in conformity with College practice.

**Participation: 10%**
The success of a course depends largely on the level of student involvement and engagement with course material. Active participation required, and will constitute 10% of your course grade. Each student must complete the assigned readings for respective weekly sessions before class-time, and prepare detailed reading notes (including personal comments and reflections, as well as queries) for class discussions. We will be reflecting not only on content of the readings (or what some might call the 'ethnographic facts'), but also on broader issues of perspective and presentation.

**Discussion Leader: 20%**
Each student will serve in rotation as Discussion Leader for at least one weekly session, with responsibility for guiding a one-hour critical review of, and reflection on, assigned readings. As evaluation of your performance will constitute 20% of your course grade, you are encouraged to consult supplemental reference material in preparation for your session, and even to prepare some of that material for presentation in PowerPoint or other media format. Your grade as Discussion Leader, while one-fifth you overall course grade, will itself be based primarily on the instructor's evaluation (90%), supplemented by scores from peer-evaluation surveys (10%).

**Weekly Reading Quiz: 10%**
The rotating Discussion Leader will prepare a short Weekly Reading Quiz (subject to instructor's approval), a brief assessment instrument using True/False, Multiple Choice, and/or Short Identification questions designed to evaluate basic familiarity with that session's assigned reading material. As Discussion Leader, each student will design at least one of these peer-based assessments, and you average score will constitute 10% of your overall course grade. All participants should have the mutual courtesy to be well-prepared for each session.

**Mid-Term Essay and End-Term Essay: 20% each (40% total)**
Each student is required to submit a take-home Mid-Term Essay and a take-home End-Term Essay (of 3-5 pp. each), based on a comparative review of materials from the first-half and second-half of the course, respectively. Each of these will constitute 20% of your course grade.

**Final Paper: 20%**
Each student is also required to submit a Final Paper, in the form of an original research report (7-10 pp.), on a topic chosen in consultation with the instructor and consistent with the analytical themes covered in the course. The Final Paper will constitute 20% of your overall course grade.

All written material should be submitted in 12-pt font, double-spaced, with one-inch margins, on consecutively-numbered pages, each bearing your student ID number and the assignment title (e.g. Mid-Term, End-Term, Final Paper) in a 'header.' Specific details pertaining to all writing assignments will be provided separately, at appropriate times.
Course Outline: Weekly Topics & Readings

Orientations
Week 1 Sep 9
No readings

PART I: REFLECTIONS ON TRADITION, MIRRORS OF MODERNITY

Traditional Confucian Ethics and the Conduct of Modern Personhood
Week 2 Sep 16
Read: Ikels, Charlotte (ed.), 2004, Filial Piety: Practice and Discourse in Contemporary East Asia, Stanford. [e-Library; Selections]

>> Country Briefs <<

Agrarian Imperialism and Modern Nation-Building
Week 3 Sep 23
Voices from Silent Majorities
Read: Hane, Peasants, Rebels, Women, and Outcastes, pp. 3-136 (chs. 1-5)

Week 4 Sep 30
Subaltern Plights of Modernity
Read: Hane, pp. 139-320 (chs. 6-11)

Community Formation and Local Elite Dominance
Week 5 Oct 7
Social Organization of Political Economy
Read: Ruf, Cadres and Kin, pp. 1-61 (chs. 1 & 2)

Week 6 Oct 14
Revolutionary Action and the Local State
Read: Ruf, pp. 62-162 (chs. 3-6)

Memory and Re-Constructions of the Past
Week 7 Oct 21
Constructing Memories
Read: Tai (ed.), The Country of Memory, pp. 1-101 (Intro & Part I)

Week 8 Oct 28
Gendered Images of the Nation
Read: Tai (ed.), pp. 109-222 (Parts II & III; Afterward)

* MID-TERM ESSAY DUE Fri., Oct. 29 *

3
Week 9 Nov 4

**Gender, Class, and Subjectivities**  
Read: Kendall (ed.), *Under Construction* [Entire Book]

---

**Space, Place, and the Production of Modernity**  
Week 10 Nov 11

Traveling Discourses  
Read: Sivaramakrishnan & Agrawal (eds.), *Regional Modernities* [Chs. 1-5, pp.1-142]

---

Week 11 Nov 18

Transgressing Global/Local Boundaries  
Read: Sivaramakrishnan and Agrawal (eds.), *Regional Modernities* [Chs. 7-9,11, pp.165-261, 286-312; and Chs. 12-14,16, pp.315-358, 377-403]

---

Week 12 Nov 25  * Thanksgiving * -- No Classes in Session  
[begin reading McCormack]

---

**Pathologies of Progress**  
Week 13 Dec 2

Read: McCormack, *The Emptiness of Japanese Affluence*

---

Week 14 Dec 9

**Marginalization, Reaction, and Resistance**  
Read: Starr (ed.), *Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland* [Selections to be Assigned]

---

* END-TERM ESSAY DUE Fri., Dec. 10 *

---

* Final Paper Due: Thu., Dec 16 *