

## **(Provisional Syllabus) HH 4024: *Lineage, Ritual, and the State in Asia***

Asst. Prof. Nicholas Witkowski

Email: [nwitkowski@ntu.edu.sg](mailto:nwitkowski@ntu.edu.sg)

Office Hours: By appointment

### **Course Aims**

The ghost of the ancestor hovers like a specter over the social order of every political community. While power is often measured by economic prosperity or bureaucratic efficiency, in this course, we will examine a number of historical cases in China, India, and Southeast Asia, in which rulers appeal to the authority of ancestors to justify their claims to political power. This course has two major components. The first is a set of several case studies, which include medieval Indian courts, the earliest state-structures in China, tribal societies in modern central India, and the Cambodian Buddhist monastery. The second is the set of theoretical lenses through which we will examine these cases. These lenses will be drawn from ritual studies, theories of sexuality and lineage, anthropological theories of kingship, studies of shamanism and spirit possession, child psychology, and group psychology.

### **Intended Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this course, you (as a student) will be able to:

1. Compare and contrast the historical processes at work across a wide range of pre-colonial Asian cultural contexts.
2. Utilize anthropological models to understand patterns of lineage and political legitimacy in both pre-colonial and contemporary Indian, Chinese, and Southeast Asian contexts.
3. Utilize sociological and psychological theories to analyze and interpret power relations across a range of Asian political contexts.
4. Develop historical empathy for a wide range of social groups in pre-colonial Asia.

### **Requirements and Expectations**

**Weekly Online Submissions and Discussion - 30%:** Each week, you are to submit online a 500-word **summary** and **analysis** of at least one **of the following week's readings**. You will submit the summary 2 days before the class to give other students the opportunity to read through your discussion. In these discussions with other students, you will come together to **formulate evidence-based, well-reasoned arguments** for your **interpretations** of the case studies covered throughout the course.

**Research Essay Proposal - 15%:** You will write a proposal for the research essay containing the following elements:

1. Statement of the essay question (this is not the same as an essay topic or subject area and needs to take the form of a *question*).
2. Summary of background research conducted to date, noting: i) the key issues in the secondary source literature; ii) the available primary sources for the topic.
3. The theoretical approach or approaches you will take in the essay.

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**Presentation of Research – 15%:** You will present the findings of your research project to the class based on **analysis of primary and secondary historical sources**. Each presentation will be assessed based on the following criteria: research question, background to research, preliminary analysis and research, hypothesis/hypotheses, theoretical approach utilized, and findings from research undertaken. After the presentation, there will be a brief Q&A session. The class will post feedback and follow up questions to the presentations on Blackboard.

**Final Research Essay – 40%:** For your final research paper (4000 words), you will select a particular historical context and **develop a novel way of conceptualizing and explaining** how lineage plays a role in justifying political power in that society. You will present a clear research question and hypothesis, review the scholarly literature on the topic, **collect and synthesize** the data, and state a clear conclusion. The research paper can represent an introductory chapter to your final year project (FYP) or one of the chapters for your thesis.

### **Course Outline**

#### **Week (1)**

#### **Thinking Anthropologically about Political Legitimation**

Readings: Glucklich; Graeber and Sahlins, Chapter 1; Hageman and Hill, pp. 3-31

#### **Week (2)**

#### **How the “Big Man” Legitimizes his Power: A Bodily Phenomenology of Ritual Relations with the Community of Living Subjects and the Ancestral Dead**

Readings: Warnier, Chapters 1-5

#### **Week (3)**

#### **The “Big Man” as Diviner/Shaman: Political Legitimation in the Archaic Chinese State**

Readings: Morris; Keightley (1978 and 1998)

#### **Week (4)**

#### **The “Big Man” as Emperor: Thinking Psychoanalytically about Political Legitimation in the Early Chinese State**

Readings: Seligman et al., Chapters 1 and 2; *Liji*, selections; Freud (1927 and 1938); Puett (2014)



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### **Week (13)**

### **No Class**

**Assignment Due:** Final Submission of Research Papers on Blackboard

### **Readings**

Ali, Daud (2002). "Anxieties of Attachment: The Dynamics of Courtship in Medieval India," *Modern Asian Studies* 36(1), 103-139. (NTU Library Site)

