

Contemporary Asian Civilization (ASAN 312 - 001)
Spring Semester 12 January – 15 May 2009
University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

Vincent K. Pollard Asian Studies Program Class meeting times: T/R, 12:00 – 1:15 p.m. Classroom: HIG 110 Fax: 956-2682 E-mail: pollard@hawaii.edu	Mailbox: Moore 416 Office: Moore 426 “B” Office hours: Friday, 2:30 - 3:30 p.m., online & by app’t. World Wide Web: http://www2.hawaii.edu/~pollard/312.html http://www2.hawaii.edu/~pollard/Asia.html
Yoko I. Wang Department of Sociology E-mail: yokoiida@hawaii.edu	Office hours: Tuesdays, 11:30 - 12:00 Noon, and 1:15 - 1:45 p.m. Office: Moore 315 (Asian Studies)

ASAN 312 is a multidisciplinary examination of problems and issues affecting peoples and institutions of contemporary Asia. Using a variety of approaches and print and audiovisual media, this course addresses issues of family, work, society, ethnic minorities, state, human rights, technology, economic change and human security.

Teaching-learning objectives. Depending on your commitment, at the end of this course you will be able to do the following with increased proficiency:

- a) *demonstrate familiarity* with major trends and values associated with continuities and transformations in contemporary Asia and their impact on families, societies and states;
- b) *appreciate* the use and misuse of evidence in making political and cultural inferences in print and audiovisual resources in light of Asia’s historical diversity;
- c) *distinguish* between descriptions of political and cultural reality in Asia and prescriptions for change;
- d) *appreciate different points of view* by people of different social classes, political persuasions, and cultural traditions in different Asian countries;
- e) *analyze* writings and films that claim to illuminate life, history and politics of contemporary Asian societies;
- f) *demonstrate* awareness of relevant stand-alone and networked information sources useful for understanding social and cultural change in Asia; and
- g) *respond* to suggestions for improving one's writing and self-editing.

Prerequisites: Students are expected to have completed ASAN 201 and 202. Otherwise, consent of the instructor is required.

Texts: Purchase a new or used copy of the following book from the UH Bookstore or online: Aat Vervoorn, *Re Orient: Change in Asian Societies*, 3rd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2006).¹ Videotapes, DVDs, handouts, lectures and class discussions are also part of the text.

¹ According to the author, pronouncing his name “AHT Vehrr-VOURRN” is close enough.

Which Asia? The English word *Asia* carries more than 2,300 years of imperial baggage. Etymologically, the English word is derived from the ancient Greek word *Ἀσία*. At that time, “Asia” referred only to the territory of Anatolia on the eastern side of the Aegean Sea. Today, that small area lies within Turkey. But as European missionaries, merchants and military forces gradually pushed further and further east, they stretched the notion of “Asia” beyond the original meaning.

Conventionally, *geographic* Asia today embraces a major chunk of the continental Eurasian landmass extending from Korea to eastern Turkey and Israel. In addition to *Asian* Russia, geographic Asia includes the western Pacific/China Sea archipelagoes of Indonesia, the Philippines and Japan, as well as Taiwan, Sri Lanka and other islands.

Over half of all humans live within Asia’s broad geographic expanse. Its cultural, linguistic, historical, political and economic diversity is stunning. This semester, we will limit “Asia” to South, Southeast and East Asia. Emphasizing its diversity, the combined populations of China, Japan and Korea number *less than half* of all the people in those three regions of Asia.

The etymology of the word *region* takes us back in history to the ancient Latin word *regio*. It means “an area under one ruler.” That etymology should enhance your skepticism towards any claim that regions have firm, immutable boundaries.

