



HH2126 Heroes and Heroines in Asia

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Office hours: Thursday, 14:30-16:30 (by
appointment)

Seminar day and hours:
Tuesday, 13:30-16:20

Course Aims

Heroes and Heroines in Asia utilizes an approach of comparing historical and literary human archetypes to describe and discuss human perceptions of the ideal being, the heroic female and male. Comparison of different character types and human beings' divergent perceptions of heroes and heroines shaped the histories we write of the roles of individuals and communities in the world. This course focuses on the examples found in premodern Asia. This course analyzes the myths and legends associated with heroes and heroines, and examines archaeological remains, such as statues, paintings, and temples linked to such individuals in conjunction with historical records. For the prehistoric period, archaeological remains provide important artifacts which can be used to hypothesize the importance and role of heroic beings, who would have been ancestor figures. As we get into the historical period, kings, queens, and other figures assumed important positions as heroic figures of authority who possessed spiritual powers. With the advent of world religions, for example, new archetypes were created, and new traits were qualities which members aim to emulate. This course examines the evolution of the ideal individual (hero and heroine) in premodern Asia. It considers whether continuity or change was more characteristic of the direction in which the heroic figure developed across time and region.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Describe the major aims of studying a history of ideal human character types and actual historical personages.
2. Provide a general chronological account of examples of heroes and heroines and in contrast to these, anti-heroes and the marginalized in premodern Asia.
3. Discuss major themes covered in a history of ideal human character types, especially in the intricate interplay between the role of the individual and the community and society within which the individual dwells.
4. Examine how the study of artifacts, architecture, paintings, and oral and literary traditions contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the history of Asia (and by extension, the world), and specifically to human beings' place in this history.
5. Formulate an argument on the complementary relationship between history and archaeology and our role in the construction of knowledge and meaning about people, objects and their significance in history and our society.

Course Content

This course provides a general introduction to the history of ideal heroic character types in Asian history: examining their place in the history of the world, in terms of human perceptions of them, and the significance members of Asian society, especially in premodern period, assign to them. The course begins with an introduction to scholarly studies of the ideal human character type, and proceeds to focus on different case studies each week over a period of 12 weeks. Each example is selected based on her/his chronological context in the history of the world and human society. By examining the history of heroic individuals, students learn to engage with the study of the role material culture and nonverbal communication played in the creation of ideal human being through examining the context of the production or origin of these archetypes, their symbolism, their functions (original/primary and secondary and invented usage), and their perceived significance in the long durée of human history and society.

The following represent themes covered in this course:

1. Art and the artist's role in the development of ideal types
2. Religion and the construction of the perfect human
3. Technology and energy capture: the blacksmith, for instance, as a heroic individual
4. Culture and interaction
5. Trade and exchange
6. Urbanization
7. War and conflict
8. Social structure: ascribed versus achieved status

Assessment (includes both continuous and summative assessment)

Component	Weighting	Team/ Individual
1. Group presentation and discussion	20%	Team
2. Mid-term essay	15%	Individual
3. Individual research project: presentation and research essay	35%	Individual
3. Participation in class discussions	10%	Individual
4. Individual short written assignments	20%	Individual
Total	100%	

Group Presentation and Discussion - 20%

Students are expected to take turns to present readings to the class in a pair. Students will present and lead discussions during these presentations; each student is expected to complete one group presentation. Each pair of presenters should give a presentation which lasts approximately 20 minutes, excluding a 10 min-discussion led by the presenters.

Each pair should prepare a powerpoint presentation of approximately 6-8 slides. Each presenter should present for up to 10 minutes each.

Each pair of presenters will receive a group score (10%) and an individual score (10%). The group score is determined by the following criteria: a) coherence, content and structure of the presentation, and b) equitable distribution of the workload (peer feedback about individual contributions to the project is taken into account). The individual score will be assessed based on the individual performance in producing the presentation, delivering it, and in responding to questions from the class.

Each student pair is also expected to take part in two group discussion activities. They will work together to present their findings/analyses.

Mid-term Essay - 15%

Students are required to complete one mid-term essay (800-1,000 words in length excluding footnotes and references). The student will write an essay in response to a question which the instructor will pose a week before the mid-semester recess week.

