

Monument and Memory in Asian History

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Office Hours: On Zoom... Tuesdays, 10-12, or By Appointment

Course Description:

Sites like the Forbidden City, the Great Wall of China, the Taj Mahal, and Angkor Wat conjure images that often have more to do with fantasy than fact. Modern monuments like Yasukuni Shrine and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial similarly evoke history, memory, and myth. Why (and how) were these monuments built? How have their meanings changed over time and why? What forces have transformed them into symbols of national identity and cultural otherness? This freshman seminar will explore the ritual, political, historical, and religious significance of monumental sites in Asia. We will also examine their more recent role as sites for political mobilization, as signifiers of cultural and national identities, and as commodities in global and local tourism.

Required Books (you may wish to purchase these from the campus bookstore:

<https://tinyurl.com/JHU-F20-100-130-02>)

- 1) Carlos Rojas, *The Great Wall: A Cultural History*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010.
- 2) Whitfield/Whitfield/Agnew. *Cave Temples of Mogao*. Paul Getty Trust, 2000
- 3) Llewelyn Morgan, *Buddhas of Bamiyan (Wonders of the World)*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012.

Grading:

Virtual Fieldwork Reports: 25%

Class Participation: 25%

Final Project Elements: 25% (proposal, bibliography, list of visual sources, video)

Final Project (8-10 pp.): 25%

The strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. Ethical violations include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments, improper use of the Internet and electronic devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery and falsification, lying, facilitating academic dishonesty, and unfair competition.

Report any violations you witness to the instructor. You may consult the associate dean of students and/or the chair of the Ethics Board beforehand. See the guide on "Academic Ethics for Undergraduates" and the Ethics Board web site (<http://ethics.jhu.edu>) for more information.

** A rubric for "virtual fieldwork" appears on the syllabus alongside the reading for each week. The rubrics ask students to use the reading and potentially brief forays into the marketing materials and other online sources to respond to questions. Students will produce a 1-2

paragraph “virtual field report” each week reflecting their engagement with the reading and the fieldwork questions. You may opt out of up to two field reports over the course of the semester (we have 11 weeks with assigned readings; I will count your 9 highest grades—up to two of the grades can be 0 if you so choose; alternatively, I will drop the two lowest grades on submitted work).

** Students should prepare at least two questions for class discussion. These questions should incorporate what you have learned from the assigned reading and virtual fieldwork. These questions should be generative—in other words, they should generate discussion. Rather than asking, “In what century was X built,” it would be more productive to ask, “How does X reflect ideas about political power that were current in Y century Z place?” These do not need to be submitted in advance; they will be used to enhance class discussion.

**The class participation grade will reflect the student’s preparation for and contribution to class discussion including their development of discussion questions. This class is a seminar centered on the discussion of assigned texts. To that end, all students are required to engage with the assigned materials before scheduled class meetings.

**The capstone project for this class will be as follows:

National Geographic magazine has commissioned you to write a feature story of approximately 8-10 pages spotlighting the Asian monument or Asia-related monument of your choice. Your story should include at least three textual or literary primary sources, three visual sources, and should address a historical controversy or paradox related to the monument of your choice.

Interim assignments will include a **three-paragraph proposal** addressed to the editor of *National Geographic* identifying your monument and explaining why it is worthy of a feature story in the magazine. The second interim assignment will be a **bibliography** identifying your sources. The third interim assignment will be an **annotated list of visual sources** explaining the contribution each image makes to your essay. The fourth interim assignment will be a brief **video presentation** (five minutes) advertising your article which will be peer-reviewed by an editorial subcommittee constituted by a group of classmates. Final papers will be shared in a “Special Issue” posted to Blackboard.

Extensions will be granted with **prior permission**. In cases of illness, emergency, or deadline conflicts, please request an extension from the instructor as early as is feasible. Papers submitted late without prior permission of the instructor will be penalized by half a grade per day.

