

**SCHOOL OF HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS**

**History Programme
HIST 337: Wild China, People's China:
Environment and Society in Chinese History**

TRIMESTER 1 2010
1 March to 4 July 2010

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1. Trimester dates

Teaching dates: 1 March 2010 to 4 June 2010
Mid-trimester break: 5 April to 18 April 2010
Study week: 7 June to 11 June 2010
Examination/Assessment period: 11 June to 4 July 2010

Withdrawal dates

Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at
<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

2. Course coordinator and contact details

Dr Pauline Keating
Old Kirk 418
Phone: 463-6760
email: pauline.keating@vuw.ac.nz
web page: <http://www.vuw.ac.nz/history/staff/pauline.aspx>

Office Hours:

Times when I will be available for student consultation are posted on my office door. If you need to see me outside these times, email me to make an appointment.

3. Class times and locations

Lectures: Tuesdays, 10 – 10.50 p.m., MY LT101

Seminars: Tuesdays, 4.10 to 6 p.m., OK406
 Thursdays, 12 – 1.50 p.m., OK406
 Fridays, 12 – 1.50 p.m., KK203

You'll be asked to nominate ONE of the seminar times at the first lecture on Tuesday 2nd March. A list of who is in which seminar will be posted on Blackboard and the History noticeboard by Friday 5th March.

Information about any changes to the programme or timetable will be announced in lectures, posted on the History noticeboard, emailed to all students, and announced on the HIST337 Blackboard site.

4. Course delivery

The HIST 337 course is organised around a set of 10 topics (see below). Each week's topic will be introduced at the Tuesday lecture, and it will then be explored in more depth in the seminar that follows the lecture (on either Tuesday afternoon or on Thursday). Students are required to prepare for the weekly seminar by reading the assigned texts and completing a short written task (e.g. written answers to some of the questions on the readings). Seminar preparation instructions are provided in a separate handout, and they will be posted on Blackboard each week.

5. Course content

HIST 337 is an environmental history of China that explores the deep historical roots of China's contemporary environmental crisis. It examines state-led assaults on the environment over 2000 years, and particularly during the last three centuries (from the 1700s). It also focuses on environmental conservation efforts undertaken by both state officials and local communities. It draws attention to instances of state-society cooperation for environmental protection and conservation whenever and wherever such cooperation occurred.

Part A:

The first half of the course is organised chronologically, and tracks the history of environmental degradation and conservation in China through five historical periods:

1. Ancient China (pre-221 B.C.)
2. The imperial period, from 221 BC to the 1700s
3. The 19th century
4. Republican China, 1911 – 1949
5. The People's Republic, 1949 - 2010

Part B:

The second part of the course is organised around five themes:

1. population and migrations
2. water and its managers
3. water, floods, drought and famine
4. forests and farmers
5. greening, greenies and democracy in the 1990s and 2000s

6. Learning objectives

By the end of the course, students will:

- ◆ understand the historical dimensions of China's current environmental crisis and the socio-cultural factors that can energise the search for solutions to environmental degradation
- ◆ be sensitive to the complex and fluid state-society dynamic that has pertained in state-led assaults on China's "good earth" through the centuries

HIST 337 will consolidate and build on the skills introduced in history courses at levels one and two. In particular, we expect stage-three History students to be able to

- ◆ research a topic extensively and to weigh the evidence they collect judiciously;
- ◆ to distinguish fact from opinion;
- ◆ to formulate arguments convincingly and concisely, and to present an oral argument lucidly;
- ◆ to come to terms with conflicting or different interpretations; and
- ◆ to use library and on-line resources efficiently and constructively.

History Graduate Attributes

As with all HIST courses, HIST 337's learning objectives contribute to the attainment of specific attributes:

Critical Thinking

- 1: Assess conflicting or different arguments
- 2: Develop understanding of historical events, context and change
- 3: Use appropriate methodologies to evaluate evidence

Creative Thinking

- 1: Synthesise information in a clear, logical and lively way
- 2: Create well-documented interpretations of historical events
- 3: Search for patterns in historical processes over time and space

Communication

- 1: Develop lucid historical arguments through writing and oral discussion
- 2: Use library print and online resources efficiently and constructively
- 3: Strengthen learning through collegial interchange

Leadership

- 1: Pursue and manage independent research
- 2: Develop critical citizenship
- 3: Develop confidence through public speaking
- 4: Strengthen decision-making capabilities

Other

- 1: Understand the development of the historical discipline

7. Expected workload

In accordance with Faculty Guidelines, HIST 337 has been constructed on the assumption that students will devote **13 hours per week** to the course. This includes three hours of formal class work (a one-hour lecture and a two-hour seminar), and **17 hours per week** for lecture and seminar preparation, research and essay-writing.