Individual Research Project – presentation (10%) and research essay (25%) - 35%

Each student is expected to complete an individual research project at the end of the semester. For this assignment, students will complete a written research paper on two heroic figures. The project comprises two parts: i. presentation (5-minute presentation + 5-minute question-and-answer), and ii. Individual essay 1,500-1,800 words each). The topic of the final project must be related to one or more themes examined in this course. The student will be evaluated based on the following criteria: 1. coherence, content, and structure of her/his presentation, such as delivery of their slides' contents and balanced coverage of their selected items, and 2. ability to field questions from the audience. The presentations will take place during the last two seminar meetings of the course: weeks 12 (last hour of the class) and 13.

Students will submit their list of personages and their rationale for selecting these individuals in week 10 to the instructor for approval.

Participation in class discussions - 10%

Students are expected to participate in class discussions and any activities conducted within the classroom.

Individual short written assignments - 20%

Students are expected to complete two short written assignments on topics the instructor selected for the course. The word limit of the written assignment is 500 words. The instructor will announce the topics during the course: the first during the first half of the semester and the second in the latter half. The student is expected to construct a question related to the topic and write a 500-word response on the topic and question. The topics were be announced during the fifth week and ninth week of the course respectively. The student has four days to complete and submit the written work. Each student is expected to complete two short written responses (2 x 500 word = a total of 1,000 words for both assignments).

Formative feedback

You will receive formative feedback through written responses to your papers and verbal feedback through in-class comments on students' group presentations and discussion. Generic summative feedback will be given to seminar group presentations and personal specific feedback (to individual written assignments) will be given to individual student.

I will consider the following points when giving comments to students:

1. Provide constructive and positive feedback whenever possible.
2. Return my feedback to students as soon as I can.
3. I will be specific in making suggestions regarding how each student can improve on her/his work.
4. Focus on the students' advancement toward their goal.

5. With respect to presentations and in-class discussions, I will encourage students to express their views freely.

Learning and Teaching approach

Approach	How does this approach support you in achieving the learning outcomes?
Brief introduction	The instructor will give a brief introduction at the beginning of each seminar introducing and providing the context for understanding each week's theme. The presentation will include the use of slides and other multi-media files.
Team-based presentations	Students in the class will select topics they want to present. The presentations provide opportunities for the students to practice public speaking and allow them to hone their presentation skills in a supportive environment. The presenters will respond to questions and comments from the instructor and the class; they would have to think quickly and respond to the questions posed to them. The students will learn teamwork.
Individual presentations	Students in the class would select topics they want to present. The presentations provide opportunities for the students to practice public speaking and allow them to hone their presentation skills in a supportive environment. Each presenter will respond to questions and comments from the instructor and the class; he/she would have to think quickly and respond to the questions posed to him/her.

Reading and References

Eliade, Mircea. *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries*. London: Collins, 1968.

Pearson, Carol. *The Hero Within: Six Archetypes We Live By*. New York: Harper and Row, 2015.

Rank, Otto and Lord Raglan. *In Quest of the Hero*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.

Course Policies and Student Responsibilities

(1) General

You are expected to complete all assigned pre-class readings and activities, attend all seminar classes punctually and take all scheduled assignments and tests by due dates. You are expected to take responsibility to follow up with course notes, assignments and course related announcements for seminar sessions you have missed. You are expected to participate in all seminar discussions and activities.

(2) Absenteeism

Group presentations and in-class discussions require students to attend classes in order for them to contribute to the course discussions. Absence from class without a valid reason can affect your overall course grade. Valid reasons include falling sick supported by a medical certificate and participation in NTU's approved activities supported by an excuse letter from the relevant bodies.

If you miss a class, you must inform the course instructor via email (gygoh@ntu.edu.sg) prior to the start of the class.

(3) Penalties for late submission

Penalties will be levied for late submissions unless there are approved medical or other certificated reasons explaining the delay. Students must ensure that they inform the instructor regarding any delay as soon as possible. Students failing to submit an assignment will be denied credit points for this course. In exceptional circumstances extensions may be granted for individual students, but only for students who ask BEFORE the assignments' submission dates.

(4) Plagiarism in writing research papers

It is important that all unacknowledged materials in students' essays are their own work. The University has strict rules pertaining to plagiarism that may result in disciplinary procedures. Students are reminded that copying or using any part of any essay (published and unpublished) and any other written work including another student's essay or written work without citing the author(s) is considered plagiarism. Verbatim citations from other writings must be placed within quotation marks. Students are encouraged to paraphrase sources. Whether quotations and/or paraphrases are used, students are required to cite their sources.