Ali, Daud (2007). "Violence, Courtly Manners and Lineage Formation in Early Medieval India," *Social Scientist* 35 (9/10): 3-21. (NTU Library Site)

Ali, Daud (2008). "Aristocratic Body Techniques in Early Medieval India," in *Rethinking a Millenium: Perspectives on Indian History from the Eighth to the Eighteenth Century*, (ed.) Rajat Datta. New Delhi: Aakar Books. (NTU Library Site)

Ali, Daud (2011). "Kingship" In *Brill's Encyclopedia of Hinduism*. (Blackboard)

Cole, Alan (1999). "Homestyle Vinaya and Docile Boys in Chinese Buddhism," *Positions: Asia Critique* 7(1): 5-50. (Blackboard)

Davis, Erik W. (2016). *Deathpower: Buddhism's Ritual Imagination in Cambodia*. New York: Columbia University Press. (ebook NTU Library Site)

Doniger, Wendy and Kakar, Sudhir (2003). *Vatsyayana Kamasutra*. Oxford University Press: New York. (Blackboard)

Foucault, Michel, (ed.) Jeremy Carrette (1999). *Religion and Culture*. New York: Routledge. (Blackboard)

Freud, Sigmund (1927). "Fetishism," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. James Strachey and Anna Freud, vol. 21, 271-278. London: Hogarth Press. (Blackboard)

Freud, Sigmund, (1938). "Splitting of the Ego in the Process of Defence," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. James Strachey and Anna Freud, vol. 23, 271-278. London: Hogarth Press. (Blackboard)

Geschiere, Peter (1988). "Sorcery and the State: Popular Modes of Action among the Maka of Southeast Cameroon," *Critique of Anthropology* 8(1): 35-63. (Blackboard)

Glucklich, Ariel (1997). *The End of Magic*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (ebook NTU Library Site)

Hageman and Hill (2019). "Leveraging the Death," in *The Archaeology of Ancestors: Death, Memory, and Veneration*. Gainesville: University of Florida Press. (Blackboard)

Holt, John Clifford Holt (2009). *Spirits of the Place: Buddhism and Lao Religious Culture*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press. (ebook NTU Library Site)

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Kapferer, Bruce (1997). *The Feast of the Sorcerer: Practices of Consciousness and Power*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Keightly, David (1978). "The Religious Commitment: Shang Theology and the Genesis of Chinese Political Culture," *History of Religions* 17(3/4), 211-225.

Keightly, David (1998). "Shamanism, Death and the Ancestors: Religious Mediation in Neolithic and Shang China (ca. 5000 - 1000 b.C.)," *Asiatische Studien* 52(3), 763-828. (Blackboard)

Klima, Alan (2002). *The Funeral Casino: Meditation, Massacre, and Exchange with the Dead in Thailand*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. (ebook NTU Library Site)

Legge, James (1882). *Liki* [Book of Rites]. Oxford: Clarendon Press. (Blackboard)

Morris, Brian (2006). "Shamanism," in *Religion and Anthropology: A Critical Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Puett, Michael (2014). "Ritual Disjunctions: Ghosts, Philosophy, and Anthropology," In *The Ground Between: Anthropologists Engage Philosophy*. Durham: Duke University Press, 218-232. (Blackboard)

Roy, Kumkum (1992). "The King's Household: Structure/Space in the Sastric Tradition," *Economic and Political Weekly* 27(43/44), 55-60. (Blackboard)

Sahlins, Marshall and David Graeber (2017). *On Kings*. Chicago: HAU Books. (ebook NTU Library Site)

Seligman, Adam, Robert Weller, Michael Puett and Bennett Simon (2008). *Ritual and its consequences: An essay on the limits of sincerity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (ebook NTU Library Site)

Smith, Frederick. (2006). *The Self Possessed: Deity and Spirit Possession in South Asian Literature and Civilization*. New York: Columbia University Press. (Blackboard)

Vigarelo, Georges (1989). "The Upward Training of the Body from the Age of Chivalry to Courtly Civility," in Michael Feher, Romana Naddoff, and Nadia Tazia, eds., *Fragments for a History of the Human Body*, pt. 2. New York: Zone, pp. 149-199. (Blackboard)

Vitebsky, Piers (1993). *Dialogues with the Dead: The discussion of mortality among the Sora of eastern India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

White, Erick (2017). "Rethinking Anthropological Models of Spirit Possession and Theravada Buddhism," *Religion and Society: Advances in Research* 8, pp. 189-202. (Blackboard)

## **Course Policies**

### **(1) General**

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You are expected to complete all assigned pre-class readings and activities, attend all lectures/tutorials 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**

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 lecture, you must inform the course instructor via email prior to the start of the class.

