

EAST ASIA UNDER THE SCOPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY

DISTINGUISHED LECTURE BY

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Venture into history on the grand scale and search for a foundational question: how has the history in East Asia - China, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan - been shaped by the environmental impacts? To respond such question, the study of environmental history in East Asia has been guided by three rules of thumb: population, evidence and environmental impact. Scholars have focused on those parts of East Asia where the highest concentrations of population developed, where we have the best evidence, and where a trajectory toward state, empire, and economic transformation seems to suggest the central problems of human condition in the region lie. The current environmental conditions have to be seen as a mushrooming complex of rapid population growth and resource and energy demands, accelerating advances in science and technology, and local/regional and increasingly environmental impacts. The fundamental question facing the East Asian societies is the simple question of sustainability. However, answers to that question won't be simple but must involve researches by multi-disciplines and cultural understandings. Dr. Liu will explore the routes that have been taken in Taiwan, and seek audience suggestions for further development and collaboration between Drexel University and Academia Sinica.

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