Academic Integrity

Good academic work depends on honesty and ethical behaviour. The quality of your work as a student relies on adhering to the principles of academic integrity and to the NTU Honour Code, a set of values shared by the whole university community. Truth, Trust and Justice are at the core of NTU's shared values.

As a student, it is important that you recognize your responsibilities in understanding and applying the principles of academic integrity in all the work you do at NTU. Not knowing what is involved in maintaining academic integrity does not excuse academic dishonesty. You need to actively equip yourself with strategies to avoid all forms of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, academic fraud, collusion and cheating. If you are uncertain of the definitions of any of these terms, you should go to the [academic integrity website](#) for more information. Consult your instructor(s) if you need any clarification about the requirements of academic integrity in the course.

Weekly Schedule

Week	Topic	Readings/ Activities
*Week 1 (Aug 16, 2022) *Aug 9 is National Day, first class postponed to the following week	Introduction to the themes of the course: background, concepts, scholarship (cultural and art history approaches: literary and artistic media of expression, use of tropes etc)	Segal, Robert. <i>In Quest of the Hero</i> . Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991. "Introduction". Pearson, Carol. <i>The Hero Within: Six Archetypes We Live By</i> . New York: Harper and Row, 2015. "Preface", "Publication History of This Book", "Changes from the Second Edition", "Uses of This Book", and "Introduction"
Week 2 (Aug 23, 2022)	Heroes of Indian Epics: Heroes and Villains/Arch-Rivals (Rama, Pandawas etc)	<u>The class will be divided into 2-3 groups and each group is required to read 1-2 readings (students can sign up for these readings via Google sheets):</u> McGill, Forrest (ed.). <i>The Rama Epic: hero, heroine, ally, foe</i> . San Francisco: Asian Art Museum, 2016. "Introduction", "Rama: A Hero of a Thousand Texts", and "What does Rama look like?"

		<p>Buck, William. <i>Mahabharata</i>. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000. "Publisher's Preface" and "Introduction".</p> <p>Gitomer, David. "King Duryodhana: The Mahabharata Discourse of Sinning and Virtue in Epic and Drama". <i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i> 112, 2 (1992): 222-232.</p> <p>Hiltebeitel, Alf. <i>Dharma</i>. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010: Chapter 6: "Two <i>Dharma</i> Biographies? Rama and Yudhisthira".</p> <p>Rooney, Dawn. <i>The Thiri Rama: Finding Ramayana in Myanmar</i>. London and New York: Routledge, 2017. "Introduction to the <i>Thiri Rama</i>" by U Thaw Kaung.</p>
<p>Week 3 (Aug 30, 2022)</p>	<p>Classical Heroes: The Perfect Being (Religious Archetypes: Cakravartin, Mahapurusha, the rulers etc)</p>	<p><u>The class will be divided into 2-3 groups and each group is required to read 1-2 readings (students can sign up for these readings via Google sheets):</u></p> <p>Braginsky, Vladimir. <i>The Turkic-Turkish Theme in Traditional Malay Literature</i>. Brill, 2015. "Kings of Rum, Their Heirs and Vassals (2): If Iskandar Zulkarnain of Istanbul is Unavailable, a Turkish Prince or Nobleman Will Do Nicely."</p> <p>Garling, Wendy. <i>The Woman Who Raise the Buddha: The Extraordinary Life of Mahaprajapati</i>. Shambhala, 2021. Selected sections.</p> <p>Goh Geok Yian. <i>The Wheel-turner and His House: Kingship in a Buddhist Ecumene</i>. Dekalb: NIU Press; Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015. Chapters 2 and 6.</p> <p>Pham Quynh Phuong. <i>Hero and deity: Tran Hung Dao and the resurgence of popular religion in Vietnam</i>. Chiang Mai: Mekong Press, 2009. Selections.</p> <p>Strong, John. <i>The Legend of King Asoka: A Study and Translation of the Asokavadana</i>. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983. Chapter 2.</p>
<p>Week 4 (Sept 6, 2022)</p>	<p>Heroes of the Localized Literary Traditions: Panji (Inao), Damarwulan, Brawijaya</p>	<p><u>The class will be divided into 2-3 groups and each group is required to read 1-2 readings (students can sign up for these readings via Google sheets):</u></p> <p>Drewes, G.W.J. "Javanese Poems Dealing with or Attributed to the Saint of Bonan." <i>Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde</i> 124, 2 (1968): 209-240.</p> <p>Holt, John Clifford. <i>Spirits of the place: Buddhism and Lao religious culture</i>. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2009: Chapter 1 and Appendix 1.</p>

