

NWC 103 ✓
Chinese Culture
Course Outlines

Course Title: Chinese Culture (NWC-103)

Credits: 3

Level of Course: 100

Catalog Description:

An historical-cultural approach to the study of Chinese Culture, illustrating how the concepts of the various social sciences can be utilized in gaining an understanding of an unfamiliar culture.

Rationale:

The world is interdependent and all students need to understand diverse cultures.

Course Outline

Part I
Traditional China

- I. Chinese History begins with the establishment of the Shang Dynasty in BC 1523.
 - A. Earlier history is based on mythology and archaeological evidence is limited.
 - B. The Shang Dynasty (1523-1027) and the Chou Dynasty (BC 1027-221) were both feudal kingdoms.
 1. Although civilization flowered, feudalism tended to fragment political power.
 2. From BC 771 to 221 feudal wars kept much of coastal China in chaos.
 3. Animism, the main religious and philosophical justification for aristocratic power, failed to solve the political problem of war and fragmentation.
- II. During the chaos of the later Chou Dynasty, hundreds of philosophical schools arose attempting to answer the question of how to form a more perfect government..
 - A. Taoism declared that individual man was relatively unimportant and should ignore politics and concentrate on merging with Tao.
 - B. Confucius advocated the adoption of absolute rules of conduct.
 - C. Legalism believed that only through absolute law could stability be achieved.

- D. Legalism would be used to establish a strong state then Confucianism to rule that state.

III. Adopting legalism as a state philosophy, the Lord of Ch'in was able to conquer all the other lords and create a Chinese Empire in BC 221.

- A. Shih Huang-ti was the first true Emperor of China.

- B. Li Ssu was the Chin first minister and implement legalistic ideas.

1. A positive good is anything which increases the power of the state; evil is anything that decreases the power of the state.
2. Freedoms were curtailed and only three occupations accepted: farmer, soldier, artisan.
3. All other philosophies were banned and hundreds of scholars killed.
4. State controlled the economy.

- C. Oppression of the Chin caused internal upheavals and the Dynasty was very short-lived lasting only until 209.

IV. The Han Dynasty supplanted the Chin in 206 BC and developed the Chinese Bureaucratic system which would have survived for over 2,000 years.

- A. A structure of government was developed which emphasized ability to hold office.

- B. Civil Service exams were instituted based on the Confucian Classics.

- C. Traditional institutions, such as the family, village, and clan remained intact.

- D. After four hundred years, BC 206 to AD 220, the cyclical problem of the rise of feudalism caused the collapse of the grand, and glorious, Han.

V. For three hundred years, 220 to 589, China remained divided among many feudal states warring with each other.

- A. During this period of Chaos Buddhism penetrated China.

1. Buddhism developed in India and spread to Southeast Asia.

2. Theravada Buddhism was austere and unacceptable to the Chinese.

- B. China alter Buddhism and form a new school of Buddhist thought called Mahayana Buddhism.
 - 1. Over 200 sects of Buddhism developed in China including Amida Buddhism.
 - 2. Buddhism spread from China to Korea, Vietnam, and Japan.
- VI. In 589, China was reunited under the Sui which was quickly followed by the Tang Dynasty which lasted from 618 to 907.
 - A. The Tang restored the greatness of the Han Dynasty.
 - B. During the Tang Dynasty art and literature flowered.
 - 1. Poetry was the most important literary form and both Li Po and Tu Fu lived during the Tang (c700)
 - 2. Folk tales such as Men of the Marshes and Romance of the Three Kingdoms were widely performed by Chinese Opera companies.
 - 3. Painting, ceramics, and music also flowered.
 - C. In 907, cyclical problem of feudalism caused the collapse of the Tang.
- VII. War would be short-lived and China was reunited in 960 by the Sung family.
 - A. The Sung Dynasty, 960 to 1260, was not as powerful as the Han & Tang.
 - B. In 1260, the grandson of Genghis Khan, Kublai Khan conquered China and established the Mongolian (Yuan) Dynasty which lasted until 1368.
 - C. In 1368, the Chinese ousted the Mongols and established the Ming which lasted 300 years until it was in turn conquered by the Manchus (Ching) in 1644.

Part II Revolution in China

- I. Confucian China remained intact until the Western World came into contact with East Asia beginning in the early sixteenth century.
 - A. Europe's desires for Chinese goods, particularly tea, caused a major currency drain.
 - B. China refused to allow open trade and restricted the Europeans, called "Big-nosed foreign devils" to the city of Canton.

- C. Around 1800, Britain began to smuggle opium into China to pay for the desperately desired Chinese goods.
 - 1. China's trade restrictions plus the opium trade would cause a major war.
 - 2. By 1830 there were an estimated 10,000,000 opium addicts in China
- D. In 1839, a series of events caused the eruption of war.
 - 1. The British navy easily defeated the Chinese.
 - 2. The Treaty of Nanking ended the War in 1842 and was first of unequal treaties.
 - a. Granted to foreigners extraterritoriality and open trade with five ports.
 - b. Allowed Western ideas to penetrate China.
- E. Conflict continued with Western powers and China lost additional wars in 1860, 1885, 1895, and 1900.

II. The weakness of the Ching (Manchu) Dynasty and major economic, political, and social problems stimulated revolution in China.

- A. In the 1850s, the peasants rebelled under the banner of the Taipings.
- B. In the 1890s, the major Nationalist leader Sun Yat-sen began his rise to national fame.
 - 1. On October 10, 1911, Sun's followers overthrew the Manchu Dynasty.
 - 2. A Republic was declared but failed as China was again entered the era of feudalism and war.
- C. In 1928, after seventeen years of civil war, Chiang Kai-shek and Kuomintang Party reunited China.

III. Nationalist China was faced with two major problems.

- A. Japan was extremely aggressive.
 - 1. In 1931 Japan invaded Manchuria.
 - 2. In 1937, Japan attacks China and occupies the coastal regions.
- B. During the War, the Communist movement in North China under Mao Zedong expands.
 - 1. Mao's philosophy of guerrilla warfare stimulates a major peasant revolt.
 - 2. Communist advocate a reform program.

C. After World War II, a Civil War erupts in China which Chiang loses to the Communist despite American military aid.

D. The People's Republic of China is declared on Oct. 1, 1949.

Part III
Communist China

I. From 1949 to 1976, there was a major struggle in the Communist Party over the direction of the new state.

A. Periodic upheavals occurred.

1. In 1956 there was the Great Leap Forward.

2. From 1965 to 1970, China was in upheaval during the Cultural Revolution.

B. The struggle between the Red and the Experts ended only with the death of Mao in 1976.

C. New leadership appears stable and less radical.

II. In Communist China the major goal of the state is to train the people in Communist ideas.

A. People are divided into work groups in which joint responsibility is applied.

B. Social controls are extensive to guarantee conformity.

III. In the international arena Communist China has moved from an allied of the Soviet Union to an independent position.

A. Beginning almost immediately in 1949, disputes arose between Russia and China.

B. By 1968, the Sino-Soviet dispute was common knowledge.

C. In order to counterbalance the Russians, China decides to improve relations with the United States.

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