

**Government of the Russian Federation  
Federal State Autonomous Educational Institution of High Professional  
Education  
National Research University 'Higher School of Economics'  
Faculty of World Economy and International Affairs  
School of Asian Studies**

**Master's Program  
in Socioeconomic and Political Development of Modern Asia**

**Syllabus for the course  
SOCIO-POLITICAL HISTORY OF EAST AND SOUTH-EAST  
ASIA**

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Prof. Olga Volosyuk**

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## 1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

### 1.1. Title of the course

Socio-political History of East and South-East Asia

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### 1.2. Pre-requisites

This course is designed mainly for the students who have no or little background in Asian studies and therefore can be regarded as a qualifying or preparatory course for more detailed special courses. This is a bridging course. It means that there are no credits. However, you need to take this course if:

- you have no background in Asian Studies
- you have weak background in East Asian Studies

You can check whether you need to pass this course with the manager of MA program

### 1.3. Course Type

Qualification course

### 1.4. Abstract

The course focuses on the historical and social background in East and South-East Asia including the historical roots, the nature of state power, social forces, major powers relationships and the future of Asian geopolitics in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The history of world politics has been a history of interactions among great powers. The legacy of history, traditional political culture, cross-border conflicts and alliances play a very important role in the current political situation in East Asia.

This course will trace the history of the region since the ancient times and show how the Asian states as well as Western powers have been shaping the geopolitical map of East and South-East Asia since the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century to the present. The course will focus primarily on the continuities and discontinuities in the cultural, social and political patterns in the context of international relations.

The following issues will be explored. China, Korea, Japan and SEA countries in the Medieval period, China and other countries of East and South-East Asia since the early Medieval period to the present day; the East Asian setting and early European influence to 1800; European impact on East and Southeast Asia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; China's and Japan's response to the Western expansion; the decline and fall of empires in East Asia and national resurrection of Asian states; the Cold War in Asia and postwar nation-building; the resurrection of Japan and China; the rise of nationalism in East Asia and its different models (Chinese, Japanese, etc.); power, authority, and the advent of democracy in Asia; Russia in the Pacific Asia; regional dynamics, regional and global perspectives of Asia Pacific; new trends in Asia: isolation, integration, and changes, etc.

Currently each Asian state faces challenges and opportunities that influence its national security objectives and strategies. One of the major goals of this course is to analyze these challenges and opportunities in an attempt to forecast what the future of Asian Geopolitics might be over the next 15 to 25 years.

The fundamental question of the continuity between the cultural tradition as the basis of socioeconomic organization seen in the historical retrospective and the elements of change and “modernity” in the present, will remain the key point issue of our course.

## 2. Learning objectives

The main academic aim of the course is *to equip* students with theoretical and methodological instruments for conducting theoretical and applied research in the field of socioeconomic and political development of contemporary Asia, *to advance* critical and independent thinking, *evaluate* students’ own standpoints on the research problem, *to enhance* the students’ competence in recognizing and creating the balanced structure and contents of the thesis in Asian Studies as well as in assessing own research as a holistic work, its place in the field of study and contribution to it, its perspectives and challenges.

## 3. Learning outcomes

Lectures, home reading, written assignments and discussions are designed to help you develop the skills to:

- Think historically, read critically, write and speak persuasively.
- Place major historical events in East Asian History in their proper geographical, chronological, and thematic context.
- Connect and integrate historical phenomena as well as grasp their political, economic, ethical and moral dimensions.
- Appreciate the greatness and complexity of EA and SEA cultural and religious traditions.
- Understand continuities and discontinuities in political and state institutions of East Asia.
- Aspire for better understanding of the present development of East Asia.
- Evaluate and critically assess the validity of historical facts and interpretations., the true value of the academic resources.
- Use primary and secondary sources to create elaborate, persuasive, and profoundly grounded analyzes of historical problems and events.