### **(3) Late submission of assignments and extensions**

Midterm essay assignments that are submitted past the due date will be deducted 10% off the mark assigned per day that the assignment is late, down to the pass mark (40%). That is, you will not be failed merely on late submission, but there is a significant penalty per day. If you receive 65% and your assignment is 1 day late, your mark will be 55% (a 10% penalty). If you receive 60% and your assignment is 4 days late, you will receive 40% (since I do not deduct below the pass mark).

**Extensions:** If you require an extension please email me **prior to day the assignment is due**. Extensions will only be given in cases of illness (in which a student presents a medical certificate) or in serious extenuating circumstances.

## **Appendix: Course Style Guide**

### **1. Format of all written assignments**

#### **1.A. Font**

The essay should be in Times New Roman font. The body of paragraphs should be 12 point size. Headings should be 14 point size and footnotes 10 point size.

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### **1.B. Spacing**

The body of the essay (including block quotations) should be double spaced. However, footnotes may be single spaced.

## **2. Elements of style**

### **2.A. Quotations**

Double quotation marks should be used. Quotations within quotations should be indicated with single quotation marks. Place commas and full stops inside quotations and other punctuation marks (e.g. colons and semi-colons) outside the quotation, unless they are part of the quoted text.

**Short quotes:** Short quotations from other sources should be included in quotation marks within the body of the paragraph.

**Block quotes:** Quotations of four or more lines (before indenting) should be formatted as a block quote. In a block quote, the quoted text should be in a separate paragraph from the main text and indented from the margin. Neither italics nor quotation marks should be used in a block quote unless they appear in the original. The footnote to the quote should be included at the end of the quote, after the punctuation mark. The quoted text should be in double line spacing (like the main text).

### **2.B. Spelling**

The essay should be in the English language. Students may use either American or British spelling, but should be consistent throughout. Quotations should follow the original text precisely, even if there are spelling or grammatical errors in the original. Students should insert “[sic]” after spelling and grammatical mistakes in quotations.

### **2.C. Italics**

Italics should be used for non-English language words. However, words of non-English language origin that are commonly used in English (such as “bazaar”) do not need to be in italics. Moreover, foreign language proper nouns such as names, places, and organisations (for example, “Guomindang” or “Barisan Nasional”) should not be italicised.

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### **2.D. References to titles in the text**

References to the titles of books, pamphlets, films, etc. should follow the referencing style (see section 2 below). Thus, the following titles should be italicised: books; pamphlets; periodicals; plays; and films. The following should be enclosed in quotation marks: titles of articles; book chapters; unpublished works; and theses.

### **2.E. Brackets**

Round brackets should be used in the main text (these are round brackets). Square brackets should be used for insertions in quotations, if an insertion is required so that the quoted sentence makes sense. For example: Washington stated in his 1796 Farewell Address, “The unity of government which constitutes you one people is also now dear to you [the American people].”

### **2.F. Numbers and dates**

Spell out numbers less than ten, except for page numbers and dates, and material in footnotes and bibliography (see section 2 below on referencing style).

For dates, use the following forms: 20 December 1875; 1875–77; nineteenth century; 1870s; 200 B.C. and A.D. 200. Including A.D. is only necessary if non-inclusion would cause confusion. Abbreviations may be used in footnotes, e.g.: 20 Dec. 1875.

The following are examples of correct and incorrect references to decades:

The doctor gave up smoking back in the 1980’s. → Incorrect

The doctor gave up smoking back in the 1980s. → Correct

The doctor gave up smoking back in the ’80’s. → Incorrect

The doctor gave up smoking back in the ’80s. → Correct

## **3. Footnote and bibliography referencing style**

Students are required to use the 16<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style*, which is available on-shelf in the NTU library. Below are examples of footnote and bibliography references taken from the Chicago style guide.