8.31 Introduction: Architectural Sites and National Memory in the 21st Century

9.7 LABOR DAY—No Class!

9.14 The Great Wall: From Icon of Isolation to Emblem of Inclusion (China)

Reading:

--Carlos Rojas, *The Great Wall: A Cultural History*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010, pp. 1-91; 126-147.

-- Han Song, “The Great Wall,” *Chinese Literature Today*, Nathaniel Isaacson, translator, 7, no. 1 (January 2, 2018): 6–11, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21514399.2018.1458370>.

(Please keep in mind that this is a work of **FICTION**—no Great Wall sites have been found in North America!)

--art exhibit review: Sheila Melvin, "Chinese Artists Interpret the Great Wall," *New York Times*, August 5, 2005.

--Poster (1979): "Song of Friendship," <https://chinese posters.net/gallery/e13-868.php>

--Poster (1997): The return of Hong Kong, One Country-Two Systems, <https://chinese posters.net/posters/e13-559.php>

--Poster (2008): "One World, One Dream," <https://chinese posters.net/posters/e37-160.php>

Reference: --Gao Minglu. *The Wall: Reshaping Contemporary Chinese Art*, 2005.

Optional: --Franz Kafka, "The Great Wall of China."

Fieldwork: 1) Look for tourist information about the Great Wall on the internet. How is the "Great Wall experience" constructed and marketed? Which elements of this "Great Wall experience" or "Great Wall image" can be connected to the assigned readings and images. In what ways does the reading complicate or contradict what you found in the travel websites. Be specific.

2) Identify a site or artifact that you consider a building block of national identity comparable to the Great Wall.

9.21 The Forbidden City: From Imperial Palace to Symbol of Decadence to National Brand (China)

Reading:

Frances Wood, "Imperial Architecture of the Qing," *China: The Three Emperors (1662-1795)*, Jessica Rawson and Evelyn Rawski, eds. London: Royal Academy, 2005, pp. 54-62.

George N. Kates, *The Years that Were Fat, 1933-1940*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988 (reprint). Introduction (i-x), Chapter 1 (pp. 1-8), Chapter 7 (pp. 104-125).

Zhang Zhipin, "It's Just a Cafe" [Starbucks Cafe Inside the Forbidden City], *Beijing Review*, 44, #3 (Jan. 18, 2001) pp. 25-6.

"Starbucks Closes Coffeehouse in Beijing's Forbidden City," *The New York Times*, July 15, 2007, sec. World, <https://www.nytimes.com/2007/07/15/world/americas/15iht-starbucks.4.6664994.html>.

Sixth Tone, "Forbidden City Gets Celebrity Treatment for New Series," *Sixth Tone*, November 13, 2018,

<https://www.sixthtone.com/news/1003199/forbidden-city-gets-celebrity-treatment-for-new-series>.

Forbidden City as Brand:

<https://www.scmp.com/business/money/spending/article/2179430/lipsticks-cultural-twist-help-beijings-forbidden-city-woo>

Suggested Film: *The Last Emperor*

<https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/the-last-emperor>

Virtual Fieldwork: 1) Look for images of and information about the Forbidden City on the internet. 2) Do the assigned reading and suggested viewing listed above (and situate the materials chronologically). 3) What are some of the images and ideas symbolized by the Forbidden City? Have these changed over time? What factors seem to affect the image of the Forbidden City? 4) Can you think of another famous site that can be compared to the Forbidden City? If so, why?

10.5 Dunhuang: Controversy, Cooperation, and Commodification on the Silk Road (China/Central Asia)

Reading:

--Aurel Stein, *Ruins of Desert Cathay: Personal Narrative of Explorations in Central Asia and Westernmost China* / (London : 1912), vol. 2, pp. 9-19, 20-31, 159-194.

<http://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015004984640>.