Organization of the course. Even if East, Southeast and South Asia are the primary focus, additional choices must be made. “Civilization” is commonly defined as “a developed or advanced state of human society.”²

With that fluid definition, teaching-learning activities for ASAN 312 are divided into nine overlapping sections of unequal length. These nine sections are as follows: **1)** “Introduction and overview”; **2)** “Family, state and society”; **3)** “Minorities, human rights”; **4)** “Work, economic development, technology”; **5)** “The endangered physical environment”; **6)** “Nationalism, integration, conflict and cooperation”; **7)** “Human security”; **8)** “Student research”; and **9)** “Recapitulation of key issues

Organized discussion of videos viewed in common complement the assigned readings.³ To facilitate understanding, appreciation and criticism of assignments, you will receive questions for the readings and videos.

In addition to the assigned readings and videos, draw on what you have learned in earlier course work. Use the two writing assignments to specialize in any aspect of contemporary Asian civilization that especially appeals to you. Continue to define or redefine what you mean by contemporary Asian civilization in that dynamic part of our world.

Grading criteria and grade reports. A 400-point system is outlined below. It reflects the emphasis assigned to all forms of other participation in this course. The value of course-related activities is spread throughout the semester.

² “Civilization,” *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (1989), <<http://dictionary.oed.com/>>.

³ Readings assigned for each section of the course are listed at pages 5-9 of this syllabus.

<i>Creditable learning activities</i>	Maximum points	Your points	% of grade
3-4 tests (combined total points)	150		37.5%
Short paper: Self-designed mini-field trip	30		7.5%
Paper, including assessment of difficulty, inventiveness, optional successive drafts, and responsiveness to suggestions	100		25.0%
Final Examination	100		25.0%
Comprehensive assessment of your personal growth, impact, responsibility, initiative, intellectual effort, collaborativeness, and other in-class participation in this mutual undertaking of co-learning	20		5.0%
<i>Maximum possible points</i>	400		100.0%

The "plus-minus" grading schedule works as follows:

F = /< 240; **D** = 241-280; **C-minus** = 281-290; **C** = 291-310; **C-plus** = 311-320; **B-minus** = 321-330; **B** = 331-350; **B-plus** = 351-360; **A-minus** = 361-370; **A** = />371; **A-plus** = />371, but also reflecting *consistently* high-quality performance throughout the semester.

Fill in the chart above to answer the question, "How am I doing?"

Quizzes and examinations. Announced and tests will remind you of central themes, facts and issues from our readings, videos, lectures and discussions. And the results will also remind me of how well prepared you are. The Final exam will help you further integrate your understandings.

Attendance policy. All students, including auditors, are expected to be with us for each class unless you are seriously ill. Evaluations and grades are based on your performance—not the reasons for nonperformance.

Attendance will be taken periodically. Students absent or late 5 times when attendance is taken will incur a deduction of 10 points.

Graduate Students. Graduate students in this class are expected to attend all classes. Instead of the assigned papers, classified and unclassified graduate students have the option of proposing, researching, revising and presenting two papers of about 15-20 pages each on topics negotiated with the instructor.

Late registrants. Late-registering students are fully responsible for understandings reached during the first two days of the semester. Late registrants may receive extra written assignments for each class missed to make sure that you don't fall behind.

Senior citizens. Otherwise eligible residents of the community who are auditing the class not-for-credit must also show their SVCP card from Dr. Lee Putnam in the Queen Lili'uokalani Student Services Center. Auditors are expected to attend class in a timely fashion.

Improve your writing in this class. Consult my "Comments & Suggestions on Writing Your Papers and Exams." (See below, pages 9-10).

Or download Pollard's handy "Editing Grid," from the *Teaching for Success* website at <<http://www.teachingforsuccess.com/IssueSupport2/PollardWritAnalsGrid.pdf>>.

Plagiarism. Unfortunately, plagiarism carries too heavy a burden to be a totally coherent concept. However, that doesn't get you off the hook. Know the UH policy on "Academic Honesty." Give explicit credit for sources quoted or summarized. This expectation is published in the *Graduate and General Information Bulletin*, "Appendix" and elsewhere. If in doubt, cite your sources.

