



Topics in Pre-modern Chinese History

ASIA 508

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ABOUT THIS COURSE

The goal of this seminar is to introduce students to some of the major problems in Chinese historiography. Emphasis will be placed on issues that are particularly pertinent to the study of later imperial China.

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

For more details on the individual components, see the [Assessment](#) section.

Attendance/Participation	20%
Short Essays	30%
Review Essay	50%

IMPORTANT DATES (PACIFIC TIME)

Sep. 14	First meeting
Sep. 21	Last date to withdraw without the "W" standing
Oct. 12	No Class (Thanksgiving)
Oct. 30	Last date to withdraw
Nov. 11	Remembrance Day
Nov. 30	Last meeting
Dec. 21	Review essay due

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: [Dr. Leo K. Shin](#)

Departments: [History](#) and [Asian Studies](#)

Contact: leo.shin@ubc.ca

Office Hours: By appointment

CLASS INFORMATION

Term: 2020 Winter (3 credits)

Seminar: M 17:00–19:00 (Pacific Time)

Course Blog:

blogs.ubc.ca/asia508a/

Download [2020W Syllabus](#)

TEXTS

All required readings are available online or from the instructor.

OFFICE HOURS

For this term, office hours are by appointment. Contact the instructor at leo.shin@ubc.ca. The usual response time is within 24 hours (except for weekends and holidays).

ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND SAFETY

During this pandemic, the shift to online learning has greatly altered teaching and studying at UBC, including changes to health and safety considerations. Keep in mind that some UBC courses might cover topics that are censored or considered illegal by non-Canadian governments. This may include, but is not limited to, human rights, representative government, defamation, obscenity, gender or sexuality, and historical or current geopolitical controversies. If you are a student living abroad, you will be subject to the laws of your local jurisdiction, and your local authorities might limit your access to course material or take punitive action against you. UBC is strongly committed to academic freedom, but has no control over foreign authorities (please visit <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,33,86,0> for an articulation of the values of the University conveyed in the Senate Statement on Academic Freedom). Thus, we recognize that students will have legitimate reason to exercise caution in studying certain subjects. If you have concerns regarding your personal situation, consider postponing taking a course with manifest risks, until you are back on campus or reach out to your academic advisor to find substitute courses. For further information and support, please visit: <http://academic.ubc.ca/support-resources/freedom-expression>.

Students who are concerned about some of the risks mentioned are encouraged to consult the instructor as soon as possible.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

UBC's Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the *xwməθkwəy̓əm* (Musqueam) people. The land it is situated on has always been a place of learning for the Musqueam people, who for millennia have passed on their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site.

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ASSESSMENT

ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION (20%)

Students are expected to actively participate and take turn leading class discussion.

SHORT ESSAYS (30%)

Two short review essays (about 1,500 words each) on two different weeks of readings. Due two weeks after the class meeting in question (through [Turnitin](#)).

For each essay, you should:

- Place the week's reading(s) in their historiographical contexts.
- Reflect on the sources and methodology used.
- Identify and explain (some of) the strengths and weaknesses of the work(s) in question.

REVIEW ESSAY (50%)

Write a state-of-the-field essay suitable for publication in a top-tier journal in your field (e.g., the [Journal of Chinese History](#)). About 5,000 words). Due on December 21 (through [Turnitin](#)).

For this review essay, you should:

- Identify a suitably-scoped academic field that fits your interests.
- Select four to six publications (mostly books) that in your view best exemplify the accomplishments/directions of this field.
- Compare and contrast the works selected as well as critically place them (perhaps alongside some of the readings for this seminar) in their historiographical contexts.

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Linked readings are available online via CWL & other unlinked readings listed are available through the instructor.

WEEK 1 (SEP. 7): NO CLASS

WEEK 2 (SEP. 14): DIGITAL HUMANITIES

- Selections from “[Digital Humanities](#),” ed. Peter K. Bol, special issue, *Journal of Chinese History*, 4.2 (2020).

WEEK 3 (SEP. 21): STATE OF THE FIELD

Survey the last three volumes (three years) or more of a top-tier journal in your field (or choose one from below) and prepare an oral report on the state of your field.

- Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies
- Journal of Asian Studies
- Journal of Chinese History
- Ming Studies
- Late Imperial China

WEEK 4 (SEP. 28): AN ARC

- Brook, Timothy. *Great State: China and the World*. London: Profile, 2019.

WEEK 5 (OCT. 5): THE WORKS OF JOHN DARDESS

John W. Dardess (1937–2020), a prolific and noted historian of the Ming dynasty, passed away earlier this year. We will choose

WEEK 6 (OCT. 12): NO CLASS (THANKSGIVING)

WEEK 7 (OCT. 19): “THE FIERY FRONTIER”

- Leo K. Shin, [The Making of the Chinese State: Ethnicity and Expansion on the Ming Borderlands](#). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
or
- Baldanza, Kathlene. [Ming China and Vietnam: Negotiating Borders in Early Modern Asia](#). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016.

