

**Online Readings for TRIAL TRA**  
(\*\*does NOT count for your grade\*\*)

Course Materials (online):

1. Objectives & Assignments
2. “Course Policies”
3. online schedule

Essential Elements of Culture (in the course content site):

4. “Introduction,” “Two Types of Culture” & “Dimensions & Layers”

**READING GUIDE KEY:**

**RED = study questions for each section of the reading**

**GREEN = terms for TRA**

**(1) The Three Guiding Questions for this Course:**

I. What are the essential elements of culture?

II. In what ways does culture connect people to each other, their environments and themselves?

III. How can people shape their culture to maximize this potential for connection?

→ all applied to historical sources of Asian cultures

**The Two Interrelated Skills Targeted in the Course:**

(2) analyzing historical records of past practices

so that you can then

(3) recommend adaptations that could be made to maximize the potential of similar contemporary practices

**terminology for the study of Asian culture**  
**“Essential Elements of Culture”** (@ course content site)

**“Essential Elements of Culture”** (@ course content site)

(a) “What are some reasons to study culture?” (“Introduction”)

## questions

“a medium that sustains life”  
dimensions layers

## elements

(b) What are the different senses in which the word “culture” is used, and to what extent is culture dynamic?” (Section I: “Two Types of Culture”)

## high culture

“pattern of...belief and behavior”

## dynamic systems

(c) “What are reflection, practice & its social web, and what analogies help picture the relationship between them? (section IV: “Dimension & Layers”)

## reflection

dimensions practice

social web  
layers

## Course Structure & Team-Based Learning (TBL)

(a) in what ways do the policies for this course differ from what you are used to?

classroom etiquette  
attendance

(b) what are the main assignments involved in TBL?

Reading Guide  
Team Readiness Assessment (TRA)  
Application Exercises  
End-of-Unit Challenge

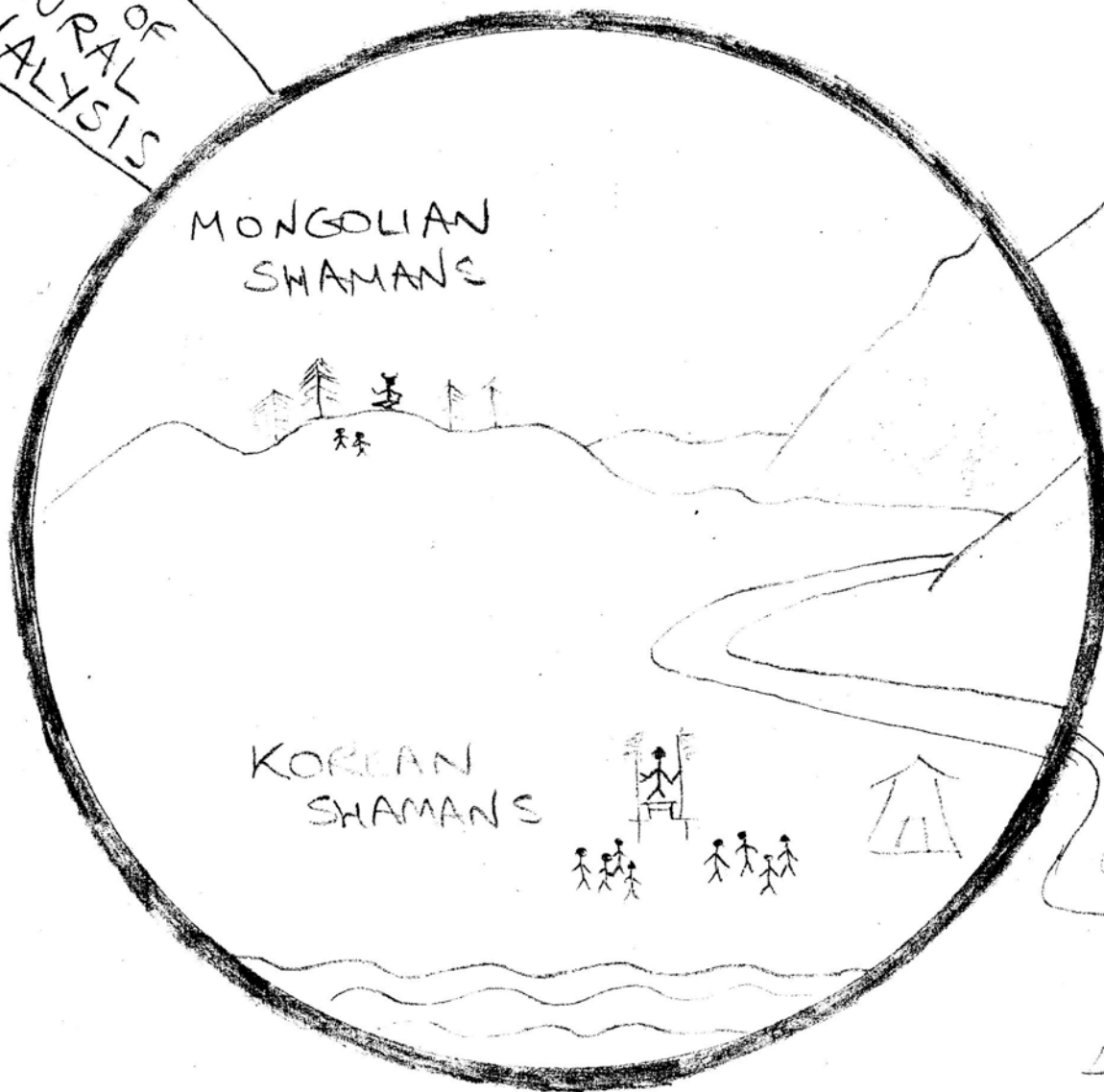
## **Content Objectives for Introductory Unit**

By the end of this introduction you should be able to describe, and also apply to real-life situations, what you have learned about:

1. the essential questions about culture that we will ask this semester; the analytical skills needed to address those questions; and the terms used to analyze culture in this course.
2. the structure of team-based learning activities in the course.
3. the geographic features of Asia & some shamanic & Buddhist practices of (A) Mongolia & (B) Korea.