8. Readings

Essential text (i.e. must be purchased):

HIST 337 Book of Readings 2010

For the first two weeks of the trimester all undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer, while postgraduate textbooks and student notes will be available from the top floor of Vicbooks in the Student Union Building, Kelburn Campus. After week two all undergraduate textbooks will be sold from vicbooks and student notes from the Student Notes Distribution Centre on the ground floor of the Student Union Building.

Customers can order textbooks and student notes online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz. Books can be couriered to customers or they can be picked up from the shop. Customers will be contacted when they are available.

Opening hours are 8.00 am – 6.00 pm, Monday – Friday during term time (closing at 5.00 pm in the holidays). Phone: 463 5515.

Recommended Reading:

A. *Survey Histories of China*

Patricia Ebrey, *China: A cultural, social and political history* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006 [a long history of China (ancient to modern), for beginners]

John King Fairbank, *China: A new history* Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press, 1992 [covers more than 2000 years of Chinese history]

Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, 2nd edition, New York: W. W. Norton, N.Y., 1999 [covers the 1600s – 1990 period]

B. *Environment and Society in China*

Elvin, Mark, *The Retreat of the Elephants: An environmental history of China* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004

He Bochuan [Ho Po-ch'uan], *China on the edge: the crisis of ecology and development*. Translated by Jenny Holdaway ... et al., San Francisco: China Books and Periodicals, 1991

McNeill, J. R., "China's environmental history in world perspective", in *Sediments of Time: Environment and Society in Chinese History*, ed. Mark Elvin and Ts'ui-jung Liu, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997

Pomeranz, K. *The great divergence : Europe, China, and the making of the modern world economy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000

Shapiro, Judith. *Mao's war against nature: Politics and the environment in revolutionary China*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001

At the back of the *HIST 337 Book of Readings* you will find a long list of English language sources on China's environmental history; the list is organised under topic headings.

9. Assessment requirements

The HIST 337 assignments are:

- (i) **TWO essays**, one worth 30% and the other worth 35% of the final grade:
 - Essay 1:** (2000 – 2500 words) on a topic related to **one period of Chinese history** (that is, one of the periods that we study in Part 1 of the course). See details below.
Deadline: Thursday 1st April at 6 p.m.
 - Essay 2:** (3000 – 3500 words). This essay will be an historical exploration of one of the five **themes** that we study in Part 2 of the course. See pages 7 – 8 below for details. More detailed instructions about this assignment will be distributed before the mid-trimester break.
Deadline: At 6 p.m. one week after your oral presentation of your essay research (each student's deadline will be fixed at the seminars during Week 7)
- (ii) **ONE oral presentation**, worth 10%, at a seminar in Part B of the course
- (iii) **ONE Take-home Test** (1500 – 2000 words), worth 25% of the final grade. The test will posted on Blackboard on Friday 28th May and a hard copy will be distributed at the final lecture on 1st June; the the completed test is to be submitted by 6 p.m. on **Friday 4th June**

10. Assignment Details

Essay 1 (worth 30%):

You are asked to write an environmental history of **ANY ONE** of the following historical periods:

1. Ancient China, from about 1000 BCE to 221 BCE
2. Early Imperial China: 221 BCE to the 14th century
3. Imperial China from the Ming to mid-Qing, 1368 to 1800
4. Late Imperial China: 1800 – 1912
5. Republican China, 1912 – 1949

Examine *changes in the relationship between society and the environment* in your chosen period by describing environmental damage resulting from human activity and any human efforts at environmental protection or reconstruction. Who, in your judgment, did most environmental damage – the state or people in the non-state sector? Your study can be China-wide in scope, or a study of just one region of China.

Your essay should include:

- A *very brief* outline of key events in the period you have chosen to study (you should begin research for this essay by reading a basic narrative of your chosen period provided in a survey history of China. There's a list of "introductory survey histories" at the back of the HIST337 Course Reader)
- "Land and people" details for the period (i.e. population data, land use....)
- *Inherited* environmental problems
- The *societal* changes that are related to *environmental* changes in the period under study.

Your study of the **societal changes** that are related to **environmental change** (either as **cause** or **effect**) can cover some or several of the following topics (the availability of information will determine which topics you can explore):

- **population growth** and its impact on
 - agriculture:
 - ◇ production for subsistence
 - ◇ production for markets (profits)

- forests: deforestation; desertification
- people movements (migrations)
- frontierlands
- natural resources
- **water** (rivers, lakes, the sea...)
- water management and control
 - ◇ for irrigation
 - ◇ for transport
 - ◇ for power generation
- mega-projects (state-sponsored)
- **economic development**
 - quantitative growth
 - qualitative growth (GDP per capita)
- **“natural” disasters and their consequences**
 - natural disasters
 - man-made disasters
- **Environmental conservation and repair**
 - Who tried to protect and repair the environment?
 - What kinds of environmental reconstruction were attempted?
- **YOUR ESSAY’S CONCLUSION**
 Conclude your essay with an *evaluation* of the interactions between natural and human worlds in China (or a region of China) in the period that you selected to study. To what extent was the Chinese state responsible for environmental damage? How much evidence of environmental protection and/or repair did you find in the period that you studied?

