

HIST 725 – East Asian History Seminar  
 Spring 2019  
 Thursdays 11-1, Humanities 5255

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 Humanities 4117

Office Hours:  
 Thursdays 1:00-2:00  
 and by appointment

This seminar will emphasize both research and professional development. We start this semester with the recognition that we will spend much of our careers trying to communicate with students (or members of the public) who have only a very general, and often quite skewed, impression of China, Japan, Korea, or East Asia as a whole. In this seminar, we seek to improve our ability to address such impressions in an effective way – in print, in oral presentations, and in the classroom. Participants will work with Professor Thal to determine the combination of activities and assignments that will best serve their needs at this stage in their graduate work.

We will focus on issues of generalization and translation, beginning with a study of two often-misunderstood phenomena from Japan: Shinto and bushido (the Way of the samurai).

Participants in the seminar may then choose and study similarly overgeneralized and/or translated phenomena in their own fields of research. Using students' chosen research topics, we will conduct workshops on communicating research findings in scholarly and public settings, classrooms, and a variety of written, oral, and/or visual media.

### Learning Outcomes

By the end of this class, students should have improved their ability to do some or all of the following:

- research and present, concisely and clearly, the history of a term or translation – with appropriate attention paid to sources and contexts
- outline the fundamentals of current scholarly understanding(s) of *bushido* (the so-called Way of the Samurai), Shinto, and a topic of their choice; clarify how that understanding differs from previous and/or popular views; and explain why those differences are important
- communicate current scholarly insights and their importance to specialist and non-specialist audiences in clear, concise speech and in writing
- contribute productively to a seminar discussion
- lead a productive classroom/seminar discussion
- summarize and reflect on the key points of a discussion
- give and accept constructive feedback
- design a syllabus or class using best practices in pedagogy and assessment (e.g., learning outcomes, backwards design, active learning, direct assessment, team-based activities, etc.)
- design a classroom lecture and/or active learning experience

### Workload and Credit Hours

Students may take this course for 1-3 credits. The credit standard for the course is met by an expectation of at least 45 hours of student engagement with the course's learning activities *for each credit* (1 credit = at least 45 hours; 2 credits = at least 90 hours; 3 credits = at least 135 hours). For non-dissertators, these activities will include group seminar meetings of 115 minutes per week. Other course activities and assignments (reading, research, writing, individual consultations with the instructor, etc.) will vary depending on the number of credits for which a student is enrolled.

Based on your status (pre-dissertator, dissertator, etc.) and the number of credits you are taking the class for, you and I (Professor Thal) will jointly determine your commitments for this class. Below please see a menu of learning outcomes and evidence for assessment. Please make some preliminary choices, then consult me to finalize your responsibilities for this class. Feel free to propose an alternative form of evidence – or even an alternative learning outcome and evidence (in the empty box). We will aim to finalize choices/commitments by no later than February 12<sup>th</sup>.

Your Choices	Learning Outcome	Evidence for Assessment
	Research and present the history of a term or translation	Short paper (2-3 pages) – <i>due 1/31</i> Short oral presentation (5-7 min.) – <i>due 1/31</i>
	Outline understandings of <i>bushido</i> , Shinto, and topic of student's choice // Communicate findings to specialist and non-specialist audiences	Bushido summary (2-3 pages) – <i>due by 2/12</i> Shinto summary (2-3 pages) – <i>due by 4/25</i> Original topic research paper (15-35 pp.) or format of choice – <i>due during finals week (TBD)</i> Original topic oral presentation (10-20 min.) – <i>due 5/2</i>
	Contribute productively to a seminar discussion	Participation in seminar discussion
	Lead a productive discussion / design and facilitate class activities	Leadership of seminar discussion – <i>as determined</i> Trajectory of comments/self-reflections in end-of-class analyses
	Summarize a discussion	Summaries of, including reflections on, guest-led discussions (1-2 pages) – <i>due 3/14 (up to 3: for Murthy, Kim, and Dennis)</i>
	Give and accept constructive feedback	Participation in end-of-class analyses Peer review contributions and responses
	Design a syllabus	Syllabus draft – <i>due 4/23</i> Final syllabus – <i>due during finals week (TBD)</i>

Grades will be determined based on your selected (and approved) learning outcomes and Professor Thal's evaluation of the relevant, agreed-upon evidence of learning.

### Weekly Schedule

The schedule below is subject to change. We will determine discussion leaders for each week on January 31<sup>st</sup>.

January 24 – Introduction and Planning

January 31 – Images of Bushido // Writing Workshop

Karl Friday, "Bushidō or Bull?" *The History Teacher* 27:3 (May 1994), pp. 339-349.

How do people today view samurai? Given current views in the late 2010s, does Karl Friday's critique still apply? Use a variety of sources to explore this question – including oral interviews, magazine articles, films, reviews, newspaper references, etc. Come to class prepared to give a 5-minute oral presentation of your findings, and hand in a bibliography of your sources (Chicago Manual of Style humanities format). Remember to convey a clear, overarching point in your presentation, supported by relevant evidence.