## 4. Course Plan

(Some topics could be excluded from the course by instructor. The order of the lectures might be a subject to change)

<b>Topic No</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Reading (PP)</b>	<b>Lectures</b>	<b>Seminars</b>	<b>Self-study</b>
1	Course Introduction Ancient China and Countries of South-East Asia		2	2	6
2-3	The East Asian Setting and Rising of State and Society before 1800	3-6, 11, 48-56, 71- 77		4	4
4	EA and SEA states in the Premodern period and Early European Influence	77-89	2	2	4
5	19th Century European Imperialism and the Colonization of Southeast Asia	89-100	2	2	4
6	China's response to the West: The Crisis and Fall of the Ch'ing Empire	173-178		4	4
7	Japan's Response to the Western Expansion: Meiji Modernization	127-155	2	2	4
8	The Rise of Nationalism in East Asia	161-163, 170-185, 189-194, 196-201		2	4
9	Nationalism in the Colonial East and SE Asia	190-200	2	2	4
10	Models of Nationalism in China: Chiang Kai-shek versus Mao	178-190		2	4
11	Ultra-Nationalism in Japan: The 1930's	201-213		2	4
12	The Pacific War and Cold War in Asia:	213-230, 238-240		2	4

13	Postwar Nation-Building in Southeast Asia	457-481		2	4
14	China from Mao to Deng	403—415, 439, 443- 457	2	4	4
15	Japan Reinvents Itself	241-270		2	4
16	The Struggle for Power in Modern East Asia	270-275	2	2	4
17	Russia in East Asia: the hard choice	303-331	2	2	4
18	Course Wrap-up	507-535		2	6
	<b>Total hours</b>	114	16	24	74

## 5. Readings

You have to read a lot - it is one of the main requirements for the course. To intensify and facilitate your understanding we recommend first of all to focus on the principle idea and the main trends in the development of East and SE Asia. Some details in this case could be skipped.

Students should be prepared to do a fair amount of reading and to deal with unfamiliar-looking names and places. If you find yourself confused, please do not hesitate to contact the instructor.

Taking notes both during the class and at home is strongly recommended.

### Textbooks

Berger, Mark; Borer, Douglas. **The Rise of East Asia : Critical Visions of the Pacific Century**. Routledge. 1997.

URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/search.action?query=The+Rise+of+East+Asia+%3A+Critical+Visions+of+the+Pacific+Century+Berger%2C+Mark%3B+Borer%2C+Douglas++Routledge++1997>.

ProQuest Ebook Central - Academic Complete 1997

### Supplementary material

Although the most important information can be found in the textbooks, a limited amount of additional reading will be recommended for better understanding of the problems. Students are expected to do all the assigned reading **prior** to all classes, and do it in a way that will allow you to follow the lecture and actively participate in the discussions. You should also bring your books to class (in the digital form), since we are supposed to discuss the crucial issues featured in the reading assignments.

Shambaugh, David; Yahuda, Michael. **International Relations of Asia**. Rowman & Littlefield

Publishers. 2014.

URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/search.action?query=International+Relations+of+Asia+Shambaugh%2C+David%3B+Yahuda%2C+Michael++Rowman+%26+Littlefield+Publishers++2014>

ProQuest Ebook Central - Academic Complete 2014

Berger Mark T. **The Battle for Asia: From Decolonization to Globalization**. Routledge. 2003

URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/search.action?query=The+Battle+for+Asia+%3A+From+Decolonization+to+Globalization+Berger%2C+Mark+T.++Routledge++2003>

ProQuest Ebook Central - Academic Complete 2003

Weatherbee, Donald E. **International Relations in Southeast Asia: The Struggle for Autonomy**. Rowman. 2014. URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/search.action?query=International+Relations+in+Southeast+Asia+%3A+The+Struggle+for+Autonomy+Weatherbee%2C+Donald+E.++Rowman+%26+Littlefield+Publishers++2014>

URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/search.action?query=International+Relations+in+Southeast+Asia+%3A+The+Struggle+for+Autonomy+Weatherbee%2C+Donald+E.++Rowman+%26+Littlefield+Publishers++2014>

ProQuest Ebook Central - Academic Complete 2014

Henshall Kenneth G. **A History of Japan**. St. Martin's Press, 1999.

