

Dr. Yan Gao

Curriculum Vitae

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in History, Carnegie Mellon University, Department of History, Pittsburgh, PA May 2012

M.A. in History, Carnegie Mellon University, Department of History, Pittsburgh, PA May 2004

M.A. in History, Wuhan University, P. R. China June 2003

B.A. in World History, Wuhan University, P. R. China June 2000

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Late imperial and modern Chinese history; China's social and environmental history; civil society/public sphere in historical and contemporary China; global environmental history; history of water and rivers; environmental humanities, digital humanities

Book Manuscript

Yangzi Waters: A Social and Environmental History of the Jiangnan Plain in Late Imperial and Modern China. *Under Contract with E. J. Brill Academic Publishing Company.*

Ongoing project

[“Sustainability in Late Imperial China,”](#) Digital Humanities project at the MPIWG, Berlin

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Germany January 16 – February 15, 2017

Visiting Post-Doctoral Fellow

- The Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society

Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, Germany June 2016 – December 2016

Carson Fellow

- The University of Memphis, Memphis, TN August 2013 – May 2016

Instructor in Asian History

- Saylor Foundation, Washington DC July 2012 – June 2013

Consulting Professor

- Asian University for Women, Chittagong, Bangladesh July 2010 – December 2011

Lecturer in Asian Studies

- Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA August 2009 – May 2010

Instructor

- Carnegie Mellon University, Doha, Qatar August 2008 – May 2009

Graduate TA & Instructor

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Articles:

- Gao, Yan. “The Revolts of the Commons: Resilience and Conflicts in Water Management of the Jiangnan Plain in Late Imperial China,” *Resilience: A Journal of the*

Environmental Humanities, “Special Issue: Global Environmental Histories from Below,” 3 (Winter/Spring/Fall, 2015-2016): 34-70.

- Gao, Yan. “The Retreat of the Horse: The Manchus, Land Reclamation and Local Ecology in the Jiangnan Plain (ca. 1700s – 1850s),” in *Environmental History in East Asia: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, edited by Ts’ui-jung Liu (London and New York: Routledge, 2014). 100-125.
- Gao, Yan. “Unifying the Yangzi Watershed Management in Early Twentieth Century China.” Environment & Society Portal, *Arcadia*. Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society. Submitted.
- Gao, Yan. “Oumei zhongguo huanjingshi yanjiu zongshu” (The Scholarship of China’s Environmental History in Europe and the U. S.), in *Proceedings of World History Summer Graduate Seminar of Peking University* (in Chinese). Submitted.

Book Reviews:

- Gao, Yan. Book Review, David A. Pietz, *The Yellow River: The Problem of Water in Modern China*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015. *Agricultural History*, Vol. 90, No. 1 (Winter 2016): 130-132.
- Gao, Yan. Book Review, Bryan Tilt, *The Struggle for Sustainability in Rural China: Environmental Values and Civil Society*. H-Environment, H-Net Reviews. January, 2011.
- Gao, Yan. Book Review, Vanessa L. Fong and Rachel Murphy, eds., *Chinese Citizenship: Views from the Margins*. London: Routledge, 2006, 194 pp. *China Information*, Vol. XXI, No. 1 (2007): 155-157.

Encyclopedia Entries:

- Gao, Yan. “Population and Environmental Degradation in China (1750-1914)”; “Chinese Agriculture — Land Issues and Population Growth (1750-1914)”; “Human Impacts on the Water Cycle (1750-1914).” *World History Encyclopedia, Era 7: The Age of Revolutions, 1750-1914*. Vol. 14. Edited by James H. Overfield (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2011). 38-40, 40-41, 43-44.
- Gao, Yan. "Natural Resources." *Encyclopedia of Modern China (Vol. 3)*. Edited by David Pong. (Detroit: Charles Scribner’s Sons/Gale, Cengage Learning, 2009). 22-26.

Selected Other Publications:

- Gao, Yan, “[Paradigm Shifts in Environmental Thinking: *Autonomous Nature* by Carolyn Merchant](#),” in *Seeing the Woods: A Blog* by the Rachel Carson Center (Bookshelf series), January 23, 2017 (seeingthewoods.org).
- Gao, Yan, “[‘Watermarks’ on My Path](#),” in *Seeing the Woods: A Blog* by the Rachel Carson Center (Making Tracks series), September 29, 2016 (seeingthewoods.org).
- Gao, Yan, “Water, Land and Society in Hankow,” in *History Happenings*, Department of History, University of Memphis, 11, no. 1 (September 2014): 12-14.