Essay 2 (worth 35%):

You are asked to select and research **ONE** of the following topics:

1. Population and birth control (a Week 7 topic)
2. Population and migrations (a Week 7 topic)
3. Population and agricultural development (a Week 7 topic)
4. The Yellow River’s history (a Week 8 & 9 topic)
5. Water control: dam building (a Week 8 topic)
6. Floods and flood prevention (a Week 9 topic)
7. Water and drought (a Week 9 topic)
8. The ‘Hanification’ of minority areas (a Week 10 topic)
9. “Youth to the villages” movements (a Week 10 topic)
10. Forests: deforestation and afforestation (a Week 10 topic)
11. Poisoned air (a Week 11 topic)
12. The rise of China’s green movement (a Week 11 topic)
13. Environmentalism in action (a Week 11 topic)
14. The “green Olympics” (a Week 11 topic)

If you would like to research and write about a topic that is not in the above list, present your proposal and a reading list during the mid-trimester break, or by 20th April at the latest.

Note:

- ✧ Your *starting point* for Essay 2 is a **contemporary** environmental issue – that is, either an *environmental problem* or a *conservation initiative in the post-1949 period*.
- ✧ You are expected include in your readings some contemporary **media reports** related to the issue you have chosen to study; aim to collect up-to-date information on your topic.
- ✧ After describing your topic and its contemporary relevance, you will then explore the **historical roots** and **development** of that problem or initiative.

After you submit Essay 1, you will be given a handout that lists what to look for when researching your chosen Essay 2 topic; the handout also gives advice about key readings.

Oral presentation (worth 10%)

You will be asked to make a 15-minute presentation of your research for Essay 2 during the week in which we are studying the broad theme that is related to your essay. If, for example, you are writing your essay on water shortages and drought in China (topic 6), you will make your presentation at the Week 9 seminar). You should hope to get valuable feedback on your oral presentation – feedback that you can use to improve your essay.

Take-home test (worth 25%)

You will be expected in your test answers to demonstrate an understanding of the *historical dimensions* of China's current environmental crisis. You will be given the test instructions a week before the submission deadline.

The best **preparation for the test** is attendance at all 12 of the HIST337 lectures, careful reading of each week's prescribed seminar texts, active participation in seminars, and thorough research for each of your two essays.

11. Penalties

Students will be penalized for late submission of essays—a deduction of:

5% for the first day late and,

2% thereafter for a **maximum of 8 days** (including weekend days);

After 8 days, work can be accepted for mandatory course requirements but will not be marked. Penalties may be waived if there are valid grounds, e.g. illness (presentation of a medical certificate will be necessary) or similar other unexpected emergencies. In such cases prior information will be necessary. It is in your interests to contact the course coordinator as soon as a potential problem emerges – not just before a deadline. Obtain an extension form from the History Programme Administrator (OK405) and agree to a new due date for the assessment.

12. Mandatory course requirements

For reasons of equity and fairness to all, the assessment requirements for HIST 337 must be rigidly adhered to.

To pass the course each student must:

- a) Submit the written work specified for this course, on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work).

AND

- b) Participate in at least eight (**8**) out of the eleven (11) seminars. Faculty guidelines allow you to miss up to 25% of the seminars (i.e. 3) without penalty. In other words, you are allowed a **MAXIMUM** of 3 weeks "sick leave". Extra absences will result in a student failing

the course, except in cases of serious illness (supported by a medical certificate), or serious personal crisis. THERE IS NO PROVISION IN THIS COURSE FOR MAKE-UPS TO COMPENSATE FOR ADDITIONAL ABSENCES EXCEPT UNDER THOSE CIRCUMSTANCES. You should allow for the possibility of unforeseen illness when using up your quota of permissible absences.

The FINAL DATE on which any written work can be accepted in this course is 5pm, **Friday 11th June**. The provision for late submission with a penalty does not apply beyond this date. Permission to submit work after that date must be sought in writing from the Head of the History Programme, Dr. Glyn Parry, and will only be granted for serious medical reasons (supported by a medical certificate), or in case of serious personal crisis.

13. Class Representative

A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person's name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, the Course Coordinator and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

14. Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

15. General University Policies and Statutes

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* or go to the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>

The AVC(Academic) website also provides information for students in a number of areas including Academic Grievances, Student and Staff conduct, Meeting the needs of students with impairments, and student support/VUWSA student advocates. This website can be accessed at:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcademic/Publications.aspx