

History 3616F

Grand Imperialism: The Asia-Pacific in the Long 19th Century

Fall 2025

Instructor: **Dr. Carl Young**

Email: **cyoung73@uwo.ca**

Office: **Department of History, Lawson Hall 2225**

Office Hours: **Tuesdays and Wednesdays 1:00 PM-2:00 PM or by appointment**

This is a **draft** outline. Please see the course site on OWL Brightspace for a final version.

Course Description

An investigation of historical developments within the international system in the Asia-Pacific and the region's interactions with the wider world and how the interplay of political, economic, and cultural factors affected the developments in empire, conflict and diplomacy from the late 18th century to 1910.

Prerequisite(s): Registration in third year or above, any module.

Antirequisite(s): The former History 3611E

Course Syllabus

The region that we know as the Asia-Pacific or Pacific Asia encompasses the regions most commonly known as East Asia (modern China, Japan, and Korea) and Southeast Asia (modern Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Myanmar/Burma Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Brunei, East Timor, and the Philippines). The region houses a high proportion of the world's population and has long had a large economic and political importance. At present, the Asia-Pacific is gaining increased economic and political prominence because of its industrial development and large and powerful states.

The aim of this course is to investigate historical developments within the international system in the Asia-Pacific and the region's interactions with the wider world, mainly concentrating on the 19th century. It will begin at the indigenous foundations of the international system in the Asia-Pacific and how outside intervention, mainly from Europe, affected the structure of international relations in the region. The course will look at the interaction of political, economic, and cultural factors in determining the shape of the Asia-Pacific and how these factors affected the developments in empire, conflict and diplomacy from the late 18th century to 1910.

This is a draft outline. 2025-26 version. Please see the course site on OWL Brightspace for a final version.

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

- Provide accurate information about the processes, people, and events behind the developments and processes of the history of international relations in the Asia-Pacific, especially from the 18th century to the present. These will include transitions in the regional systems of international relations, imperialism, and interactions with other regions.
- Describe the importance of regional developments in relation to wider global trends
- Analyze and discuss secondary and primary sources in dealing with a variety of issues and approaches to the history of international relations in the Asia-Pacific
- Synthesise primary and secondary sources to produce a research paper

Methods of Evaluation

Term Paper (approximately 10-15 pages)	30%
Final Exam	30%
2 Article/Document analyses (15% each: 3-6 pages)	30%
Discussion Participation	<u>10%</u>
	100%

The term paper will be a research paper on a topic of your choice in the history of international relations in the Asia-Pacific in the 19th century. Suggested topics will be handed out early in the beginning of the semester. The suggested length of the papers will be approximately 10-15 pages. The paper will be due on **Nov. 12**.

The final exam will take place in the December final exam period. It will be a 3-hour exam composed of a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

The two article analyses will be based around the readings for each class. During the semester, students will choose any **2** of the articles indicated with a “***” on the reading list and write a 4-6 page paper each on the articles. These papers are **due on the day of the relevant seminar in which the particular reading is assigned. This assignment will not normally be accepted late. The last chance to hand in a 1st article analysis, for articles between Sept. 17 and Oct. 22 is Oct. 22. The last chance to hand in a 2nd article analysis, for articles between Oct. 29 and Dec. 3 is Dec. 3.** This assignment is more than merely a summary. The main purpose of the paper is to bring forth the main issues of the article or series of documents, discuss how the author(s) bring forth their point of view, and also analyze the

This is a draft outline. Please see the course site on OWL Brightspace for a final version.

effectiveness of the readings in conveying information and opinion, as well as their contribution to the topic under discussion in the particular seminar.

Discussion is an important part of the course and will be worth 10% of the total mark. The class will be divided into 2 tutorial groups and these will meet on alternate weeks in the last hour of the class. Discussion participation will be marked on a scale of 1 to 5 for each class and at the end of the semester, the marks will be added together to give an overall participation mark.

If you should have any questions pertaining to the structure or content of the course, please do not hesitate to contact me during my office hours, or by phone or e-mail to make an appointment.

