

CAMOSUN COLLEGE
ASIA 212—F04
RESEARCH ISSUES IN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION

Instructor: Helen Lansdowne

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Office: Paul 230 **Office Hours:** Tuesday 5:00 – 6:00 pm

Class Schedule: Tuesday 3:30 – 4:50 **Classroom:** Young 325

Friday 11:00 – 12:20 **Classroom:** Paul 107

Tuesday – Lecture // Thursday -- Seminar

Optional Text:

1. *Notes on the Preparation of Essays in the Arts and Sciences*. Fourth Edition, Peterborough, Ontario: Trent University, 1993.
2. *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures*. Anne Fadiman. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1997.

Course Objectives:

Pac 212 is intended as an introduction to historical and contemporary Western critical theories and their use as analytical tools in the study of the Asia-Pacific region. This course is not about learning facts and figures, rather it is about formulating ideas and asking questions. In other words, this course is about critical thinking, and it is about learning to express your thoughts in clear, coherent, and concise language.

In the coming weeks we will explore issues such as the rise of modern industrial capitalism, Marxism, Modernism, Orientalism, Post-Colonialism, Postmodernism, Consumer Capitalism and Globalization. We will explore such questions as how we know what we know, and how various types of knowledge are use by governments and international corporate institutions to pursue social, cultural, political, and economic agendas. In the context of such issues **all students** will be required to engage in the critical analysis of selected problems in discussions, oral presentations and written assignments.

Course Requirements and Weightings:

Weekly Comments (one page type written)	10%
Participation	10%
Presentations (5-10 minutes)	20%
Paper # 1	15%
Book Report	20%
Paper # 2	25%

Letter Grades will be assigned according to the following distribution of marks:

A+ 95 – 100	B+ 80 – 84	C+ 65 – 69
A 90 – 94	B 75 – 79	C 60 – 64
A- 85 – 89	B- 70 – 74	D 50 – 59 F < 50

Weekly Comments:

At the beginning of each weekly discussion every student is required to submit, **in person**, a one page commentary on the assigned readings. (All of the readings are available in the Reserve Reading Room at the main library). Please take note that the written comments are not to be based on the material from the Tuesday lectures, but from the material assigned for the weekly discussions. There is no set form for the commentary, but you should not merely summarize the readings. The objective of this exercise is for you to give your thoughtful reaction to the weekly topic, and to what the various authors have to say. Commentaries are to be kept to a length of one type written page. **Comments must be handed in at the beginning of the Thursday class. Late assignments will not be accepted.**

Presentations:

Each student in the class must give a 10 to 15 minute oral presentation at the beginning of one of the weekly discussions. The presenters' task is to pick one or two particularly important and interesting aspects of the general topic to be discussed, research them, and present findings to the class. **Avoid dull and deadly summaries.** Be as controversial and provocative as you like. The purpose of the presentations is to stimulate discussion on the questions raised.

Short Paper:

This first paper is to be 1000 words long. It is a “**problem paper**,” that is, you are to select an issue of particular interest to you (historical or contemporary), research it, and write an analytical paper. This is called a **problem paper** because you must choose an issue that has opposing points of view or interpretation. I would suggest that you focus on how a particular Asia-Pacific issue has been presented in popular or academic literature. You should explore the dimensions of the “problem” rather than try to give a definitive answer. You should discuss the critical approaches used by the various authors to which you refer in your paper. To receive a good mark on this assignment you must do more than merely summarize or describe; dig beneath the surface and analyze.

This short paper must conform to academic form and standards. It must include a title page, a clear opening statement, a concluding statement, proper footnotes, and a bibliography. You must include two direct quotations (no more): a short one of a line or two, and a longer one of a paragraph or so, using proper academic style. You must also include at least five footnotes. Be sure to make use of the assigned text, *Notes on the Preparations of Essays in the Arts and Sciences*.

The short paper is 1000 words long (four typewritten pages, 250 words per page, size 12 font, one-inch margins), is worth 15% of your grade and is due on Friday, October 8th by 4 p.m. (under my door).

Book Report:

In your analytical book report, you will offer both a summary and an evaluation of the book *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors and the Collision of Two Cultures*. Do not simply reiterate the book's plot and conclude with a personal opinion. Situate your summary in the context of the author's arguments, in light of ideas gleaned from this course or other courses, and in light of the points you consider to be the most important. Your evaluation should be substantiated by specific examples from the book (including page numbers). If you wish, you may draw on other course materials to evaluate the book, but this is not necessary. A good report will be clear, coherent and thorough. A superior report will be personable and informed.

The report must conform to academic forms and standards. It must include a title page, a clear opening statement, a concluding statement, proper footnotes and a bibliography if necessary.