Plagiarism results in a zero of the assignment—and possibly an "F" for the course. If an assigned activity is individualized, you may be asked certify that you have used only the amount of outside assistance specified for each assignment.

Internet. You must have a workable e-mail address. Your UH e-mail address will be subscribed to the *Asia312-L e-mail* network. This one-way list will be used to deliver information and, in some cases, handouts to you. Wise students check their e-mail at least once between classes. If you wish, use UH Webmail's *Options=>Settings=>Mail Forwarding* sequence to have your UH e-mail forwarded to another e-mail address.

You are expected to know how to access e-mail, read e-mail, reply to it, send e-mail or download Word files and to access websites.

KOKUA: If you have any disabilities that might affect your school work, KOKUA is a confidential service for students with disabilities that is available to offer assistance to you.

It is the student's responsibility to have one's disability certified by KOKUA and to notify Pollard or Wang in advance of any course activity where you need accommodation, for example, a proctored exam outside the regular classroom.

The KOKUA office is located in Queen Lili'uokalani Student Services Center #013. The phone number is 956-7511.

Changes in syllabus. Any modifications in planned learning activities that may become necessary because of extended discussions or additional readings will be announced in class.

Weeks 1 - 2:
13, 15 & 20 January 2009
Introduction and overview

Administrative introduction to the course.

“Introduction” [includes political maps of East Asia, Southeast Asia, and South and West Asia] in Aat Vervoorn, *Re Orient: Change in Asian Societies*, 3rd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2005), **pp. 1-15**.

“Maps: Locational Skills.” Handout

“Globalisation and Insulation in Asia,” Ch. 1 in Aat Vervoorn, *Re Orient: Change in Asian Societies*, 3rd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2005), **pp. 17-39**.

Weeks 2 - 4:
22, 27 & 29 January and 3, 5 & 10 February 2009
Family, state, society and security

Holiday: Monday, 19 January 2009. Commemorating the birthday of the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (15 January 1929 - 4 April 1968).

“State, Society, Individual,” Ch. 2, in Aat Vervoorn, *Re Orient: Change in Asian Societies*, 3rd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2005), **pp. 40-68**.

Vincent K. Pollard (ed.), “Confucianism: Roots of Exemplary Conduct and Effective Governance.” Handout.

“Family Matters,” Ch. 8, in Aat Vervoorn, *Re Orient: Change in Asian Societies*, 3rd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2005), **pp. 218-242**.

Weeks 5 - 6:
12, 17, 19 & 24 February 2009
Minorities, human rights

“Ethnic Minorities,” Ch. 4, in Aat Vervoorn, *Re Orient: Change in Asian Societies*, 3rd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 89-120.

“Human Rights,” Ch. 3, in Aat Vervoorn, *Re Orient: Change in Asian Societies*, 3rd ed.

Writing assignment 1: “Short paper: Self-designed mini-field trip.” (30 points)

One option in this written assignment entails attending a panel of the 20th School of Pacific and Asian Studies (SPAS) Graduate Student Conference at the Korean Studies Center during 11-13 March 2008. (The conference program will be given to you online or as a handout.)

As an alternative, students may propose a viewing a film, attending a lecture or workshop, or visiting one or more of the Asia sections of the Honolulu Academy of Art. (The third Sunday of each month is free.)

Deadline: No later than 22 March 2009.

Weeks 7 - 10:
26 February and 3, 5, 10, 12, 17 & 19 March 2009
Work, economic development, technology

Writing assignment 2 (100 points):

Students will write a short review essay focusing on one or more of the themes around which ASAN 312 is organized. This will let you specialize on subtopics that are of special interest to you. Expect a detailed explanatory handout for this assignment. Due: 23 April 2009.

Whichever format you select, you are expected to consult with Pollard periodically during the rest of the semester.

“Economic and Social Development,” Ch. 5, in Aat Vervoorn, *Re Orient: Change in Asian Societies*, 3rd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 121-158.