--Whitfield/Whitfield/Agnew. *Cave Temples of Mogao*. (Entire—mostly pictures)

--International Dunhuang Project Website: <http://idp.bl.uk/>

--Dunhuang Virtual Reality—Cave 45 Virtual Immersive Experience:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0uUJgIH-5s>

-- Dunhuang dance show: (culture as commodity?)

http://www.bjreview.com.cn/culture/txt/2013-03/11/content_524836.htm

--Clip of Dunhuang dance: Flying Apsaras

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vvZbhLd8YfM>

Virtual Fieldwork: Aurel Stein's expeditions played an important role in popularizing the image of the "Silk Road" outside of Asia. Within China, however, he is portrayed as an agent of national humiliation. Today, international or transnational projects play an important role in the preservation and promotion of this Buddhist site. What role does the image of the Silk Road play in political and scholarly projects in China today? In other words, what did Dunhuang and the Silk Road mean in Aurel Stein's day and what does the Silk Road symbolize in China (and abroad) today? Do the site's religious origins play a role in this at present?

9.28 NO CLASS: Yom Kippur

10.12 Bamiyan: A Cultural Crossroads and its Annihilation (Afghanistan)

Reading:

-- Llewelyn Morgan. The Buddhas of Bamiyan (Wonders of the World)

--Finbar Barry Flood, "Between Cult and Culture: Bamiyan, Islamic Iconoclasm, and the Museum," *Art Bulletin* Vol 84, (2002) 641-659.

--Takayasu Higuchi and Gina Barnes. "Bamiyan: Buddhist Cave Temples in Afghanistan" *World Archaeology* Vol 27 (1995) 282-302.

--Xuanzang. *Su-Yu-Ki Buddhist Records of the Western World*. S. Beal trans. 2 vols., 1884. 49-53.

Virtual Fieldwork: When and why and by whom were the Bamiyan Buddhas built and destroyed? Since their destruction, various individuals and organizations have proposed rebuilding the Bamiyan Buddhas. Who has advocated for reconstruction, in what media, and why? Who has opposed? In your opinion, should the Bamiyan Buddhas be rebuilt?

10.19 Taj Mahal: Tourists in Search of the Perfectly Picturesque (India)

Reading:

--Agnes Rush Burr, India: The Land that Lures, Boston: L.C. Page, 1929, 88-104.

--Wayne E. Bagley, "The Myth of the Taj Mahal and a New Theory of its Symbolic Meaning." The Art Bulletin. LXI: 1 (March 1979) 2-35.

--Tim Edensor, Tourists at the Taj: Performance and Meaning at a Symbolic Site, New York: Routledge, 1998, 69-104.

Video: (NHK/UNESCO: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/252/video/>)

Virtual Fieldwork: The Taj Mahal numbers among the world's most iconic buildings. How is it marketed to tourists? To what extent does the marketing reflect the influence of earlier Anglo-American writers like Agnes Rush Burr? Based on a brief survey of travel websites featuring the Taj Mahal, does the visual power of the architecture or the emotional power of the love story play a larger role in the site's appeal?

10.26 Borobudur: Preserving the Past in a Global Context (Indonesia)

Reading:

--Dr. Soekmono, Chandi Borobudur: A Monument of Mankind, Paris: The UNESCO Press, 1976, 1-12, 42-51.

--Shelly Errington, "Making Progress on Borobudur," in The Death of Authentic Primitive Art and Other Tales of Progress.

Drone videography: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6DiEVUSrRqE>

Website: <https://blueplanetvr.com/tag/borobudur/>

Virtual Fieldwork: 1) Visit the UNESCO World Heritage Website: <http://whc.unesco.org/>

2) Read the actual text of the World Heritage convention, the list of World Heritage sites, and all documents related to the inclusion of Borobudur. What is a World Heritage Site? What does this designation mean and why do countries pursue it? Which of the other sites we have studied this semester are UNESCO World Heritage sites? What is the relationship between this international designation and the formation of national identity at present? 3) We have visited several Buddhist sites this semester. In what ways is Borobudur similar to and different from the other Buddhist sites that we have looked at? How did Borobudur "work" as a religious site?

11.2 Angkor--Pillaging the Past in a Global Context (Cambodia)

-- Roland Fletcher et al., "Angkor Wat: An Introduction," *Antiquity* 89, no. 348 (December 2015): 1388-1401, <https://doi.org/10.15184/aqy.2015.178>.

