

Comparative Understanding of Europe, Asia, Africa

– A multidisciplinary Approach -

Spring Semester, 2024

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Course Description

Human civilizations have been developed through different roots and sources of the planets in which heterogeneous experiences and orthodoxies are solid foundations of each cultural development. However, throughout the development of civilizations in each area, the interactions between cultures are also a strong element for renovating existing culture. Especially, a rapid development of technology allows us to have a planetary dimension of multi-civilizations. Thus, in this lecture, the course will focus on three distinct levels of understanding on Europe, Asia, Africa as civilizations.

First, our attention will be given to questions of sources and roots of each civilization. Core root questions will be studied around the major axiological events.

Second, after having a brief overview on foundational questions of each civilization, the course will focus on discourses developed around the concept itself of civilization, namely Europe, Asia, Africa. The discourses are the conceptual frame that shape our own understanding of civilization, so we need to understand those discourses more critically.

Third, with comparative view introduced by Paul Ricoeur hermeneutical idea of Ethico Politics, the course will compare Europe, Asia, Africa with discursive analysis by focusing on mythic-ethical level through some concrete cases.

Course Schedule

Session 1. Orientation

Part I. METHODOLOGY

Methodology 1. (Literature and Interpretation)

Session 2. Narrative Approach

- “Lord of flies” and implication for comprehensive understanding on the violence and its implication for Ethico-Economico-Political community

** William Golding, *Lord of the Flies* (1963 film)

Session 3. Hermeneutico-Phenomenological Approach

- Ricoeurian Hermeneutico-Phenomenology on Ethics and Politics as a multidisciplinary framework/method

** Paul Ricoeur, Ethics and politics in *From text to action*, Northwestern University, 1991. pp.325-337.

Methodology 2. Philosophical and Historical Approaches

Session 4. Western Ancient Philosophy with focus on Ethical root of contemporary debates

- Root of today’s philosophy and social-moral sciences by studying core arguments of historical development of ancient intellectual debates.
- Presocratic. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and others

** Byun Kyun Yong(Ed.), Ancient Greek Philosophy, in *Comparative World Cultures*, Sogang Univeristity, 2001. pp 18-25.

Session 5. Western Modern Philosophy focus on Individual and rationalism around political arguments

- The questions around philosophical individualism which forms today's epistemology in science and political norms
- Focus on Descartes, Hobbes, Kant and others

** Byun Kyun Yong(Ed.), *Morden Philosophy*, in *Comparative World Cultures*, Sogang University, 2001. pp 26-37.

Methodology 3. Civilization and culture Theory

Session 6. Paul Ricoeur's philosophy of Civilization and Culture as a Framework for comparative civilization analysis 1

- Rational and universal civilization based on 5 different categories

** Paul Ricoeur, *Civilization and National Cultures*, in *History and Truth*, Northwestern University Press, 1965. pp. 271-284

Session 7. Paul Ricoeur's philosophy of Civilization and Culture as a Framework for comparative civilization analysis 2

** Paul Ricoeur, *Civilization and National Cultures*, in *History and Truth*, Northwestern University Press, 1965. pp. 271-284.

- Civilization as nucleus of Ethico-Mythique
- Questions of values and Symbol-Images
- Way to achieve communication among civilizations

Session 8. Mid-exam period (No exam)

PART TWO. CASE STUDIES

Comparative Case Studies 1. Europe

Session 9. European Case Study 1. Raymond Aron and Europe

- Raymond's paraxiological approach to the idea of Europe
- Different combinations of politico-economics-ethical analysis compared to Ricoeur

**Joel Mouric, Raymond Aron and the idea of Europe in *Raymond Aron and international relations*, Routledge, 2018. Ppp. 111-125.

Extracurricular Session-Visit to Chungwadae

** Visit the former presidential house of Korea(청와대) in order to experience Korean politics and culture in relation to Asian politico-cultural understanding

Session 10. European Case Study 2. Ricoeur and Europe

- An ethical approach(isolated from politics and economics) by Ricoeur on European future.
- Understanding on the effects of ethical efforts towards politics and economics through Ricoeurian analysis.

** Paul Ricoeur, Reflections on a new ethos for Europe, in *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, vol 21, no 5/6., Sage 1995. pp 3-13.

Session 11. Consulting Session for presentation

- Consulting individual students for presentation

Comparative Case studies 2. Africa

Session 12. African Case Study 1. Ethical perception and historical consequence

- Understanding on ethical attitudes as a form of historically constructed misperception of the idea of African Civilization based on discursive critics.
- Reconstruction of ethical perception on Africa

** John Parker, Richard Rathbone, The idea of Africa, in *African History (A Very Short Introduction)*, Oxford University Press, 2007. pp. 1-24.

Session 13. African Case Study 2. Historical sources and challenges on Africa

** John Parker, Richard Rathbone, Africa's past: historical sources, in *African History (A Very Short Introduction)*, Oxford University Press, 2007. pp. 48-69.

Comparative Case Studies 3. Asia

Session 14. Asian-African Case Study, Key concept of Asia

- Connecting Africa and Asia as an Ethical and non-western civilizational point of view
- Discerning the differences and similarities of two civilizations in terms of discursive formation of the perception.

** John Parker, Richard Rathbone, Africans: diversity and unity, in *African History (A Very Short Introduction)*, Oxford University Press, 2007. pp. 48-69.

Session 15. Asian Case Study. War memory and reconciliation between Korea-Japan.

- Understanding Asian contemporary civilizational issues through Korea-Japan ethical and political relations.
- Focus on ethical actors such as Artists, novelists, historians' role in forming political and cultural actions through their discourses.
- Methodological ethico-political application based on theory of interpretation

** Roman Rosenbaum, Oda Makoto and Literary Reconciliation: The Rise of Civil Societies in Japan and Korea in the Wake of the Asia-Pacific War, in *History Wars and Reconciliation in Japan and Korea* (Peter Duus Ed.), University of Sydney, 2017. pp. 143-159.

** Peter Duus, Introduction: history wars in postwar East Asia (1945-2014), in *History Wars and Reconciliation in Japan and Korea* (Peter Duus Ed.), University of Sydney, 2017. pp. 1-16.

Session 16. Additional consulting session for the final report (No obligation)

Session 17. Final Exam (No exam, Deadline for the final report 14 June)

Course Requirements

Attendance 10%

- Notification and justification prior to eventual absences are necessary.
- 2 unnoticed/unjustified absences may cause the non validation of the class in principle.

Class Participation 10%

- Respectful manner with members of the class
- Efforts for mutual communication
- Contribution to the class social relationships

Preparation for the class (reading and summary) 50 %

- Preparation for each class with summary note and critical point of student's view
- As the final report will be based on the presentation as a representative of summaries, the final report is crucial for evaluation. It should contain 1) background of the article, 2) essential arguments and contents of it, 3) with students critical and evaluative assessment based on methodologies studied during class.
- Student can choose freely the format of the final report if it maintains consistency. (Cf. Font size 11, 1.5 width(space) is preferable. 5 pages minimum to 10 pages maximum without bibliography).
- No weekly summary submission is necessary.
- Occasional checks by QnA and quizzes on class contents, if necessary.

In class presentation/communication 30 %

- Presentation will be based on one article recommended by instructor.
- Presentation contents after reflecting class discussion and professor's comments should be submitted as a form of "report" at the end of class
- Effective and courteous attitude/communication (of presenter and audience) during the presentation is evaluated.