		Kieven, Lydia. "Lovers, sailors, fighters in illustrations of Javanese Panji tales manuscripts." In Irene Schneider and Holger Warnk (eds.) <i>Knowledge, Science and Local Tradition: Multiple Perspectives on the Middle East and Southeast Asia in Honor of Fritz Schulze</i> . Gottingen: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2021.
Week 5 (Sept 13, 2022)	Heroines of the Localized Traditions:	<p><u>The class will be divided into 2-3 groups and each group is required to read 1-2 readings (students can sign up for these readings via Google sheets):</u></p> <p>Andaya, Barbara. <i>The Flaming Womb: Repositioning Women in Early Modern Southeast Asia</i>. Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 2006. Chapters 1 and 2.</p> <p>Anderson, Elise. "The Construction of Amannisa Khan as a Uyghur Musical Culture Hero". <i>Asian Music</i> 43, 1 (2012): 64-90.</p> <p>Dror, Olga. <i>Cult, Culture, and Authority: Princess Lieu Hanh in Vietnamese History</i>. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007. Chapters 1 and 2.</p> <p>Pauwels, Heidi. <i>The Goddess as Role Model: Sita and Radha in Scripture and on Screen</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. "Introduction".</p> <p>Flueckiger, Joyce. <i>Material Acts in Everyday Hindu Worlds</i>. SUNY Press, 2020. "Introduction" and Chapter 3.</p>
Week 6 (Sept 20, 2022)	The Folk Hero: Si Lidah Pahit; Bhima the blacksmith; Maung Tin De	<p><u>The class will be divided into 2-3 groups and each group is required to read 1-2 readings (students can sign up for these readings via Google sheets):</u></p> <p>Busse, Mark. "Wandering Hero Stories in the Southern Lowlands of New Guinea: Culture Areas, Comparison, and History". <i>Cultural Anthropology</i> 20, 4 (2005): 443-473.</p> <p>Gibson, Thomas. "The Hero Legend in Colonial Southeast Asia." <i>Philippine studies, historical and ethnographic viewpoints</i> (2013): 437-476.</p> <p>McLaren, Anne and Emily Yu Zhang. "Recreating "Traditional" Folk Epics in Contemporary China: The Politics of Textual Transmission." <i>Asian Ethnology</i> 76, 1 (2017): 19-41.</p> <p>O'Connor, S.J. "Iron-working as a spiritual inquiry." <i>History of Religions</i> 14, 3 (1975).</p>
RECESS WEEK		

<p>Week 7 (Oct 4, 2022)</p>	<p>Explorers and Merchants</p>	<p><u>The class will be divided into 2-3 groups and each group is required to read 1-2 readings (students can sign up for these readings via Google sheets):</u></p> <p>Subrahmanyam, Sanjay. <i>The Career and Legend of Vasco da Gama</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. Preface and Introduction.</p> <p>Subrahmanyam, Sanjay. (ed.) <i>Sinners and Saints: The Successors of Vasco da Gama</i>. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998. "From Setubal to the Sublime Porte: The Wanderings of Jacome de Olivares, New Christian and Merchant of Cochin (1540-1571)" by Jose Alberto Rodrigues da Silva Tavim.</p> <p>Subrahmanyam, Sanjay. <i>Three Ways to be Alien: Travails and Encounters in the Early Modern World</i>. Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2011. Introduction and Chapter 3.</p> <p>Sochaczewski, Paul Spencer. "An Inordinate Fondness for Beetles. The Hero's Journey of Alfred Russel Wallace." In Indraneil Das and Andrew Alek Tuen. <i>Naturalists, Explorers and Field Scientists in South-East Asia and Australasia</i>. Springer, 2016.</p> <p>De Clercq, Eva. "Memories of Yoginipur: Delhi's Digambara Merchant Community after Timur." <i>South Asia</i> 40, 3 (2017): 531-543.</p> <p>Fox, Ariel. "Playing against Type: The Moral Merchant on the Early Qing Stage." <i>Journal of Chinese literature and culture</i> 6, 2 (2019): 383-411.</p> <p>Kathirithamby-Wells, Jeyamalar. "'Strangers' and 'stranger-kings': the sayyid in eighteenth-century maritime Southeast Asia." <i>Journal of Southeast Asian Studies</i> 40, 3 (2009): 567-591.</p>
<p>Week 8 (Oct 11, 2022)</p>	<p>Warriors</p>	<p><u>The class will be divided into 2-3 groups and each group is required to read 1-2 readings (students can sign up for these readings via Google sheets):</u></p> <p>Fogg, Kevin. "Making an Indonesian National Hero for Lombok: The shifting category of pahlawan nasional." <i>Indonesia and the Malay World</i> 47, 137 (2019): 1-22.</p> <p>Kosuta, Matthew. "Ethics of War and Ritual: The Bhagavad-Gita and Mahabharata as Test Cases". <i>Journal of Military Ethics</i> 19, 3 (2020): 186-200.</p> <p>Lanzona, Vina. <i>Amazons of the Huk Rebellion: Gender, Sex, and Revolution in the Philippines</i>. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009: selected chapters.</p>