“Patterns of Population Change,” Ch. 6, in Aat Vervoorn, *Re Orient: Change in Asian Societies*, 3rd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 159-186.

“The World of Work,” Ch. 9, in Aat Vervoorn, *Re Orient: Change in Asian Societies*, 3rd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 243-272.

Week 11:
30 March and 2 April 2009
The endangered physical environment

“Environmental Impact, Ch. 7, in Aat Vervoorn, *Re Orient: Change in Asian Societies*, 3rd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 187-218.

Weeks 12 - 13:
7, 9, 14 & 16 April 2009
Nationalism, integration, conflict and cooperation

“Media, Communication, Censorship,” Ch. 10, in Aat Vervoorn, *Re Orient: Change in Asian Societies*, 3rd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 273-295.

“Using and Creating Knowledge,” Ch. 11, in Aat Vervoorn, *Re Orient: Change in Asian Societies*, 3rd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 296-321.

Weeks 14 – 15:
21, 23, 38 & 30 April 2009
Human security

Vincent K. Pollard, “Redesigning Asia’s Military Landscape at the 1986 Constitutional Commission of the Philippines,” to be translated into Chinese, in 冷战国际历史研究 [*Lengzhan guojishi yanjiu* {“Cold War International History Studies”}], forthcoming, 2009. **Downloadable from ASAN 312 website.**

Hyun-Seok Yu, “Asian Values and Human Security Cooperation in Asia,” pp. 99-108, in William T. Tow, Ramesh Thakur, and In-Taek Hyun (eds.), *Asia’s Emerging Regional Order: Reconciling Traditional and Human Security* (Tokyo and New York: United Nations University, 2000), ch.6.

Vincent K. Pollard, "Designing a Peaceful Okinawa: Local Opportunities, Regional Obstacles," *Social Science Japan*, no. 23 (April 2002) (Issue theme: "Civil Society"), pp. 29-35; online edition, downloadable .pdf file <<http://web.iss.u-tokyo.ac.jp/newslet/ssj23/index.html>> and scroll down to p. 29.

Book review due: 23 April 2009.

Week 16:
6 May 2009
Recapitulation of key issues

“Conclusion”, in Aat Vervoorn, *Re Orient: Change in Asian Societies*, 3rd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 322-324.

Advice for the final exam.

Course evaluations.

Thursday, 8 May 2009: Non-instructional study day: No class meeting.

Week 17:
11-15 May 2009
Final Examination

Tuesday, 12 May 2009

12:00 Noon – 2:00 p.m. (The two-hour exam begins at our normal starting time!)

We will meet in the same classroom.

COMMENTS & SUGGESTIONS ON WRITING YOUR PAPERS & EXAMS

From reading and commenting on papers written by students and by participants in my writing workshops, I have briefly summarized typical problems that arise in these efforts. And I can suggest some solutions.

Writing is thinking. And thinking can be hard work. Therefore, if you experience difficulty and frustration, that does not mean anything is wrong with your head. It's normal. Just be persistent.

My comments on your writing should help you get better results from your efforts. Many of my comments, questions and suggestions apply only to your individual paper. Below, I share some general observations that should be helpful to all of you. Use these suggestions as guidelines and reminders in peer-editing, as well as in revising your final drafts.

1. Please carefully read and directly answer the question that you are asked to answer. Answer all parts of every question. If you do not understand the question, please talk to me about it--before class, during class, or after class. Or if you prefer, make an appointment to discuss the matter in my office. Or e-mail me at pollard@hawaii.edu. After you have finished your answer, look at the question again. After you have written a coherent statement, make sure that it answers the question.

2. Write an introductory sentence or paragraph that summarizes the central point you are making in your answer. If this is not the first sentence or the first paragraph, it should be very close to the beginning of your paper.