# INTRO TO ASIA & THE STUDY OF CULTURE

LENS OF  
CULTURAL  
ANALYSIS



SIBERIAN SHAMANS



**\*\*Online\*\* Readings for TRIAL “End-of-Unit Challenge”**  
(\*\*does NOT count for your grade\*\*)

Primary Sources (available \*ON-LINE\* via links in schedule of readings)

1. "Possession by Changun" (YouTube)
2. "Video Introduction" & "Festivals: The Tsam Ceremony"  
(Asia Society web site) —> download & print out
3. related IMAGES and CAPTIONS ONLY:  
“Horned Garuda,” “Deer,” “White Old Man” & “Yellow Dharmapala”

EB articles (links on-line; locate **terms marked with \*** on pages below):

5. "Asia" (introductory "Article" section ONLY) + map of Asia
6. "Shamanism,” "Persistence of Shamanism" & "Vajrayana

## Suggestions for Use of Reading Guide

1. Read the unidentified passages on the next page, circling and making notes on clues that might help you to locate them. Keep these clues at the back of your mind as you read, and check back if you think you've found a passage.
2. Locate the reading identified at the top of each subsequent page, read over the questions for each section of the reading, and browse the terms under each question. In the blank spaces, WRITE SEVERAL QUESTIONS of your own about how the terms relate to each other and to the questions under which they are placed.
3. PUT THE READING GUIDE ASIDE, and read the historical record without referring to it. Look for and mark details that provide clues about the **actions, objects** (including use of **body**), **locales, times and words** (recited, spoken sung, etc.) involved in the practice; the **people, their roles and their relationships**; and **words** that participants might reflect on. You may want to go through a reading several times, looking for different things.
4. Go back to the reading guide and see if you can answer your own questions; if you missed any of the terms in green, go back and annotate them. NOTE: You will ONLY be allowed **your own annotated reading**, NOT this guide, for the End-of-Unit Challenge.
5. Locate the EB articles related to the reading, and search for any terms marked with an asterisk (“\*”) in the reading guide. Make notes about relevant details in the margins of your reading, drawing connections to the way the term is used in the reading.



## passages to locate and study in the historical records of practice:

"...seven concentric circles were drawn in chalk inside a clearly marked square. In the center of these circles, an open tent or canopy was erected in which was installed the *zor*, a pyramid made of dough and crowned by a skull. At the beginning of the ceremony, the *lingka*, a doll made of dough, was placed next to the *zor*. The dances started with a performance by two...figures wearing skull masks and skeleton costumes....through their dance rituals and the mantras they repeated, the pavilion and objects enshrined in it were transformed into a mystic Charnel Ground where the desire that is the root of rebirth is extinguished and where higher knowledge can be obtained.... Afterwards, other groups of characters wearing demonic masks appear and dance around the *zor*, banishing all evil by driving it into the *lingka*.

"'There are many Korean generals. General Kwa Nun Jan from China comes; many kinds of generals come, we worship Japanese generals too. Even the spirit of Genghis Khan is worshipped.' In her home, [she] keeps a special shrine dedicated to General Che Yong, who died as a national hero in 1388. His image on the wall overlooks the many costumes and traditional weapons the shaman uses to entertain her general's spirit during a ritual of possession called 'kut.' ...When shamans invite the spirits of Changun to possess them, they exhibit behaviors very different from those of their daily lives, including some traditionally considered masculine."

"The final character to appear in the Tsam square was Yama, God of the Realm of Death and Supreme Judge of the Dead whom the Mongols call Erlig Khan. He usually appeared wearing a Buffalo mask, with a lasso for catching souls in one hand and a skeleton-shaped scepter in the other. His arrival at the head of the possession constituted the climax of the ritual. Mongolian masks symbolizing the actual presence of a deity never have their eyes pierced. The performers therefore had to look through the mouths of the masks, adding extra height to the performer. As the temporary residence of gods and demons, masks are like statues and treated as sacred objects. When not in use, they were stored in monasteries and paid homage to in daily rituals."

**KEY for remaining pages:**

**RED = study questions for each section of the assigned source**

**GREEN = terms that may appear in the End-of-Unit Challenge**

**IMPORTANT:**

**\* = look in the relevant EB article linked to the on-line schedule for essential additional information about the term**

**EB = on-line “Encyclopedia Britannica”**

**shamans\*** of East **Asia\*** channel spirits of Changun (YouTube video)

(a) What people, locales, objects, actions & words  
are involved in the possession rituals shown?

Kut  
chaktu

(b) Who are the possessed shamans\*, and  
how do they make sense of what they experience?

Changun  
Kim Num Sun

**Buddhists of Central Asia\* dance in the Tsam procession**

(Asia society web site → text + images of masks)

(a) Who has lead & who has participated in the Tsam festival, in what places and during what periods?

Ulaan (=Ulan) Baatar

shamanism\*

tantric Buddhism\*

(b) what costumes, dances and symbolic actions are involved in the festival, and what is the layout of the ritual space?

lingka

Citipati

Dharmapala

Yama