

HH4091 East Asian Environmental History
Nanyang Technological University
Semester 1, AY2017/18

Draft Syllabus (July 31, 2017)

1 Course Details

Academic units: 4

Meeting time: Wednesdays, 9:30am–1:30pm

Venue: LHS-TR+52

Instructor: Dr Lin Qi Feng (please call me Dr Lin. I am not a professor.)

Email: gflin@ntu.edu.sg

Office hours: by appointment

2 Course Description

We study the history of the environment of *Northeast Asia*, focusing on what is present-day China and Japan. We will study how “nature” and “the environment” or rather, and more accurately, how *cognate concepts* in Northeast Asian societies are understood in the region throughout history. We will study how these cognate concepts are perceived through the philosophy and worldview of the region and how environmental processes have intertwined with socio-economic, cultural, and political process. Some of the major themes include forest, agriculture, climate, human-animal relationships, war, industrialism, and environmentalism.

Whether or not “East Asia” encompasses Southeast Asia depends on one’s opinion. Considering the multifarious themes in Northeast Asia that are available for study, we will not study Southeast Asia in detail in this course. Throughout this course, we will be using the unambiguous appellation, “Northeast Asia.”

3 Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to

1. Appreciate the role of the environment in history;
2. Understand how nature and the environment are understood in Northeast Asia, in contradistinction to, say, Western civilisation;
3. Understand environmental characteristics of the region;
4. Articulate the major environmental processes and events in the history of the region;
5. Understand how the environment and human society have interacted in the history of Northeast Asia.

4 Student Assessment

4.1 In-Class Participation (15%)

This component will be evaluated according to two criteria: punctuality and attendance, and contribution to discussion in class. Punctuality is a virtue that has become rare of late.

This class begins early at 9:30am. Attendance will be taken at 9:30am sharp. Please leave allowance in your commuting time for any contingency. I would aim to be fifteen minutes early, if not more. To begin discussing fruitfully at 9:30am, one would ideally have to arrive before that.

Participation is a function of having read and reflected on the readings. Outstanding participants will demonstrate a thorough and critical understanding of the assigned material by offering perceptive comments and asking informed questions. Please come with questions or connections you have identified and be ready to articulate them in class.

4.2 Map Quiz (10%)

I will share maps at the beginning of the semester that you can study. In week 4, I will conduct a brief map quiz based on these maps.

4.3 Book or Papers Presentation, 30 minutes (15%)

Each week I will provide a list of supplementary readings, which are marked with an asterisk (*) in the course schedule below. Students will present a book or a set of three journal articles from these supplementary readings. Students will sign up for the week they will present at the beginning of the semester. We will discuss the supplementary readings and the day's lecture and required reading together.

To economize on effort, you might want to consider your choice of literature for presentation with the following two assignments.

4.4 Historiographical Analysis and Literature Review (20%) [In preparation for research essay]

This assignment requires students to do the following:

1. **Reflection on** what you want to write for your final essay. Explore ideas by googling for library guides focused on East Asian primary sources. Here are some sites:
 - a. <http://guides.library.jhu.edu/c.php?g=202498&p=1334881>
 - b. <http://guides.lib.fsu.edu/c.php?g=436778&p=2977510>
 - c. https://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/home/vis_menu_02b.html

At the very least, settle on a region and a time period, or a theme (e.g., deforestation). **Formulate a thesis statement and identify what is need to prove or disprove the thesis.**

2. **Identify the readings** (required and/or supplementary) that are relevant to your (possibly vague) idea.
3. **Write a short historiographical analysis** of the reading (book or set of three articles). The analysis should be a critical review of the effectiveness of the reading's arguments. What points does the reading make most clearly? What is missing? What could be done better? What are the sources and methods? Is there anything about the way it was written that made it better for you? This analysis should help you think about how to write a good environmental history. **This may require you to read ahead of class.**
4. **In addition, you will write a literature review** that is associated with your thesis statement.

The **combined length** of the assignment is 1,000–1,500 words. The historiographical analysis should take up 40–50% of the length while the literature review should be 50–60%. The latter should be longer since it will be incorporated into your research essay.

This analysis will be due on Friday, September 22, 2359, to be submitted as a Word document in Turnitin. This early deadline will force you to start thinking about and working on your research essay early.