Make-up tests, midterms, and exams can only be approved by Academic Advising. Please see https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html for department procedures and requirements involving make-up tests and exams.

Absences and Late Assignments

The term paper will be accepted late. However, there will be a penalty of 2% a day that will be applied for every day the assignments are late, including weekends and holidays. The article analyses will not normally be accepted late, since there is flexibility as to when to hand them in. I normally request both an electronic copy of your assignment, submitted on OWL, and a paper copy submitted to myself in class, during my office hours, or through the History department office (please see below). Penalties stop on receipt of the first version (either electronic or paper) that has been received. However, I will normally only start marking your assignment when I have both versions of your assignment. If you have missed class, try and get notes from another member of the class. The Powerpoints for the lectures will also be posted after they have been presented.

If you do hand in your assignment late, please hand in your paper copy to the wooden drop-off box outside the History Department office at Lawson Hall. The staff will pick up the assignment and stamp it with a date and time and put it in my mailbox. This provides greater security and clarity for the handing in of the assignment. Please avoid shoving the paper under my office door if at all possible, because it could get lost.

In case of family emergency, illness, or other circumstances, penalties can be removed from assignments after approval from academic advising. In these circumstances, please get in contact with your home faculty or college's academic advising office and submit the required forms and documentation. The office will then get in touch with me and give me recommendations for accommodation.

Students have the right to file **one assignment per course per semester** with academic advising without supporting documentation. In this case, normally an extension will be given for 2-3 days, after which lateness penalties will begin.

Some students have access to flexibility in assignment deadlines through Accessible Education. This allows for extensions on assignments for a few days without having to go through academic advising. Please come and consult with me to work out a new assignment deadline if you have this accommodation and you are exercising this option. Flexibility in assignment deadlines does not mean extending assignment submission over weeks or months. This is to avoid stress in the end of the semester with an accumulation of assignments for submission. If more time is needed than a few days, academic advising will need to be consulted.

All written work (regardless of accommodations) must be submitted by the end of classes for winter semester, which is **Dec. 9, 2025**. Any petition for extension beyond this date will require approval from the academic advising office with supporting documentation.

Attendance at the seminar sessions and participating in discussion is an important part of the course. However, if you do miss a seminar class, after advice from academic advising, I will either request a 1-2 page response paper on the readings for the relevant week to make up for your participation mark for that week or I will waive the participation mark for that week. This flexibility should be the exception rather than the rule for your seminar participation mark.

Please consult the following for more in-depth information on department, faculty, and university policies on absences and late submissions.

- Social Science Academic Advising on [Absence & Academic Consideration](#)
- the university's policies on [Academic Consideration for Medical Illness](#) and
- the Department of History's own [Undergraduate Policies and Statements](#))

Course Materials

All readings are available on the course OWL website.

Course Schedule and Readings

(Readings with a ‘**’ are eligible for the article analysis assignments)

Sept. 10--Introduction

Sept. 17—The Setting: Systems of International Relations in the Asia-Pacific in the late 18th Century

Mark Borthwick, *Pacific Century: The Emergence of Modern Pacific Asia* (4th edition), (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2013), p. 13-71

This is a draft outline. Please see the course site on OWL Brightspace for a final version.

** “The Northeast Frontier in Chinese History” in Evelyn S. Rawski, *Early Modern China and Northeast Asia: Cross-Border Perspectives* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 21-61

** David Chandler, *A History of Cambodia* (Fourth Edition), (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2008), p. 35-64

Group 1 meets for discussion

Sept. 24—Varieties of Western Presence in the Asia Pacific in the late 18th century

“Interactions with the Outside World and Adaptation in Southeast Asian Society, 1500-1800” in *The Cambridge History of Southeast Asia, Volume One, Part Two* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 1-57

** “The Shogun’s Loyal Vassals” in Adam Clulow, *The Company and the Shogun: The Dutch Encounter with Tokugawa Japan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), p. 95-131

