

Grading guidelines EXFAC03-EAST spring 2021

Question 1

What are the arguments that can be used to support the argument that 'East-Asia is a coherent region'? What are the counterarguments?

Arguments for:

- intertwined ancient history, Korea as China's tribute country.
- the expansive use of Chinese written characters and borrowed Chinese words in Japanese and Korean
- widespread Confucian values.
- connected forms of Buddhism (the history of Buddhism traveling from China to Korea to Japan).

Arguments against:

- recent research challenges that 'Confucian values' really exist, internal heterogeneities.
- wars and conflicts, Japan's imperialism in 19c-20c and its attempt to 'leave Asia and join Europe' (e.g., Sino-Japan War, Japan's colonization of Korea).

Students should discuss at least three abovementioned points to be granted a pass.

Question 2

What changed and what did not change in terms of international relations in East Asia due to the end of the Cold War?

What did not change:

- Communist China
 - Taiwan Strait Cold-War divide.
 - Korean Peninsula Cold-War divide.
 - US military bases on Japanese and South Korean territory and US nuclear umbrella.

What did change:

- The rise of China
 - Rise of nationalism and 'emergence' of colonial/wartime issues (history textbooks, Nanjing massacre, comfort women, Yasukuni shrine) and territorial disputes (Takeshima/Dokdo and Senkaku/Diaoyu).

- The democratization of Taiwan.
- The democratization of South Korea.
- Implosion of the Soviet Union.
- North Korea losing its Russian back-up.

To be considered as a pass, the students should mention at least three out of all points above and discuss both changes and continuities.

Question 3

How did gender relations evolve in Japan and China's modern times and what was the role of the state in making these changes?

Japan

The following are the key turning points of Japanese gender relations:

- The Meiji period.
 - Establishment of the modern "Ie-system" with the eldest son as the family head (no inheritance right for women.)
 - "Good wife, wise mother" ideal and education for women.
- After the WW
 - Everyone in the family equal before the law.
 - family registry and marriage as an institution endure.
- Difficulty of combining family and work for women and declining birthrate
 - The emergence of "state feminism" as a remedy.
 - Backlash.
 - Various responses.

China

- Various strands of feminism in early 20C: nationalist/anarchical/communist feminism.
- State feminism and revolutionizing gender structures in the Mao era (e.g., 1950 New Marriage Law, Mao's egalitarian notion).
- Feminist thinking in China's reform era, (e.g., market feminism, gender equality feminism, queer feminism) vs state-enforced reproductive policies (e.g., one child policy).

Students should demonstrate knowledge of at least three different aspects of the abovementioned points to be granted a pass.