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### **3.A. Footnotes**

The first time a work is referenced in the footnotes, a full reference (including full author name, title and publication details) should be used. Subsequent references should be shortened to author's family name, short title and page number. When the same work is referenced in two consecutive footnotes, "Ibid., [page number]" should be used for the second footnote.

#### ***Book***

##### One author

1. Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals* (New York: Penguin, 2006), 99–100.

[Short reference: Pollan, *Omnivore's Dilemma*, 3.]

##### Two or more authors

1. Geoffrey C. Ward and Ken Burns, *The War: An Intimate History, 1941–1945* (New York: Knopf, 2007), 52.

[Short reference: Ward and Burns, *War*, 59–61.]

Four or more authors: List all of the authors in the bibliography; in the note, list only the first author, followed by *et al.* ("and others"):

1. Dana Barnes et al., *Plastics: Essays on American Corporate Ascendance in the 1960s . . .*

##### Editor, translator, or compiler instead of author

1. Richmond Lattimore, trans., *The Iliad of Homer* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 91–92.

[Short reference: Lattimore, *Iliad*, 24.]

##### Editor, translator, or compiler in addition to author

1. Gabriel García Márquez, *Love in the Time of Cholera*, trans. Edith Grossman (London: Cape, 1988), 242–55.

[Short reference: García Márquez, *Cholera*, 33.]

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### ***Chapter or other part of a book***

#### Book chapter:

1. John D. Kelly, "Seeing Red: Mao Fetishism, Pax Americana, and the Moral Economy of War," in *Anthropology and Global Counterinsurgency*, ed. John D. Kelly et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 77.

[Short reference: Kelly, "Seeing Red," 81–82.]

#### Preface, foreword, introduction, or similar part of a book

1. James Rieger, introduction to *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus*, by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), xx–xxi.

[Short reference: Rieger, introduction, xxxiii.]

### ***Book published electronically***

If a book is available in more than one format, cite the version you consulted. For books consulted online, list a URL. Include the year that the book was published, not the date it was put online, or the date you accessed it. If no fixed page numbers are available, you can include a section title or chapter number.

1. Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (New York: Penguin Classics, 2007), Kindle edition.

2. Philip B. Kurland and Ralph Lerner, eds., *The Founders' Constitution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), <http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/>.

3. Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*. [Short reference]

4. Kurland and Lerner, *Founder's Constitution*, chap. 10, doc. 19. [Short reference]

### ***Periodical***

#### Article in a print journal

In a note, list the specific page numbers consulted, if any. In the bibliography, list the page range for the whole article. If you access a print journal electronically, you do not need to include the URL or DOI (Digital Object Identifier). A DOI is a permanent ID that, when appended to <http://dx.doi.org/> in the address bar of an Internet browser, will lead to the source. URL's and DOI's are only necessary for journals which are published in electronic format only (see below).

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1. Joshua I. Weinstein, "The Market in Plato's *Republic*," *Classical Philology* 104 (2009): 440.

[Short reference: Weinstein, "Plato's *Republic*," 452–53.]

### Article in an online journal

Include a DOI if the journal lists one. If no DOI is available, list a URL. Do not include an access date.

1. Gueorgi Kossinets and Duncan J. Watts, "Origins of Homophily in an Evolving Social Network," *American Journal of Sociology* 115 (2009): 411, accessed February 28, 2010, doi:10.1086/599247.

[Short reference: Kossinets and Watts, "Origins of Homophily," 439.]

### Article in a newspaper or popular magazine

If you consulted the article online, include a URL; an access date is not necessary. If no author is identified, begin the citation with the article title.

1. Daniel Mendelsohn, "But Enough about Me," *New Yorker*, January 25, 2010, 68.

2. Sheryl Gay Stolberg and Robert Pear, "Wary Centrists Posing Challenge in Health Care Vote," *New York Times*, February 27, 2010, accessed February 28, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/28/us/politics/28health.html>.

3. Mendelsohn, "But Enough about Me," 69. [Short reference]

4. Stolberg and Pear, "Wary Centrists." [Short reference]

### Book review

1. David Kamp, "Deconstructing Dinner," review of *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*, by Michael Pollan, *New York Times*, April 23, 2006, Sunday Book Review, <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/04/23/books/review/23kamp.html>.

[Short reference: Kamp, "Deconstructing Dinner."]