- Bhattacharya, Kamaleswar, "The religions of ancient Cambodia," In: Jessup, Helen Ibbitson; Zephir, Thierry, eds. Sculpture of Angkor and Ancient Cambodia: Millenium of Glory. Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1997, pp. 34-52
- P. Jeannerat de Beerski. *Angkor: Ruins in Cambodia (With sixty-five illustrations reproduced from drawings by the author and from photographs)*. London: Grant Richards Ltd. 1923, pp. 299-302.
- Ian Mabbett and David Chandler, The Khmers. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1995, 1-12.
- Denise Heywood, "Report from Angkor Wat," Orientalism, 26:4 (April 1995), 71-73.
- David Chandler, "Seeing Red," Facing the Cambodian Past. Allen and Unwin, 1996, 233-254.
- Zhou Daguan, *A Record of Cambodia: The Land and Its People*, Peter Harris, trans. Silkworm Books, 2007, pp. 45-52. Note that Zhou Daguan visited Angkor from 1296-1297 as part of an official mission from the Yuan court in China. His is the only surviving first-hand, written account of life in the Khmer capital.
- Virtual Angkor <https://www.virtualangkor.com/>
- Video: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/world-heritage/angkor/#close>
<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/668/video/>

Virtual Fieldwork: Why and how has Angkor Wat (built as a Hindu temple) become a symbol of Cambodian (Khmer) national identity? What aspects of the site's history feature prominently in discussion of its role/place as a national symbol? What events and processes in Cambodia's history (pre-colonial, colonial, and modern) must we consider in a discussion of Angkor Wat (or Khmer/Cambodian identity) more generally?

11.9 Nikko and Katsura: Decadence vs. Refinement in the Construction of an Authentically "Japanese" Aesthetic (Japan)

Reading:

--late 19th and early 20th century descriptions of Nikko:

Ralph Adams Cram, Impressions of Japanese Architecture. New York: The Japan Society, 1930 (reprint; originally published 1905). pp. 19-23, 60-65, 106-108.

Christopher Dresser. Japan Its Architecture, Art and Art-Manufactures. London, 1882, pp. 198-211.

--Mid-20th century interest in Katsura

-- Bruno Taut. Houses and People of Japan. London: John Gilford, 1937, pp. pp. 139-164, 275-307

--Walter Gropius, "Architecture in Japan" in Katsura: Tradition and Creation in Japanese Architecture, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960, 1-11.

--Kenzo Tange, "Tradition and Creation in Japanese Architecture," in Katsura: Tradition and Creation in Japanese Architecture, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960, 14-36.

--Shoichi Inoue, "The False Image of Katsura Detached Palace," Japan Quarterly XXXIV: 2 (April-June 1987), 185-188.

Reference:

Dana Buntrock. "Katsura Imperial Villa: A Brief Descriptive Bibliography, with Illustrations." *Cross-Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review* 1, no. 2 (December 30, 2012): 469–504. <https://doi.org/10.1353/ach.2012.0022>.

Virtual Fieldwork: Find at least two examples (architectural or material culture) of the so-called "Japanese Aesthetic" in your local environment. Relate to the images described in your reading. What makes the objects "look Japanese" to you? What does this aesthetic symbolize to American consumers? Was it inevitable, based on your examination of Katsura and Nikko, that this one style would become iconic?