WEEK 8 (OCT. 26): NORTHEAST ASIA

- Rawski, Evelyn S. [Early Modern China and Northeast Asia: Cross-Border Perspectives](#). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.

WEEK 9 (NOV. 2): THE EARLY MODERN WORLD

- Brook, Timothy. *Vermeer’s Hat: The Seventeenth Century and the Dawn of the Global World*. London: Bloomsbury, 2008.

WEEK 10 (NOV. 9): THE MATERIAL WORLD

- Ko, Dorothy. *The Social Life of Inkstones: Artisans and Scholars in Early Qing China*. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2017.

WEEK 11 (NOV. 16): GREAT QING AND ITS ENVIRONMENTS

- Bello, David A. [Across Forest, Steppe, and Mountain: Environment, Identity, and Empire in Qing China’s Borderlands](#). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016.
or
- Schlesinger, Jonathan. *A World Trimmed with Fur: Wild Things, Pristine Places, and the Natural Fringes of Qing Rule*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2017.

WEEK 12 (NOV. 23): TO BE DETERMINED

WEEK 13 (NOV. 30): PRESENTATIONS

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ZOOM

We will be using Zoom for our meetings (meeting link will be sent out in due course). Even if you have been using this platform, you may want to check out the support page for information about privacy matters: keeplearning.ubc.ca/technologies/#zoom.

TURNITIN

Students are asked to submit their assignments through Turnitin. Please follow the steps below:

1. Visit the [Turnitin page](https://lthub.ubc.ca/guides/turnitin/) (lthub.ubc.ca/guides/turnitin/) of the Learning Technology Hub for background information and for **instructions regarding privacy matters**.
2. If you would like to create a new account, select “**Get Started**” and follow the instructions to [create a user profile](#).
 - Note that since the server of Turnitin is not located in Canada, students may opt to use an alias when they sign up for an account.
3. [Log in](#)
4. Select “**enroll in a class**” and provide the following information:
 - class/section ID: 26447422
 - enrollment password: asia508
5. Select “**20W-ASIA 508**” from the list.
6. Select “submit” (next to the appropriate assignment):
 - A. Choose “file upload” (preferred) or “cut & paste” (**for privacy reasons, please delete your name and any identification information from the original document before uploading**);
 - B. Provide the required information;
 - C. Upload your file *or* copy and paste your document (including endnotes and bibliography, if applicable);
 - D. Select “submit” and ******wait for confirmation******.

Further Information

- Students who are new to Turnitin and who would like to get a sense of how the service works may submit a draft assignment under “Trial submission.”

- Students who are unable to access Turnitin may submit their assignments to the instructor as e-mail attachments (which will then be forwarded to Turnitin). Please contact the instructor in advance.

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LEARNING ONLINE IN THE TIME OF PANDEMIC

We recognize that learning online in the time of pandemic poses many challenges. Do visit the [Keep Learning](https://keeplearning.ubc.ca/) website (keeplearning.ubc.ca/) for resources and support. You may find the [Self-Care](https://keeplearning.ubc.ca/self-care/) section (keeplearning.ubc.ca/self-care/) especially helpful.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions.

Details of the policies and how to access support are available on the [UBC Senate website](https://senate.ubc.ca/policies-resources-support-student-success) (senate.ubc.ca/policies-resources-support-student-success).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

As a member of this class, you are expected to fully take part in its learning activities and to complete all course requirements. In coming into your own as an independent and responsible member of the academic community, you are encouraged to seek advice, clarification, and guidance from your instructor. You are welcome to chart your own path of learning, but in doing so you must ensure that you do not submit others' work as your own.

Academic communities depend on their members' honesty and integrity in representing the sources of reasoning, claims, and wordings in their work. If you are found to have misrepresented your work (such as using others' words or ideas without proper attributions), to have submitted others' work as your own, or to have handed in an assignment that had already been submitted for credit in another course, penalties may follow.

If you are unable to meet a deadline or have questions about an assignment, please feel free to seek advice from the instructor.

For clarification and support, please visit the very useful UBC website on [Academic Integrity](#) (learningcommons.ubc.ca/academic-integrity/).

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

UBC is committed to creating an accessible learning environment. Students who seek academic accommodations are required to register with the [Centre for Accessibility](#) (students.ubc.ca/about-student-services/centre-for-accessibility) and are strongly encouraged to notify the instructor as early as possible.

ILLNESS AND ABSENCE

If you experience medical, emotional, or personal problems that affect your attendance or academic performance, please reach out to the Graduate Advisor of your program. If you are planning to be absent from a class, please advise the instructor in advance.

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