3. Select examples that support your argument. Avoid vagueness. Since two different people may sometimes interpret the same example in completely different ways, show precisely how your chosen example strengthens the point you are making. In a short paper, one or two well-chosen and well-explained examples can add a lot of power to your writing. Further, if you are developing an interpretation or line of argumentation that I hadn't anticipated, your examples will be helpful to me. Also, if your examples are clear but, perhaps, your point of view is less clearly expressed than it otherwise might be, then it is easier for me to write questions, comments or suggestions for you.

4. Say exactly what you mean. Your reader shouldn't have to "guess" your real meaning.

5. Be as concise as possible. Avoid "overwriting." Ask yourself: "Do I really need that sentence?" "Do I need those words?" Many of you may have noticed that I sometimes suggest a shorter way of expressing some thoughts. Sometimes when I make these kinds of suggestions, I also write: "Same idea/fewer words/more power." And sometimes I will write an "equals" (=) sign followed by one or more words and a question mark. The comment will be {bracketed} with a word or expression from your essay. This comment means I am unsure of your point. If you decide that my suggested alternative does not express exactly what you mean to say, then my comments are simply encouraging you to improve your own writing.

6. In face-to-face conversational language, our whole body, our facial muscles and our tone of voice “punctuate” and emphasize our spoken words. However, if we write down our spoken language, those written words are sometimes less effective than the same words if spoken aloud. Phrases slowing the reader down as she searches for your main point are words and phrases that do not belong in your writing. For example, in face-to-face conversation, we commonly use throw-away words like “actually” and “basically” for emphasis and transitions. In writing, try to find more precise transitional words and phrases.

7. Social science, as we are learning, is social! We often depend on the work of other people. But avoid plagiarism! Whether the result of an intent to deceive, indifference or carelessness, plagiarism is a failure to acknowledge how one has used the writing of other people. So, use quotation marks whenever you are reproducing someone else’s words in your paper. Give page references or URL's when you are quoting someone's words or summarizing ideas s/he has expressed in books, articles or Internet essays.

8. Using extensive quotations should be the exception. Learn to summarize. Quote sparingly for added effect. And it demonstrates your understanding of what you have read.

9. Becoming “your own best critic” should be your goal. Ask yourself the questions that I ask when I comment on your paper. Acquire the skill of making better criticisms of your own writing than the criticisms made by other people.

10. Make sure subjects and verbs in your sentences “agree” with one another: that is, a singular subject takes a singular verb; a plural subject gets a plural verb. Also, pronouns refer back to the closest noun that agrees with them. Although this rule is violated in spoken language, clear writing requires accurate pronoun-noun “agreement.”

11. Ask yourself if your verbs would be more effective in the “active” voice. Usually, the “active” voice is more “lively” than the “passive” voice.

12. Turn long adjectival clauses into independent clauses or separate sentences.

13. Very long introductory adverbial phrases and clauses make it hard to tell what the main idea is. Consider three alternatives: a) Shorten these phrases or clauses; b) place them after the main clause; or c) turn them into separate sentences.

14. Continual suggestions (from me) on the need for more precise word usage probably indicate that you will benefit from using a better dictionary--one with several meanings for each word.

15. Careful use of transitional adverbs or adverbial phrases will enhance the coherence of your paper, that is, the way in which one part flows into another.

16. In proofreading your final drafts, please use the “spellcheck” software on your computer. Or use the “eyeball method.” Large numbers of spelling errors distract from your main point. Also, some spelling errors change your meaning.

17. Show the “final” version of your paper to a friend who has not seen an earlier draft. Ask your friend to summarize your main point in one or two sentences. If your friend has difficulty giving you a clear summary, then you probably need to spend some more time revising the paper.

18. Never give up! Just keep telling yourself that, no matter how frustrating the writing sometimes gets, you will absolutely refuse to give up. And get whatever help you need. Why? Sometimes the difference between a mediocre paper and a superb piece of writing is the result of revising your draft one or two more times.