4.5 Research Essay (40%): 4,000–4,500 words, due Monday, November 20, 2017

Applying your reflection in your historiographical analysis on what makes for a good environmental history, research and analyze your thesis statement. You will build on the foundation—the literature review—laid in the previous assignment. Treat this essay as a way to satisfy your curiosity and to formulate and put forward your thesis argument. You will use the concepts we have covered in class to study your thesis.

Give a brief presentation of ten minutes on November 1, Week 11. The purpose is to share your findings in class and receive feedback from your peers. This brief presentation **will not be graded but is compulsory.**

Its purpose is to force you to put in considerable work into researching and thinking about your thesis argument (because you will look bad if you have not) and to test yourself on your grasp of the literature and your own reasoning.

Submit your essay as a *Word document* using Turnitin by 2359 on **Monday, November 20, 2017.**

5 Plagiarism Policy

All assignments should be original work, consistent with the university's anti-plagiarism rules. Papers will be evaluated on rigor and depth of research, clarity and concision of writing, proper footnoting, and list of works cited using Chicago referencing style.

6 Late Policy

For each day for which an assignment is late, **15%** will be deducted from the overall marks. For example, an assignment that is late by a day will be graded out of 85%, while one that is late by two days will be graded out of 70%. In the event of extenuating circumstances, please refer to the university's leave policy for undergraduates.

7 Required Texts

These titles will be available for loan in the reserves section at the Library Outpost and for purchase at the bookstore.

Marks, Robert. 2017. *China: An Environmental History*. 2nd ed. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield.

Totman, Conrad D. 2014. *Japan: An Environmental History*. London: I.B.Tauris.

NOTE: The bookstore, Booklink Pte Ltd, is now located at NS3-01-25 at the North Spine Plaza.

8 Course Schedule and Readings

Week 1 (Aug 16): Introduction to Northeast Asia Environmental History

Perdue, Peter C. 2011. "East Asia and Central Eurasia." In *The Oxford Handbook of World History*, edited by Jerry H. Bentley. Oxford University Press.

Marks: Introduction (1–13); Chapter 8 (Conclusion, 393–411).

Totman: Introduction (1–5); Chapter 1 (7–21); Epilogue (283–291).

Early Northeast Asia (~1500 BCE–1300 CE)

Week 2 (Aug 23): Prehistory and the beginnings of agriculture

Ebrey, Patricia, and Anne Walthall. 2014. "Connections: The Prehistory of East Asia." In *East Asia: A Cultural, Social, and Political History*, 2–7. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

Marks: chapters 2 and 3 (15-117).

Totman: chapter 2, 3, and 4 (23-107).

*Cohen, David Joel. 2011. "The Beginnings of Agriculture in China: A Multiregional View." *Current Anthropology* 52 (S4): S273-S293. doi: 10.1086/659965. <http://www.jstor.org.ezlibproxy1.ntu.edu.sg/stable/10.1086/659965>.

*Guedes, Jade D'Alpoim. 2011. "Millets, Rice, Social Complexity, and the Spread of Agriculture to the Chengdu Plain and Southwest China." *Rice* 4 (3-4): 104-113. doi: 10.1007/s12284-011-9071-1.

*Ruddiman, William F. 2013. "The Anthropocene." *Annual Review of Earth and Planetary Sciences* 41: 45-68.

Week 3 (Aug 30): Guest Lecture on "Human-Nature Relationship in Asia" by Associate Professor Victor R Savage (Senior Visiting Fellow RSIS, NTU)

Using examples and empirical evidence from East Asia, Southeast Asia and South Asia, this lecture attempts to understand the ideational and existential aspects of human-nature relationship in Asia – the ideology, religious beliefs and philosophies governing the way Asians tend to look at Nature. The lecture is divided into three parts: a) an overview of the contrasting views of human-nature relationship between the Occident (West) and Orient (East), between Europe and Asia, between Christian thought and Asian religious perspectives (Hinduism, Buddhism, Zen Buddhism, Daoism) on Nature; b) Southeast Asian human-nature relationships and c) the environmental ideology of the Singapore government.

Readings: TBA

Week 4 (Sept 6): Agriculture and Water Control

Marks: chapters 4 119–190

Tuan, Yi-Fu. 1968. "Discrepancies Between Environmental Attitude and Behaviour: Examples from Europe and China." *Canadian Geographer* 12 (3): 176-191.

Weller, Robert P. 2006. "New Natures." In *Discovering Nature: Globalization and Environmental Culture in China and Taiwan*, 43–63. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Perdue, Peter C. 2010. "Is There a Chinese View of Technology and Nature?" In *The Illusory Boundary: Environment and Technology in History*, edited by Martin Reuss and Stephen H. Cutcliffe, 101–119. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press.