** “The Business of Conversion” in Liam Matthew Brockey, *Journey to the East: The Jesuit Mission to China, 1579-1724* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), p. 287-327

Group 2 meets for discussion

Oct. 1—Crisis, Imperial Expansion, and Resistance in the Asia-Pacific in the early 19th century

“The English and Dutch in the East Indies” in D.R. SarDesai, *Southeast Asia: Past and Present* (5th edition), (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2003), p. 87-99

Marcus B. Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), p. 257-270

** Mark Clement, “A Cross-Cultural Encounter in Pre-Colonial Burma: Henry Gouger’s Narrative of Commerce and Captivity, 1822–26”, *Journal of Burma Studies*, Volume 17, Number 2 (December 2013), p. 335-371

** Ulbe Bosma, “The Cultivation System (1830-1870) and its Private Entrepreneurs on Colonial Java”, *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 38, No.2 (June 2007), p. 275-291

Group 1 meets for discussion

Oct. 8—China and the Opium Wars

Joanna Waley-Cohen, *The Sextants of Beijing* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1999), p. 129-165

** “The Political Redefinition of Opium Consumption” in Zheng Yangwen, *The Social Life of Opium in China* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 87-100

** “The Taiping Challenge to Empire” in Thomas H. Reilly, *The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom: Rebellion and the Blasphemy of Empire* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004), p. 78-116

Group 2 meets for discussion

Oct. 15—A New Order of International Relations in Japan and Korea

“Endings and Beginnings: From Tokugawa to Meiji, 1787-1873” in Conrad Schirokauer, David Lurie, and Suzanne Gay (eds.), *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization (Second Edition)*, (Thomson Wadsworth, 2006), p. 168-191

Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Korea: From Antiquity to the Present (Third Edition)* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2020), p. 243-251

** “Negotiating Space: The Meaning of Yokohama” in Michael R. Auslin, *Negotiating with Imperialism: The Unequal Treaties and the Culture of Japanese Diplomacy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), p. 34-60

** *Sources of Japanese Tradition* (2nd edition), Vol. II, Part II (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), p. 5-24

Group 1 meets for discussion

Oct. 22—The Consolidation of Western Empires in Southeast Asia in the mid-19th Century

M.C. Ricklefs et al, *A New History of Southeast Asia* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 165-227

** Jacob Ramsey, “Extortion and Exploitation in the Nguyen Campaign against Catholicism in 1830s-1840s Vietnam”, *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 35 (2)(June 2004), p. 311-328

** J.H Walker, “James Brooke and the Bidayuh: Some Ritual Dimensions of Dependency and Resistance in Nineteenth-Century Sarawak”, *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (Feb. 1998), p. 91-115

Group 2 meets for discussion

********Last chance to hand in 1st Article Analysis---Oct. 22********

Oct. 29--Empire: Administrative, Economic, and Cultural Developments in the Late 19th Century—East Asia

“The Modern State” in W.G. Beasley, *The Japanese Experience: A Short History of Japan* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999), p. 210-229

William Cohen, *East Asia at the Centre* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), p. 273-280

** Takii Kazuhiro, “Ito Hirobumi’s European Research: From *Constitution* as Law to *Constitution* as National Structure” in Takii Kazuhiro, *The Meiji Constitution: The Japanese Experience of the West and the Shaping of the Modern State* (Tokyo: International House of Japan, 2007), 49-89

** Lane J. Harris, “Stumbling towards Empire: The Shanghai Local Post Office, the Transnational British Community and Informal Empire in China, 1863-1897”, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Vol. 46, No. 3 (2018), p. 418-445

Group 1 meets for discussion

Nov. 3-9—Fall Reading Week—No class

Nov. 12—Empire: Administrative, Economic, and Cultural Developments in the late 19th Century—Southeast Asia

Norman G. Owen (ed.), *The Emergence of Modern Southeast Asia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005), p. 201-221

** Purnawan Basundoro and Linggar Rama Dian Putra, “Contesting Urban Space between the Dutch and the Sultanate of Yogyakarta in Nineteenth-Century Indonesia”, *Canadian Journal of History* 54 (1-2)(2019), p. 46-83

