The Mongols and the Eurasian Nexus of Global History will provide participants with five weeks of enthusiastically-delivered and intellectually-absorbing lectures, discussions, museum visits, and films focused on investigating the Mongol period of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries—an era of extraordinary interactions among the peoples and civilizations of Asia and Europe that in many ways marked a turn toward greater multiculturalism and more concertedly pursued globalization. Funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), this program will enable undergraduate educators to develop new curricula on this crucial moment in world history. While focusing on the Mongol era, its historical contexts and subsequent impacts, the program will also offer resources for enhancing engagement with multiculturalism, its challenges, and creative possibilities.

The summer institute has helped me with curriculum development and course revision, especially for my Pre-modern Korean history course and to a significant degree my courses on Korean Diaspora and Contemporary Korean Popular Culture both of which explore Korean history in the larger global context. The institute provided a tremendously important opportunity for me to explore the interconnectedness of “Asia” via the Mongol empire. The weeks that the Institute explored Mongol-Koryo relations were especially helpful since the fall of the Yuan Dynasty and the Koryo Dynasty are not so far removed from each other. In fact, the tributary relationship that was solidified between the two dynasties attests to the extent in which diplomatic, commercial, and cultural exchanges were flourishing.

This Institute helped me to strengthen the section on the Koryo period in my EAS 215: Pre-modern Korean history course. Currently, I only spend only two weeks on the Koryo period, but through my participation in the Institute I gained a stronger understanding of this period so that I could amplify, enhance, and enrich the teaching and understanding of medieval culture. During the Institute, as part of my final project, I prepared new lectures, assignments, and collaborative projects that delve into the complex relationship between Koryo and Yuan politically, economically, and culturally. I have combined my participation in the Reacting to the Past Annual meeting (Summer 2013) (also supported by the Sherrerd Center for Teaching and Learning) to create a new role playing, collaborative project on Koryo-Yuan-Ming Transition as part of the NEH Summer Institute project. (See below).

Of most interest to my own teaching and research are the areas in urban development and history and transculturation through movements of people. I enhanced the Pre-modern Korean history course with sustained investigation of development of medieval Korean city culture and development. For example, how was the city of Kaesong, the capital of Koryo dynasty, functioning and developing as a capital city? What about the border towns...
between Koryo and Yuan? What kinds of exchanges were taking place in these border towns? As a follow-up, I will be presenting a paper “Pax-Monolia: Koryo-Yuan Cultural Exchanges and Relations” at the upcoming ASIANetwork Conference (April 2015, St. Louis, MO) along with the program director Dr. Peter Hershock and the academic director Professor Morris Rossabi of the NEH Institute on the Mongols.

In addition to my personal research and teaching interest in urban history, I added a section on Buddhism and the creation of literary works and theatrical performances inspired by Buddhism, which are subjects that also nicely complement the Five College Buddhist Studies Program, Five College East Asian literary studies, and the newly inaugurated World Studies Interdisciplinary Project at UMass.

Although the NEH Summer Institute is focused on the Mongol Empire, the broader methodological framework can be applied to my other courses on Modern Korea (EAS 200: Korean Diaspora and EAS 217: Contemporary Korean Popular Culture: Translating Tradition) which also ask questions about Korea’s important place in the world from the 19th century to the present day. Initially, I hope to revise and enhance the already existing courses on Korean history. However, for the future, I foresee the NEH Institute contributing to the design of a new course on North Korea that I have been envisioning.

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EAS 215: Premodern Korean History
Reacting to the Past Role Play
Created by Jina E. Kim

Koryŏ and the Mongol Empire

Description:
King Kongmin (b. 1330) was steeped in Mongol culture having lived in Yuan China from an early age. Despite the years he had spent living in Daidu and marrying a Mongolian woman whom he loved dearly, when he took the throne in 1351, he did much to establish and assert a greater autonomy for Koryŏ. This brought him into conflict with various factions in Koryŏ as well as in the larger Mongol polity. It can be said from the moment he took the throne until the day he was assassinated in 1374, he had to carefully weigh how the Koryŏ court should interact with its closest neighbor--the Mongols. Kongmin is haunted by the memories of the destruction that multiple Mongol invasions had engendered on Koryŏ throughout the 12th century and also knows the extent to which Mongols have employed Koreans in their efforts to attack Japan, which was at an enormous cost to Koryŏ. Moreover, Kongmin personally experienced the Red Turban invasions in Koryŏ.

Kongmin thus far has had a marked reign in which pragmatism did not necessarily lead to positive outcomes. He was often described as fickle, weepy, and indulgent by his opponents but also as clever and loyal by his supporters. During what appeared to be Yuan’s decline, Kongmin again tried to assert Koryŏ’s autonomy although powerful elites in the bureaucracy, like the Ki family, did much to undermine it. In fact, some of the reforms that
Kongmin carries out are not simply for seeking autonomy within the Mongol realm but also to increase power of the throne vis-à-vis the bureaucracy. In his later years, he formed a close relationship with a monk Sin Ton to whom the King bestowed not only much affection but power. Sin Ton, in fact, became one of the wealthiest and closest confidant to the extent that others became highly jealous of him.

By mid 13th century, Yuan and Ming were both competing for Koryŏ’s acknowledgement. It is becoming increasingly difficult to avoid making a decision. Many of the reforms that Kongmin declared appeared to be anti-Yuan but it is also glaringly obvious that he cannot escape the Mongol influence. On the other hand, the Ming founded by Zhu Yuanzhang is increasingly becoming more influential pushing out the Mongols.

So what would you advise King Kongmin to do during these turmoils.

**Approach:**
We will debate this dilemma. Students will formulate their own informed position but also anticipate counter-arguments from opponents. Students will read primary and secondary source materials in order to prepare formal memorials (written work for the course). They will make oral arguments in class. Students will have to negotiate with each other in order to ultimately come to a decision as to what should be done—should Koryo pay tributes to the Mongols or the new Ming dynasty? As a group, students will write a final edict, which will be promulgated in the King’s name.

**Goals:**
1. To gain insight into the historical forces at play: interactions of historical forces and historical actors behind major turning points
2. To research into an historical situation and systems of ideas informing that situation
3. To hone skills in developing and advancing arguments orally and in writing

**Requirements:**
1. Each student will **write a memorial** (about 2 pages) to the King. The memorials must be written in character and make use of primary sources and secondary scholarship. These will be posted to our Moodle site. Each student will have to read the other memorials in order to prepare for debates. Memorials should be posted on Moodle by ____________________.
2. Each student will make **oral arguments** based on her own memorials as well as in rebuttals to other memorials. Everyone must present and there will be time for an open debate when you can propose and formalize the final edict.
3. The class as a whole must come to a common understanding on this issue and write a **final edict** to be adopted and promulgated.
4. Each student will write her own informed **analysis of the final edict**. The analysis should be about 2 pages and discuss how the final edict responded to the specific problem and whether or not this solution is sufficient. This is not where you simply report the minutes of what you and your classmates did but is an analysis. This final analysis is due ____________________.
Roles:

1. King Kongmin
2. Empress Ki
3. Sin Ton
4. Yi Chehyon
5. Yi Sŏnggye

References:
Lee, et al., *Sources of Korean Tradition, Volume 1*
Michael Seth, *A History of Korea*
Rossabi, *The Mongols and Global History*
Robinson, *Empire’s Twilight*