- *Karl, A. Wittfogel. 1957. "Chinese Society: An Historical Survey." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 16 (3): 343–364.
- *Elvin, Mark. 2004. "Water and the Costs of System Sustainability." In *The Retreat of the Elephants: An Environmental History of China*, 115–164. New Haven: Yale University.
- *Kang, Bong W. 2006. "Large-Scale Reservoir Construction and Political Centralization: A Case Study from Ancient Korea." *Journal of Anthropological Research* 62 (2): 193–216.
- *Zhang, Ling. 2016. *The River, the Plain, and the State: An Environmental Drama in Northern Song China, 1048–1128*, Studies in Environment and History. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Selection

Early Modern East Asia (approx. 1300 CE to 1800s CE)

Week 5 (Sept 13): Animals and Empires and Resource Management (and MAP QUIZ)

Marks: chapter 5

Totman: chapters 5 and 6

Schafer, Edward H. 1968. "Hunting Parks and Animal Enclosures in Ancient China." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 11 (3): 318-343. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3596278>.

*Walker, Brett L. 2005. *The Lost Wolves of Japan*. Seattle: University of Washington Press. Selection.

*Elvin, Mark. 2004. *The Retreat of the Elephants: An Environmental History of China*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Chapters 2 to 4, 18-95.

Week 6 (Sept 20): Early Industrialism and Trade

Deng, Gang. 1997. "The Foreign Staple Trade of China in the Pre-Modern Era." *The International History Review* 19 (2): 253-285.

Atwell, William S. 2005. "Another Look at Silver Imports into China, ca. 1635-1644." *Journal of World History* 16 (4): 467-489.

*Wagner, Donald B. 2001. "The Administration of the Iron Industry in Eleventh-Century China." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 44 (2): 175-197.

- *Yi, Kisung. 2015. "Transition from the Prehistoric Age to the Historic Age: The Early Iron Age on the Korean Peninsula." *Asian Perspectives* 54 (1): 185–206. <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/604393>.
- *Watanabe, Takehiro. 2013. "Talking Sulfur Dioxide: Air Pollution and the Politics of Science in Late Meiji Japan." In *Japan at Nature's Edge*, edited by Ian Jared Miller, Julia Adeney Thomas, and Brett L. Walker, 73-89. University of Hawai'i Press.
- *Morris-Suzuki, Tessa. 1998. "Environmental Problems and Perceptions in Early Industrial Japan." In *Sediments of Time: Environment and Society in Chinese History*, edited by Mark Elvin and Ts'ui-jung Liu, 756–780. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Week 7 (Sept 27): Agriculture

- Marks, Robert B. 1996. "Commercialization without Capitalism: Processes of Environmental Change in South China, 1550-1850." *Environmental History* 1 (1): 56-82.
- Li, Lillian M., and Alison Dray-Novey. 1999. "Guarding Beijing's Food Security in the Qing Dynasty: State, Market, and Police." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 58 (4): 992-1032.
- Xue, Yong. 2005. "Treasure Nightsoil As If It Were Gold: Economic and Ecological Links between Urban and Rural Areas in Late Imperial Jiangnan." *Late Imperial China* 26 (1): 41-71.
- Dunstan, Helen. 1998. "Official Thinking on Environmental Issues and the State's Environmental Roles in Eighteenth-Century China." In *Sediments of Time: Environment and Society in Chinese History*, edited by Mark Elvin and Ts'ui-jung Liu, 585-614. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- *Menzies, Nicholas K. 1994. *Forest and Land Management in Imperial China*. New York: St. Martin's Press. 55–64.

"Week 8" (Oct 4, Make-up class during Recess Week):

Frontier Lands

- Liu, Ts'ui-jung. 1998. "Han Migration and the Settlement of Taiwan: The Onset of Environmental Change." In *Sediments of Time: Environment and Society in Chinese History*, edited by Mark Elvin and Ts'ui-jung Liu, 165–199.
- Vermeer, Eduard B. 1998. "Population and Ecology along the Frontier in Qing China." In *Sediments of Time: Environment and Society in Chinese*

History, edited by Mark Elvin and Ts'ui-jung Liu, 235–279.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

*Reardon-Anderson, James. 2000. “Land Use and Society in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia during the Qing Dynasty.” *Environmental History* 5 (4): 503–530.