** Mark Ravinder Frost, “Emporium in Imperio: Nanyang Networks and the Straits Chinese in Singapore, 1819–1914”, *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 36:1 (Feb. 2005), p. 29-66

Group 2 meets for discussion

*******Term Paper due—Nov. 12*******

Nov. 19—Survivors: Thailand, China, Japan, and Korea

M.C. Ricklefs et al, *A New History of Southeast Asia* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 227-237

“The Self-Strengthening Movement” in Jack Gray, *Rebellions and Revolutions: China from the 1800s to 2000* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 101-124

Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Korea: From Antiquity to the Present (Third Edition)* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2020), p. 251-260

** Tongchai Winichakul, “The Quest for Siwilai: A Geographical Discourse of Civilizational Thinking in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth-Century Siam”, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 59, No. 3 (August 2000), p. 528-549

** “Suzerainty, Sovereignty, and Ritual” in Kirk W. Larsen, *Tradition, Treaties, and Trade: Qing Imperialism and Chosŏn Korea, 1850-1910* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University East Asia Center, 2008), p. 164-196

Group 1 meets for discussion

Nov. 26—Japan’s First Imperial Expansion: The Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars and their Consequences, 1894-1910

“The Acquisition of Empire” in James L. McClain, *Japan: A Modern History* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2002), p. 283-315

Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Korea: From Antiquity to the Present (Third Edition)* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2020), p. 257-283

** Petr E. Podalko, “‘Weak ally’ or ‘strong enemy’: Japan in the eyes of Russian diplomats and military agents, 1900-1907”, *Japan Fourm*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (2016), p. 266-281

** Michael C.E. Finch, “Suicide to Assassination: A Comparative Study of the Views of Min Yŏnghwan and An Chunggun on Peace in East Asia and their Responses to the Japanese Protectorate in Korea”, *Acta Koreana*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (Dec. 2012), p. 293-309

Group 2 meets for discussion

Dec. 3—Legacies: Reverberations of 19th century Imperialism in the Asia-Pacific

** Alexis Dudden, “The Vocabulary of Power” in Alexis Dudden, *Japan’s Colonization of Korea: Discourse and Power* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005), p. 45-73

** Stephanie Po-yin Chung, “Chinese Enterprises across Cultures: The Hong Kong Business Experience in the Early Twentieth Century” in Billy K. L. So and Ramon H. Myers (eds.), *The Treaty Port Economy in Modern China: Empirical Studies of Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (Berkeley, CA: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 2011), p. 172-185

** “*Les fidèles Cambodgiens and les Khmèrophiles*” in Penny Edwards, *Cambodge: The Cultivation of a Nation, 1860-1945* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007), p. 64-94

Both tutorial groups will meet together

********Last chance to hand in 2nd article analysis—Dec. 3********

********Final Exam during December examination period********

Additional Statements

Communication policies: E-mail is generally the easiest way to contact me for short questions. I will endeavour to answer within the day, although there may be delays on weekends and holidays in particular. You can also ask short questions during the class lecture breaks. For longer enquiries, please drop by during my office hours at my office. If you are unable to come to my normal office hours, please contact me to set up an alternative appointment, either in person or through Zoom. For general class announcements, I use the “Announcements” feature on OWL, so please check frequently on OWL to keep track of latest class developments.

Use of electronic devices: No electronic devices will be allowed for the final examination. A paper English-second language dictionary will be permitted for the final examination. These dictionaries will be inspected when signing in to the examination.

Use of generative artificial intelligence (AI):

You may use generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, in this course for activities such as researching and refining your ideas, or drafting an outline to organize your thoughts—but not

for generating prose. All writing submitted in this course must be your own. If in doubt, please ask me for clarification and advice.

Please review the Department of History's shared policies and statements for all undergraduate courses at: https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html for important information regarding accessibility options, make-up exams, medical accommodations, health and wellness, academic integrity, plagiarism, and more.