Wright, David C. History of China. Greenwood Publishing Group, Incorporated. 2001. URL:

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/search.action?query=%09+History+of+China+Wright%2C+David+C.++Greenwood+Publishing+Group%2C+Incorporated++2001>.

ProQuest Ebook Central - Academic Complete 2001

## 6. Grading System

**Final grade** = 0,7 cumulative grade + 0,3 grade for the exam

**Cumulative grade:**

Class attendance 50%

Participation at the class work - 20%

Group Discussion and readings - 30%

10 10 point grading system	
10,9, 8	Excellent
7,6	Good
5,4	Fair
3,2,1	failing grade

## 7. Guidelines for Knowledge Assessment

### 7.1 Class Attendance & Discussion

Regular class attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to attend class as well as participate in lectures, discussions, and review sessions. Class participation will constitute 25% of the final grade. Each student is allowed a maximum of two (2) unexcused absences during the semester. For each unexcused absence thereafter, five (5) points are deducted from your final grade. You are responsible for keeping the professor informed of any situation that prevents you from attending class. **Students who have more than 5 unexcused absences will be placed as "failed" regardless of other individual achievements.**

### 7.2 Questions for exam

1. Does East Asia enjoy any unity beyond that imposed by race and geography?
2. What are the main ethno-linguistic divisions among East Asians?
3. Do these divisions necessarily coincide with cultural differences such as religion and subsistence patterns?
4. What are the main cultural divisions in the region?
5. Why did the Chinese see themselves as the "center" of the civilized world?
6. What kind of relations with China was characteristic of the SEA states in the middle ages?
7. What were the main trends in the maritime trade of the region?
8. To what extent do pre-modern attitudes and rivalries influence contemporary East and South-East Asia?
9. What was the first reaction of Asian countries to the Western impact?
10. Policy of European superpowers in East and South-East Asia: main trends, regional financial flows and trade.
11. What was the nature of early European Rivalry in China and SEA?
12. What were the main trends of the transformation of political systems in South-East Asia after the European impact?
13. Do you agree that "modern nation-states" did not exist in East Asia in 1800?
14. Why was the European impact relatively limited between 1500 and 1800?
15. Where and in what ways did the Europeans exert the greatest influence?
16. Why was East Asia unprepared to deal with the 19th century European imperialist expansion?
17. What major factors influenced the rise of modern South Korea?
18. What would be the most impressive success story in the modern history of South-East Asia?

### 7.3 Final essays

The general topic is as follows:

#### **"The Price of reforms in Modern East and South-East Asia"**

(Please, specify the region, e.g. China, Japan, Malaysia, etc.) You have to write a short

essay (2 pages in English) after watching selected documentaries.

#### **7.4 Main topics to consider:**

1. The nature of reforms in East Asia: social and economic dimensions
2. Social conflicts as the price of reforms
3. Political changes and social activities
4. Reforms as the mental challenge for ordinary people
5. China and South-East Asia: past and present
6. China "next": "overheating" of Chinese economy and the overloading of Chinese mind
7. Political and economic dimensions of the transition in East Asia

#### **7.5 Requirements and tips for writing an essay:**

1. You are supposed to use all possible information from the materials you have studied.
2. You can criticize the existing concepts, approve, agree or disagree with the material found in the resources. In any case, your essays should be of analytical nature and reflect your individual critical thinking. Any concept or statement should be supported by historical facts or sociocultural arguments.
3. It is better to focus on several most important ideas or events than to write "in general" without any specification. Be brief, laconic, and specific in articulating your point.
4. English proficiency is important albeit not critical.
5. Time for writing the essay is no more than 120 min.

**8.Methods of Instruction:** lecturing, discussions, case studies

**9. Special Equipment and Software Support:** laptop, projector