The book review is 1500 words long (6 typewritten pages, etc.), and is due on November 5th (under my office door by 4 p.m.) and is worth 20% of your grade.

Long Paper:

This paper is to be 2000 words in length, and is due on the last day of class. For this paper students are free to choose any topic that concerns the Asia-Pacific region. (**Note:** all topics must be approved by the instructor). In this paper students must identify and analyze important issues, questions, and problems raised in the various course readings. To get a good mark on this paper you will have to go beyond presenting a mass of facts and figures; it is important that you demonstrate your research skills and analytical abilities.

The final paper is 1500 words in length (6 to 7 typewritten pages, etc.) and is due on Friday, December 10th, under my office door by 4 p.m. It is worth 25% of your grade.

Important Note:

The presentations, short paper, and long paper must all deal with issues related to the Asia-Pacific region. The topics for each of these assignments must be different from one another. Work covering substantially the same topics will not be accepted. Marks for papers exceeding the specified word limits will be reduced by 10% for every extra page (based on a font of not more than 12 characters per inch, 25 lines per page, and one inch margins...250 words per page). Papers deficient in English (i.e. grammar, syntax, and spelling) will be marked down.

Weekly Readings for Lectures and Discussion Groups

Week 1: Course Introduction and Writing and Research Skills

September 7th Lecture: Introduction to Course

September 10th Lecture: Essay Writing and Library Skills

Reading: No Assigned Reading

Week 2: Objectivity in the Social Sciences

September 14th Lecture: Objectivity and the Social Sciences

Readings: E.H. Carr, *What is History?* Ch. 1.

September 17th Discussion: Social Science and Objectivity

Readings:

1. E.H. Carr, *What is History?* Ch. 2
2. John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, Ch.1 & Ch.2

In the modern era it has often been argued that it is as necessary to be scientific and objective when studying human society and culture as it is when studying the physical world around us. Is it really possible to be objective when studying human society? Is there an objective reality that can be known? What does John Berger have to say about objectivity?

Week 3: Orientalism

September 21st Lecture: Orientalism

- Readings:**
1. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, Introduction, pp. 1-28.
 2. Chen Xiaomei, *Occidentalism*, Introduction, pp. 3-26.

September 24th Discussion: How the West Sees Asia

- Readings:**
1. Catherine A. Lutz & Jane L. Collins, *Reading National Geographic*, Chapter 4, pp. 87-117.
 2. M. Creighton, “Imaging the Other in Japanese Advertising Campaigns”, pp. 135-160.

Can we discuss *Reading National Geographic* in terms of Said’s “Orientalist” critique? Is it possible for us to know “Other” cultures objectively? When looking at the Asia Pacific region from the West, is it possible for us to avoid falling into the “Orientalist” trap?

Week 4: Society, The Division of Labor, Peasant Perspectives

September 28th Lecture: Emile Durkheim’s Division of Labor

Readings: Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society*, pp. 374-385

October 1st Discussion: Peasants in the Modern World

- Readings:**
1. Kate Zhou, *How the Farmers Changed China*, Introduction, pp. 1-22
 2. Kate Zhou, *How the Farmers Changed China*, Conclusion, pp. 231-247

In today's discussion we are looking at the role of peasants in the late-20th century. Given the current state of the global economy is it possible to even talk about peasants? Have all peasants become farmers? What is the difference between a peasant and a farmer? Are peasant/farmers powerless politically? How do peasant/farmers integrate into the new global order? What do you think about China— with two-thirds of the population still living in the countryside can we still think about it as a peasant society?

Week 5: Modes of Production and Proletarianization

October 5th Lecture: Marx's Notion of History

Readings: 1. Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, pp. 6-29

October 8th Discussion: Asian Workers

Readings: 1. Aihwa Ong, "Japanese Factories, Malay Workers," pp. 385--422

Much of the success of the new Asian industrialization has been based on the use of cheap female labor. How should we think about this situation? Are these women merely being exploited as labor power, or are there other ramifications of the massive influx of Asian females into the labor force? Some would argue that it allows Asian women to finally escape the "tyranny" of the traditional domestic social order. What do you think about this issue?