## ***Unpublished source***

### Essay or dissertation

1. Mihwa Choi, "Contesting *Imaginaires* in Death Rituals during the Northern Song Dynasty" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2008).

[Short reference: Choi, "Contesting *Imaginaires*."]

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### Paper presented at a meeting or conference

1. Rachel Adelman, “‘Such Stuff as Dreams Are Made On’: God’s Footstool in the Aramaic Targumim and Midrashic Tradition” (paper presented at the annual meeting for the Society of Biblical Literature, New Orleans, Louisiana, November 21–24, 2009).

[Short reference: Adelman, “Such Stuff as Dreams.”]

### ***Website***

Because website content is subject to change, include an access date or, if available, a date that the site was last modified.

1. “Google Privacy Policy,” last modified March 11, 2009,  
<http://www.google.com/intl/en/privacypolicy.html>.

2. “McDonald’s Happy Meal Toy Safety Facts,” McDonald’s Corporation, accessed July 19, 2008, <http://www.mcdonalds.com/corp/about/factsheets.html>.

3. “Google Privacy Policy.” [Short reference]

4. “Toy Safety Facts.” [Short reference]

### **3.B. Bibliography**

The bibliography below contains examples of each of the source types listed above. **The source type is included in square brackets after the example. You obviously should not include this in your bibliography.** The sources should be listed in the bibliography according to alphabetical order (as below).

For journal articles and book chapters, include the page number range of the article/chapter in the bibliography. For other types of books, it is not necessary to include the pages or chapters you consulted.

Bibliography entries should be indented from the margin from the second line (as below).

Adelman, Rachel. “‘Such Stuff as Dreams Are Made On’: God’s Footstool in the Aramaic Targumim and Midrashic Tradition.” Paper presented at the annual meeting for the Society of Biblical Literature, New Orleans, Louisiana, November 21–24, 2009. [Paper presented at a meeting or conference]

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Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. New York: Penguin Classics, 2007. Kindle edition. [Book published electronically]

Choi, Mihwa. "Contesting *Imaginaires* in Death Rituals during the Northern Song Dynasty." PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2008. [Essay or dissertation]

García Márquez, Gabriel. *Love in the Time of Cholera*. Translated by Edith Grossman. London: Cape, 1988. [Editor, translator, or compiler in addition to author]

Google. "Google Privacy Policy." Last modified March 11, 2009. <http://www.google.com/intl/en/privacypolicy.html>. [Website]

Kamp, David. "Deconstructing Dinner." Review of *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*, by Michael Pollan. *New York Times*, April 23, 2006, Sunday Book Review. <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/04/23/books/review/23kamp.html>. [Book review]

Kelly, John D. "Seeing Red: Mao Fetishism, Pax Americana, and the Moral Economy of War." In *Anthropology and Global Counterinsurgency*, edited by John D. Kelly, Beatrice Jauregui, Sean T. Mitchell, and Jeremy Walton, 67–83. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010. [Book chapter]

Kossinets, Gueorgi, and Duncan J. Watts. "Origins of Homophily in an Evolving Social Network." *American Journal of Sociology* 115 (2009): 405–50. Accessed February 28, 2010. doi:10.1086/599247. [Article in an online journal.]

Kurland, Philip B., and Ralph Lerner, eds. *The Founders' Constitution*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987. <http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/>. [Book published electronically]

Lattimore, Richmond, trans. *The Iliad of Homer*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951. [Editor, translator, or compiler instead of author]

McDonald's Corporation. "McDonald's Happy Meal Toy Safety Facts." Accessed July 19, 2008. <http://www.mcdonalds.com/corp/about/factsheets.html>. [Website]

Mendelsohn, Daniel. "But Enough about Me." *New Yorker*, January 25, 2010. [Article in a newspaper or popular magazine]

Pollan, Michael. *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*. New York: Penguin, 2006. [Single author book]

Rieger, James. Introduction to *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus*, by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, xi–xxxvii. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982. [Preface, foreword, introduction, or similar part of a book]

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<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/28/us/politics/28health.html>. [Article in a newspaper or popular magazine]

Ward, Geoffrey C., and Ken Burns. *The War: An Intimate History, 1941–1945*. New York: Knopf, 2007. [Book with two authors]

Weinstein, Joshua I. "The Market in Plato's *Republic*." *Classical Philology* 104 (2009): 439–58. [Article in a print journal]