11.16 Yasukuni: Honoring the War Dead, Controversially (Japan)

Required:

John Nelson, Social Memory as Ritual Practice: Commemorating Spirits of the Military Dead at Yasukuni Shinto Shrine, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 62, No. 2 (May, 2003), pp. 443-467
Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3096245>

The National Politics of Yasukuni Shrine <http://www.japanfocus.org/-Takahashi-Tetsuya/2272>

Website of Yasukuni: <http://www.yasukuni.or.jp/english/>

Global Times (China) editorial:

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/818778.shtml#.Uo4uEifAFRA>

Northeast Asian History Foundation (Korea): <http://www.nahf.or.kr/eng/>

Yomiuri and Asahi Editors Call for a National Memorial to Replace Yasukuni

<http://www.japanfocus.org/-Wakamiya-Yoshibumi/2124>

Virtual Fieldwork: Yasukuni Shrine commemorates the soldiers in the Imperial Japanese Army, including those who died during World War II. Controversy around the enshrinement of Class A war criminals and soldiers from the Japanese Empire (especially Taiwanese and Koreans) has made Yasukuni a flashpoint in regional politics. Yasukuni may have elements in common with monuments celebrating the Confederacy in the United States. Additionally, it connects to debates regarding the post-World War II constitution, specifically the separation of religion and government, and over other painful legacies of Japanese imperialism, including comfort women. Briefly survey the internet for information about these controversies. Is Yasukuni only seen as a problematic site from outside Japan? Or has it sparked debates within Japan as well?

11.23 Thanksgiving Week!

11/30 Jeju 4.3 Peace Park –Guest Speaker Youjoung Kim, PhD student in Anthropology

Reading:

--Heonik Kwon, *After the Korean War: An Intimate History*, pp. 1-8; pp. 162 (second paragraph)-167.

--Bruce Cumings, 2010, "38 Degrees of Separation: A Forgotten Occupation," in *The Korean War: a History*, pp.103-143.

--Choe Sang-Hun, "Memories of Massacres Were Long Suppressed Here. Tourists Now Retrace the Atrocities.," *The New York Times*, May 28, 2019, sec. World,

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/28/world/asia/south-korea-jeju-massacres.html>.

--Brendan Wright, "Political Violence and the Problematics of Localized Memory at Civilian Massacre Sites: The Cheju 4.3 Peace Park and the Kōch'ang Incident Memorial Park, *Cross-Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review*, No. 14, pp. 151-180.
--Film: Im Heung-soon, "Things that Do Us Part"

Reference:

--Website: <http://jeju43peace.org/>

Virtual Fieldwork: The 4.3 Jeju Peace Memorial has elements in common with the Museum of Memory and Human Rights in Santiago, Chile and the Jingmei Human Rights Memorial and 2.28 Memorial in Taipei. Visit the websites at least one of the other sites and consider: what do these sites have in common? Your answer should be informed by the readings.

12.7 Vietnam Veterans Memorial: Monument and Memory on the National Mall (USA)

--Kristin Ann Hass, "Making a Memory of War: Building the Vietnam Veterans Memorial," in *Carried to the Wall*, UC Press, pp. 7-33.

--Viet Thanh Nguyen. *Nothing Ever Dies: Vietnam and the Memory of War*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016, pp. 1-3, 4-19, 47-70.

"Vietnam Veterans Memorial Official Park Guide" (Gov. pubs I29.9/2 V67)

Skim the following congressional documents regarding the construction of the monument—and additions to the site:

"Vietnam Women's Memorial: report together with additional views (to accompany S. 2042). Report 100-371 United States. Congress. Senate. Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. U.S. G.P.O., 1988]

On the proposed addition of an underground visitor center (the project was subsequently abandoned due to lack of funds, but the debate is revealing!):

<http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS36027>

<http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS39739>

<http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS36027>

<http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS35745>

Optional Video: "Maya Lin: A Strong, Clear Vision"

Optional Reading: --Laura Palmer, *Shrapnel in the Heart: Letters and Remembrances from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial*, Random House, 1987. Introduction and selections.

Virtual Fieldwork: Visit the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and its constituent monuments, plus at least two of the following: the Japanese American Veterans Memorial, the Korean War Memorial, the District of Columbia War Memorial, the Japanese American

Memorial to Patriotism in WWII, Arlington Cemetery, and the World War II Memorial in Washington DC virtually via the internet. Pay attention to dates of construction and visual vocabulary. Be prepared to discuss conventions for military commemoration in the nation's capital. Which of the monuments that you visited do you find most effective and why?