

East Asian Studies 210: Introduction to Nomadic Cultures

Syllabus - Spring 2002

Dr. Edward J. Vajda

Materials

- ***A History of the Peoples of Siberia***, by James Forsyth
- **Online Materials** (see the Schedule and List of Materials and Maps)

NOTE: The manual is not for sale in the bookstore. All manual material is available via the [Course Website](#): Course Materials, Maps, and Study Guides.

A printed version of the manual is on reserve at the library reading room (2nd floor, Haggard Hall, to the left of the circulation desk).

Course Grade

Two tests and a final, each of which counts as 1/3 of your course grade.

Description

This course introduces you to the native peoples and cultures of **Northern and Middle Asia**. After learning the basic geographic and political features of **Siberia, the Russian Far East, Mongolia, Central Asia, and the northern and inner regions of the People's Republic of China**, we will examine the traditional lifeways of the native peoples of this vast area. Native Siberian and Inner Asian ethnology will occupy us for most of the first two thirds of the course. The final three weeks are devoted to Native/Russian and Native/Chinese relations over the past several centuries, especially to the impact of Chinese (both imperial and communist) and Russian (tsarist and soviet) policies on the traditional lifeways of the native peoples who came under their rule. The concluding lecture assesses the future prospects for the approximately three dozen Native Siberian peoples and National Minorities of Northern China who have managed to preserve their language and at least part of their culture up to the present day. Some of these peoples may eventually achieve independence, as the contemporary Mongols and the Turkic peoples of former Soviet Central Asia have recently done.

Suggestions for Home Study

Reading assignments and other homework should be done after attending the lecture on the particular day the assignment is listed. Studying an area of the world so far removed from American experience, one cannot avoid encountering a complex array of unfamiliar geographical and ethnic terms. Try memorizing the many geographic and ethnic names as quickly as possible, as this will aid comprehension when reading the textbook. Knowledge of these names will figure prominently on the tests.