*Perdue, Peter C. 2007. “Sustainable Development on China's Frontier ” In *Natures Past: The Environment and Human History*, edited by Paolo Squatriti, 172–197. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

*Bello, David. 2010. “The Cultured Nature of Imperial Foraging in Manchuria.” *late Late Imperial China* 31 (2): 1-33.

Bello, David A. 2005. “To Go Where No Han Could Go for Long: Malaria and the Qing Construction of Ethnic Administrative Space in Frontier Yunnan.” *modernchina Modern China* 31 (3): 283-317.

*Perdue, Peter C. 2005. *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. “Introduction,” chapters 1, 8, 9.

*Walker, Brett L. 2001. *The Conquest of Ainu Lands: Ecology and Culture in Japanese Expansion, 1590–1800*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Modern East Asia (approx. 1800s CE to late 1940s)

“Week 9” (Oct 11): Adjusting to Modernity and Climate

Marks: chapter 6 (257-305)

Totman: chapter 7 (189-236)

Pomeranz, Kenneth. 2009. “The Transformation of China's Environment, 1500–2000.” In *The Environment and World History*, edited by Edmund Burke and Kenneth Pomeranz, 118–164. Berkeley: University of California Press.

*Atwell, William S. 2001. “Volcanism and Short-Term Climatic Change in East Asian and World History, c. 1200-1699.” *Journal of World History* 12 (1): 29-98. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20078878>.

*Cao, Shuji, Yushang Li, and Bin Yang. 2012. “Mt. Tambora, Climatic Changes, and China's Decline in the Nineteenth Century.” *Journal of World History* 23 (3): 587–607.

*Marmé, Michael. 2008. "Locating Linkages or Painting Bull's-Eyes around Bullet Holes? An East Asian Perspective on the Seventeenth-Century Crisis." *The American Historical Review* 113 (4): 1080-1089.

Oct 18 – no class (Deepavali public holiday)

Week 10 (Oct 25): Disaster and Total War

Elvin, Mark. 2004. "War and the Logic of Short-term Advantage." In *The Retreat of the Elephants*, 86-114. Yale University Press.

Tsutsui, William M. 2003. "Landscapes in the Dark Valley: Toward an Environmental History of Wartime Japan." *Environmental History* 8 (2): 294-311.

Muscolino, Micah S. 2010. "Refugees, Land Reclamation, and Militarized Landscapes in Wartime China: Huanglongshan, Shaanxi, 1937-45." *J of Asian Stud The Journal of Asian Studies* 69 (02): 453-478.

*Clancey, Gregory K. 2006. *Earthquake Nation: The Cultural Politics of Japanese Seismicity, 1868-1930*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Selection

Postwar Period

Week 11 (Nov 1):

No readings – Prepare for your presentations

Paper Presentations

Chai Jing's documentary *Under the Dome* (2015) – which should be available on Youtube.com.

Week 12 (Nov 8): Revolution and Industrialism

Marks: Chapter 7 (307-391)

Totman: Chapter 8 (237-282)

*Shapiro, Judith. 2001. *Mao's War against Nature: Politics and the Environment in Revolutionary China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

*George, Timothy S. 2001. *Minamata: Pollution and the Struggle for Democracy in Postwar Japan*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, distributed by Harvard University Press.

*Walker, Brett L. 2010. *Toxic Archipelago: A History of Industrial Disease in Japan*. Seattle: University of Washington Press. Selection

Week 13 (Nov 15): Environmentalism

Lee, Su-Hoon. 1999. "Environmental Movements in South Korea." In *Asia's Environmental Movements: Comparative Perspectives*, edited by Yokshiu F. Lee and Alvin Y. So. Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe.

Knight, Catherine. 2010. "The Nature Conservation Movement in Post-War Japan." *Environment and History* 16 (3): 349-370.

Arch, Jakobina. 2016. "Whale Meat in Early Postwar Japan: Natural Resources and Food Culture." *Environmental History* 21 (3): 467-487. doi: 10.1093/envhis/emw004.

*Brady, Lisa M. 2008. "Life in the DMZ: Turning a Diplomatic Failure into an Environmental Success." *Diplomatic History* 32 (4): 585-611. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-7709.2008.00714.x.

*Pritchard, Sara B. 2013. "An Envirotechnical Disaster: Negotiating Nature, Technology, and Politics at Fukushima." In *Japan at Nature's Edge*, edited by Ian Jared Miller, Julia Adeney Thomas, and Brett L. Walker, 255-279. University of Hawai'i Press.