<p>Week 9 (Oct 18, 2022)</p>	<p>Ascetics, Monks, and Ancestors</p>	<p><u>The class will be divided into 2-3 groups and each group is required to read 1-2 readings (students can sign up for these readings via Google sheets):</u></p> <p>Chambert-Loir, Henri. "Saints and Ancestors: the cult of Muslim saints in Java." In H. Chambert-Loir and A. Reid (eds.) <i>The Potent Dead</i>. Crows Nest: Allen and Unwin, 2002.</p> <p>von Hinuber, Haiyan Hu. "The sea voyage to China attempted by Indian Buddhist monks during the years from 305-435." <i>Studies in Chinese Religions</i> 6, 4 (2020): 347-359.</p> <p>Hunter, Thomas. "Processions, Seductions, Divine Battles: Asvaghosa at the Foundations of Old Javanese Literature." <i>Journal of Indian Philosophy</i> 47, 2 (2019): 341-360.</p> <p>Sen, Tansen. "In Search of Longevity and Good Karma: Chinese Diplomatic Missions to Middle India in the Seventh Century." <i>Journal of World History</i> 12, 1 (2001): 1-28.</p>
<p>Week 10 (Oct 25, 2022)</p>	<p>Artists: weavers, potters, woodcarvers, sculptors, painters, puppeteers</p>	<p><u>The class will be divided into 2-3 groups and each group is required to read 1-2 readings (students can sign up for these readings via Google sheets):</u></p> <p>Hoogervorst, Tom and J. Jakl. "The Rise of the Chef in Java." <i>Global Food History</i> 6, 1 (2020): 3-21.</p> <p>Kim, Jinah. "Painted Palm-Leaf Manuscripts and the Art of the Book in Medieval South Asia." <i>Archives of Asian Art</i> 65, 1-2 (2015): 57-86.</p> <p>Miksic, John and Goh Geok Yian. <i>Ancient Southeast Asia</i>. New York and London: Routledge, 2017: Introduction and other excerpts.</p> <p>Totton, Mary-Louise. "Cosmopolitan tastes and indigenous designs – virtual cloth in a Javanese <i>candi</i>". In Ruth Barnes. <i>Textiles in Indian Ocean Societies</i>. Routledge, 2005.</p>
<p>Week 11 (Nov 1, 2022)</p>	<p>Superheroes/Comic Heroes, anti-heroes (nagas, nats)</p> <p>+ five individual students' presentations on their projects</p>	<p><u>The class will be divided into 2-3 groups and each group is required to read 1-2 readings (students can sign up for these readings via Google sheets):</u></p> <p>Gutierrez, Anna Katrina. "American superheroes, manga cuteness and the Filipino child: the emergence of glocal Philippine comics and picturebooks." <i>Journal of graphic novels and comics</i> 5, 3 (2014): 344-360.</p> <p>Chen Yea-Wen, et al. "The Superhero in Our Hearts is Chairman Mao": The Structuring of Chinese Sojourners'</p>

		<p>Conceptualizations of (Super)Hero Identities”. <i>The Howard Journal of Communication</i> 27, 3 (2016): 218-235.</p> <p>Jackson, Roy. <i>Muslim and Supermuslim: The Quest for the Perfect Being and Beyond</i>. Springer, 2020. Chapters 1 and 2.</p> <p>Martin, Daniel. “The Americanization of the Hong Kong Kung Fu Hero: Orientalism and Social Class in Marvel Comics’ Iron Fist.” <i>Journal of Popular Culture</i> 51, 6 (2018): 1521-1539.</p>
Week 12 (Nov 8, 2022)	Student presentations	Student presentations of their individual research projects.

Provisional Syllabus
subject to change