Race and Religion in East Asia, 1500-Present
HIST 463

Professor Washington  garrett.washington@oberlin.edu  Office: 440-775-8418
Class Time: Monday 2:30-4:20PM
Classroom: King 335
My Office: Rice 16
Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 10-11:30AM, and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The course examines the arrival, development, and impacts of religions and religions institutions in the formation of ideas about race in East Asia. Our topics will range from the European Society of Jesus in the 16th and 17th centuries to American and German missionaries in the 19th century East Asia to colonized Korea’s experience with Japanese Shinto, Japanese Protestantism, and American Protestantism to China’s Muslim minority. The course will use excerpts from historical textbooks, diaries, newspapers, journals/magazines, and scholarly articles and books to examine the racial contours and the intellectual and cultural repercussions of these cross-cultural encounters.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- To develop knowledge about the complexity of East Asia’s so-called “traditional” and “foreign” or “imported” religious belief systems
- To develop knowledge about and awareness of the role that religion can play in the formation of cultural and national identities.
- To draw attention to commonalities and contrasts in the related development of race and religion in China, Japan, and the Koreas.
- To develop advanced critical reading, historical writing, and verbal communication skills

REQUIRED BOOKS:

ASSIGNMENT RUBRIC:

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**ASSIGNMENT EXPLANATIONS:**

**Book Review:** 500-word summary and critique of the assigned chapters in Andrew Ross for February 14th. In this exercise, you will practice synthesizing and critically evaluating an academic work.

**Essay 1:** Write a 2-paragraph (ca. 500 words) short essay that completes the following sentence from St. Francis Xavier’s perspective, using specific examples to support your argument.

“Christianity has a bright future among the people of Japan because the Japanese race is ________.” This assignment aims to hone your abilities to use primary sources and build and carry an argument while also highlighting racialized notions of the “Other” in the words of sixteenth-century Western European missionaries.

**Essay 2:** For our in-class debate, write a 750-word, article-based essay using Paramore, Best, and Anderson to argue for or against the following statement.

“The Japanese can only exercise real patriotism through adhering to and practicing a truly Japanese religion.” This exercise aims to both encourage and give you the opportunity to think critically about academic arguments (from the scholarship of the present and distant past), utilize them to make your own arguments, and synthesize various sources for both purposes.

**Essay 3:** Write a 750-word essay responding to the following question. “What religions accompanied Japan’s expansion into Korea? Why and what were the consequences?” This assignment simply aims at demonstrating the knowledge that you’ve obtained from the week’s readings. The essay will also allow you to integrate the use of some primary source data and think critically about and synthesize a significant amount of information.

**Essay 4:** Write a 1000-word essay on the interactions between religion and national...
intersection between race and religion is dis/similar in these three countries. This is a long writing exercise. It aims to bring together all of the skills you’ve been developing in this course and a good deal of the knowledge and perspective that you’ve been building. Furthermore, you will have the chance to appropriate a topic, after first discussing it with me.

**Presentation**: Give a 20 minute presentation, and lead the subsequent discussion about your respective Essay 5. This presentation aims to enhance your presenting skills, educate your classmates and me, and give you the opportunity to show your newly found expertise.

**Reading Question**: These will consist of short sets of questions (ca 5-10) concerning the readings for weeks with no other written assignments due. The sole aim is to provide you with a basis for our class discussion.

**Participation**: A composite grade comprising attendance (required), participation in class during discussions, activities, and presentations.

**Due Dates and Assignment Details:**
All Assignments are due on the day listed in the syllabus. All written work must be typed in 12pt Times New Roman, double spaced, and bolded with a heading on each page.
ASSIGNMENT(S)

Reading Questions

JAPAN AND KOREA (March 14)
READINGS


ASSIGNMENT(S)
Essay 3 on Japanese imperialism and religion

KOREA AND WESTERN RELIGION (March 21)
READINGS

(Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 108-125, E-RES

ASSIGNMENT(S)

Reading Questions
KOREA AND ITSELF (April 4)
READINGS
Chongho Kim, Korean Shamanism: The Cultural Paradox (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003), 105-120. Chapters 6-7. E-RES

WESTERN RELIGION (April 11)
READINGS

CHINA AND WESTERN RELIGION (April 18)
READINGS

ASSIGNMENT(S)
None
CHRINA AND ITSELF (April 25)

READINGS


ASSIGNMENT(S)
Presentation on race and religion in modern China.