Your research: Identify a misunderstood term or concept that you would like to explore this semester. Write a brief (2-3 page, double-spaced, size 12 font) essay outlining how popular and academic views of this have changed over time. E-mail your essay, with a full bibliography (in Chicago Manual of Style humanities format, bibliography does not count in the page length) to Professor Thal by 9:00 on Thursday morning. We'll use these essays as the basis of a writing workshop in class.

As part of your research, do the following:

- 1) Take a quick survey of current uses/interpretations of this concept. (Try a variety of search engines on the web, twitter and/or facebook, databases of public magazines such as the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, films, newspapers, etc. Think creatively!) Write a paragraph and/or create a table or graph describing your findings.
- 2) Research the first mentions of this word/concept in English, and try to get a sense of changing usage since that time. When and how did it first appear in English dictionaries, and how has its definition changed since? (Consult a variety of dictionaries, Google ngram viewer, databases such as Reader's Guide Retrospective, historical newspapers, etc.)
- 3) Now do the same for scholarly uses, present and past. (Check out the "Articles" search function on the library webpage, the online Bibliography of Asian Studies, WorldCat, Hathi Trust database, etc.)

February 7 – Bushido

Skim: Ryusaku Tsunoda, Wm. Theodore de Bary, and Donald Keene, eds., *Sources of Japanese Tradition* 1 (Columbia University Press, 1958), pp. xiii-xviii (table of

contents) and pp. 384-391 (introduction to and excerpt of Yamaga Sokō's *Shidō*).

Read: John Allen Tucker, "Tokugawa Intellectual History and Prewar Ideology: The Case of Inoue Tetsujirō, Yamaga Sokō, and the Forty-Seven *Rōnin*," in Joshua Fogel, ed., *Crossing the Yellow Sea* (Norwalk: EastBridge, 2007), pp. 241-279.

Oleg Benesch, "Reconsidering Zen, Samurai, and the Martial Arts," *Japan Focus* (September 1, 2016). <https://apjif.org/2016/17/Benesch.html>

Recommended:

Oleg Benesch, *Inventing the Way of the Samurai: Nationalism, Internationalism, and Bushidō in Modern Japan* (Oxford University Press, 2014).

February 12 (*Tuesday*, 11:00-1:00) – Pedagogy: Course and class design  
Readings TBD

February 21 – Periodization and Modernity (Viren Murthy)

Read: Alexander Woodside, "Territorial Order and Collective-Identity Tensions in Confucian Asia: China, Vietnam, Korea," *Daedalus* 127:3 (Summer, 1998), pp. 191-220.

Constantin Fasolt, "Breaking up Time – Escaping from Time: Self-Assertion and Knowledge of the Past," in Chris Lorenz and Berber Bevernage, eds., *Breaking up Time* (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), pp. 7-38.

February 28 – Misconceptions of North Korea (Charles Kim)

Read: Andre Schmid, "Historicizing North Korea: State Socialism, Population Mobility, and Cold War Historiography," *American Historical Review* 123:3 (April 2018): 439-462.

Watch:

Liberty in North Korea (LiNK). "Jangmadang Generation."

<https://www.nkmillennials.com/>

Also, please spend a few minutes browsing the LiNK website: <https://www.libertyinnorthkorea.org/>

"Loyal Citizens of Pyongyang in Seoul."

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ktE\\_3PrJZO0&t=983s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ktE_3PrJZO0&t=983s)

March 7 – Misconceptions in Teaching Chinese History (Joe Dennis)

Readings TBD

March 14 – Performance: Talking about your Research

Come prepared to give a “lightning talk” (2-3 minutes) on your research  
Outline of research paper/project due

## SPRING BREAK

March 28 – Improving a Podcast

Listen to at least two episodes of the “Transasia and the World” podcast  
(<https://transasiapod.history.wisc.edu/>)

Type up and come prepared to discuss:

- 2 things that you think are very effective about the podcast
- 2 ways that you think the podcast could be improved
- Who you think the primary audience is or should be

April 4 – Premodern Shinto

Read: Mark Teeuwen, “What Used to be Called Shinto: the Question of Japan’s Indigenous Religion,” in Karl F. Friday, ed., *Japan Emerging: Premodern History to 1850* (Westview Press, 2012), pp. 66-76.

Mark Teeuwen, “Comparative perspectives on the emergence of *jindō* and Shinto,” *Bulletin of SOAS* 70:2 (2007): 373-402.

Other readings TBD

April 11 – Modern Shinto

Read: Jason Ananda Josephson, *The Invention of Religion in Modern Japan*.

Other readings TBD

April 18 – Shinto and Empire

Readings TBD by S. M. and J. G.

April 25 – Pedagogy: Improving a Syllabus

Email your draft syllabus to Professor Thal ([thal@wisc.edu](mailto:thal@wisc.edu)) by 8:00 Tuesday evening, April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Read all of your peers’ syllabi. For each syllabus, type up a brief note that includes:

- 2 (or more) things that you think are very effective
- 2 (or more) ways that you think the syllabus could be improved
- 2 (or more) questions that you’d like the author or the class to consider

May 2 – Performance: Improving Oral or A/V Presentations

Come prepared to deliver your own presentation on your research and respond to and critique your fellow students’ presentations.