Week 6: Institutions and Regulations

October 12th Lecture: The Fine Art of Docility

Readings: M. Foucault, "Docile Bodies", pp. 135-169

October 15th Discussion: Rules of Conformity

Reading: 1. S. Suryakusama, "State and Sexuality in New Order Indonesia", pp. 92-119

Week 7: The State and Bureaucracy

October 19th Lecture: Weber on Power and Bureaucracy

Readings: 1. Gerth and Mills, *From Max Weber*. "Marx and Weber," pp. 46-55; "Class, Status, Party," pp. 180-195; "Bureaucracy," pp. 196-198

October 22nd Discussion Groups: Asian States, Power, and the New Confucianism
Readings: 1. Hofheinz & Calder, *The East Asian Edge*, “Common Sources of Strength,”
2. Haruhiro Fukui, “The Japanese State and Economic Development”

One of Max Weber’s most noted books is *The Protestant Ethic*, in which he argues that the protestant ethic was a central dynamic in the rise of capitalism in the West. In recent years the case has been made that the Confucian ethic has played a similar role in the rise of capitalism in Asia. This might or might not be the case in China, Japan, Taiwan, and Korea, but it does not necessarily apply in southeast countries such as Thailand (Buddhist) and Indonesia (Islamic). What do you think? What role does Confucianism play in contemporary east Asian society? In light of today’s Asian economic crisis is Confucianism another term for “crony” capitalism?

Week 8: Global Realms

October 26th Lecture: Global Economies

Readings: 1. David Harvey, “Time-space compression and the postmodern condition”, pp. 284-307

October 29th Discussion: Globalization and Cultural Practice

Reading: 1. L. Ching, “Imaginations in the Empires of the Sun: Japanese Mass Culture in Asia”

2. K. Iwabuchi, “Becoming ‘Culturally Proximate’: the Ascent of Japanese Idol Dramas in Taiwan”, pp. 54-74.

Week 9: Ideology and Gender

November 2nd Lecture: Gender and the Social Sciences

Readings: 1. Katherine Lutz, “The Gender of Theory,” pp. 249-266.

November 5th Discussion: Asian Women in a Global Context

Readings: 1. Aihwa Ong, “Women Out of China: Traveling Tales and Traveling Theories in Post-colonial Feminism,” pp. 350-372.

2. Neferti Tadiar, “Sexual Economies in the Asia-Pacific Community,”

The presenters will briefly discuss some of the problems and issues facing women in selected countries in Asia and/or the Pacific. You should consider the question of whether or not women’s lives and women’s problems have had proper representation in the Western social sciences. Are there problems in applying Western feminist concepts in non-Western societies? Are women’s concerns universal, or do they vary from country to country?

Week 10: Development Concepts and Paradigms

Nov. 9 Discussion Oceania in the New Global Order

Readings: 1. Glenn Alcalay, “Pacific Island Responses to U.S and French Hegemony,”
2. Stephen Britton, “Tourism, Dependency and Development,” pp. 1-19.

How do the economies of the Pacific Island “micro-states” fit into the new global order? Is it realistic to think that they will be able to affect the kind of development happening in east and southeast Asia? Do the Pacific Islands offer more than tourist destinations? Is it possible for Pacific Island states to achieve true independence, or will they always be tied to their previous colonizers (i.e. England, France, & the United States)?

November 12th - No Class

Week 11: The Win and Lose of Development

November 16th Lecture: Concepts in Development Studies

Readings: 1. Andrew Webster, “The Sociology of Development,” pp. 1-14

November 19th Discussion: What is Sustainable development?

Readings: 1. Vaclav Smil, “Development and Destruction in China” pp195-217
2. G. Esteva, “Development”, pp. 6-25

Week 12: Modernization Theory, Dependency, and the World System

November 23rd Lecture: Modernization Theory and Developing Underdevelopment

Readings: 1. Andrew Webster, “Modernization Theory,” pp. 41-64.
2. Andre Gunder-Franke “Theories of Underdevelopment,” pp. 7-48

November 26th Discussion: The New International Division of Labor

Readings: 1. Rosalinda Pineda-Ofreneo, “Philippine Outwork: Subcontracting for Export-oriented Industries,” pp. 158-164.
2. John Sidel, “The Underside of Progress: Land, Labor, and Violence in Two Philippine Growth Zones, 1985-1995,” pp. 3-12.

The New International Division of Labor (NIDL) has been much discussed in recent years. First of all, what is it? Secondly, if there is such a thing, how do Asia and the Pacific fit in? What are the problems with the concept? Are there better approaches to this issue? The presenters should briefly discuss the relationship of selected Asia-Pacific countries to the larger international economy.

Week 13: Gender and Identity

November 30th Lecture: Identity and Ethnicity

No Readings: In Class film

December 3rd Discussion: Orientalism Revisited

Readings: 1. L. Schein, “Gender and Internal Orientalism in China”, pp. 69-98

Week 14: The New Global Environment

December 7th Lecture: Who’s In and Who’s Out

Reading: 1. Zigmund Bauman, “Dreams of Purity” pp. 7-28

December 10th Discussion: Last Day of Class—Open Forum