Traditions of China and Japan (MAP: World Cultures v55.0506) Spring 2005. Room 206 Silver. TR 8am to 9:15. Instructors: Prof. Roberts, Ms. Yue Zhuo and Ms. Milligan. Prof. Roberts’ office 715 B’way, 3rd floor, CHECK BOOK PRICES WITH AMAZON.COM. or ABEBOOKS.COM

Readings, Topics, and Problems

1. The Tale of Kieu, Vietnam’s national classic, written early in the 19th century by Nguyen Du and translated into English by Huynh Sanh Thong, Yale Univ Press paperback. Nguyen Du translates and adapts an older Chinese novella, which is set in the mid-16th century, that is, in the middle of the Ming dynasty (1368-1644). Read Woodside’s Historical Background and the translator’s Introduction. Pay attention to the footnotes. Questions: 1) Why has the author chosen a time frame of 15 years? 2) When does Kieu’s pre-incarnation, Dam Tien, leave the narrative? 3) Do Confucian or Buddhist values prevail in the end? ASSIGNMENT: one-two page paper describing any character and his or her role in the plot.

2. Confucian Analects, translated by James Legge, Dover paperback. Sayings and dialogues of Confucius and / or his followers (and their followers) from the late 6th century B.C. down (perhaps) to the late 5th century B.C. Note terms, junzi (superior man, literally ruler’s son), ren (benevolence, perfect virtue, humaneness), li (ritual, ceremony, etiquette, forms and formalities), yi (righteousness, honor, duty, service, The Code), xiao (filial piety or devotion). The Analects has almost 500 passages divided into 20 short books. Read all. Book 4 consists of direct quotes from Confucius (except 4.15); book 12 concentrates on the art of governing; book 18 (read) defends government service against the recluses (?daoists). Sample of noteworthy passages: 1.1, 1.2, 1.10, 1.11, 1.16. 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.19, 2.21, 2.23. 3.3, 3.8, 3.9. 5.6, 5.9, 5.11, 5.18. 6.20, 6.21, 6.28. 7.1, 7.21, 7.22, 7.29. 8.2, 8.8. 9.12, 9.13, 9.16, 9.17, 9.29. 14.23, 24, 25, 36, 37, 41. 15.28. 19.22.

Exam on the first two readings.

3. Laozi’s Dao De Jing, translated by Moss Roberts, Univ of California Press. A set of 81 philosophical poems on ethics, government, aesthetics, cosmology, and cosmogony attributed to Laozi (Old Master), generally critical of Confucian positions. Portions contemporary with (or slightly later than) the Analects. Terms: wuwei (non-action, action through inaction),
wanwu (ten thousand things) dao (the Way). Questions:  1) Why does Laozi make the gender issue so prominent?  2) How does the shengren (sage, wise man) compare with the junzi of the Analects?


**Takehome Quiz on readings 3 and 4.**

5. Four Plays of Chikamatsu, translated by Donald Keene, Columbia Univ. Press. Comedy, history, and tragedy by the 18th century Japanese playwright Terms: makoto (sincerity), giri (honor), and nijin (interest, emotion, passion), shinji (love suicide, compare junshi, vassal suicide). Certain modern themes foreshadowed. Read all four plays.


**Quiz on readings 5,6,7.**

8. And Then, by Natsume Soseki, translated by Norma Field (read her afterword). Break down in generational continuity in late Meiji Japan. The novel was written after Japan defeated China and Russia in brief wars (1895 and 1905).

9. Lu Xun’s True Story of Ah Q, translated by Yang Xianyi. 1921. China’s hopes for gaining equality among the nations were raised during WWI but dashed by the post-war actions of the Western Powers and Japan, setting the stage for mass protest in China (1919) and the birth of the Communist Party.

FINAL EXAM WILL COVER LAST TWO READINGS. FINAL PAPER ON TOPIC OF YOUR CHOICE.