GRANTS & AWARDS

- Visiting Post-Doctoral Fellowship at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin, Germany, January 16 to February 15, 2017
- Carson Writing Fellowship at Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, Germany, June to December, 2016
- Small Grants from the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation and the China and Inner Asia Council (CIAC) of the Association for Asian Studies, July - August 2015
- University of Michigan Asia Library Travel Grant, May 2015
- Carnegie Mellon University: Department of History Goldman Teaching Award, 2010
- Carnegie Mellon University and Qatar Foundation: One-Year Graduate Teaching Assistantship at CMU Qatar Campus, August 2008 – May 2009
- Harvard Yenching Library Travel Grant, July 2008
- Carnegie Mellon University: GuSH Research Fund, March 2010 & August 2006
- Carnegie Mellon University: Ford Motor Company Graduate Student Research Fund, 2006-2007
- Wuhan University: Outstanding M.A. Thesis Award, 2004

SELECTED INVITED TALKS AND CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- Lunch Colloquium, “Yangzi Waters: A Social and Environmental History of the Jiangnan Plain.” Rachel Carson Center, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, Germany, November 2016.
- Panel co-organizer, “State, Rebels, and Nature: War and the Environment from a Chinese Perspective.” Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Society for Environmental History (ASEH), Seattle, March 30 – April 3, 2016.
- Invited Talks: “The State of the Field of China’s Environmental History” and “The Integration of the History of Water Control and Environmental History.” Peking University, P. R. China, July 2015.
- “Cultured Marshes: Perceptions, Possession and Conflicts over the Wetlands in Late Imperial and Modern China – The Jiangnan Plain as a Case Study.” Presented at the

Annual Meeting of the American Society for Environmental History (ASEH), Washington D. C, March 18-21, 2015.

- “The Retreat of the Horse: The Manchus, Land Reclamation and Local Ecology in the Jiangnan Plain (ca. 1700s – 1850s).” Presented at the Annual Meeting of Association for Asian Studies (AAS), Philadelphia, PA, March 27-30, 2014.
- “From Division to Unification: Resurrecting the Water Control System during the Republican Era.” Presented at The Second Biennial Meeting of Association of East Asian Environmental History (AEAHEH), National Dong Hwa University, Taiwan, October 24-26, 2013.
- “An Organic Weapon: Empire, Rebels, and River Ecology in the Mid-Nineteenth Century: A Case Study of Hubei” in the panel “Public Interest and Public Works: Water Control and the State in Tokugawa Japan and Qing China.” Presented at the Annual Meeting of Association for Asian Studies (AAS), San Diego, CA, March 21-24, 2013.
- “A Political Ecology of Horses: The Manchus, Land Reclamations and Local Ecology in the Han River Valley (1700s-1800s).” Presented at The First Biennial Meeting of Association of East Asian Environmental History (AEAHEH), Taiwan Academia Sinica, October 24-26, 2011.
- “Militarizing Water: The Moral Economy in the Jiangnan Plain of Late Nineteenth Century China.” Presented at the Annual Meeting of Association for Asian Studies (AAS), Philadelphia, March 26-28, 2010.
- “Water, Myth, and Resilience of Community: Producing Culture of Disasters in the Jiangnan Plain in Ming and Qing Times.” Presented at The First World Congress of Environmental History, Copenhagen, Denmark, August 4-8, 2009.
- “Boundaries, Conflicts and Consolidation: The “*Yuan*” and “*Yuan Society*” of Central China in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries.” Presented at The Eleventh Annual Harvard East Asian Society (HEAS) Graduate Student Conference, Cambridge, MA, February 29-March 2, 2008.
- “Encroaching on the Marshes: Perception, Possession and Conflicts over the Wetlands in Qing Period – The Jiangnan Plain as a Case Study.” Presented at Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference of Association of Asian Studies (MAR-AAS). Also organized the panel “Ecological Shadow in Chinese History: The State, Society and the Environment” for the conference. New Jersey, October 27-29, 2006.
- “Water Control, Economy and Dilemma of the Commons in the Jiangnan Plain in the Seventeenth and Nineteenth Centuries.” Presented at Workshop “History of Environment, Agriculture, Technology & Science” (WHEATS) in London, Ontario (Canada), October 6-8, 2006.
- “Moral Economy versus Environment: Local Ecological Strategies Seen in 17th – 19th Century Chinese Legal Documents.” Presented at Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies Graduate Student Conference, Princeton University, April 7, 2006.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- *Modern East Asia (3000 level)*, University of Memphis, Spring 2016

- *Chinese Culture and Society Through Films (4000 and 6000 level)*, University of Memphis, Spring 2014, Fall 2015
- *World Civilizations I: To 1500(1000 level)*, University of Memphis, Spring 2014, Fall 2014
- *World Civilizations II: Since 1500(1000 level)*, University of Memphis, Spring 2014, Spring 2015
- *The Environment and World History*, Asian University for Women, Fall 2011
- *Chinese Culture and Society*, Asian University for Women, Spring 2011
- *Modern China*, Asian University for Women, Fall 2010
- *Chinese Culture and Society*, Carnegie Mellon University, Spring 2010, Fall 2009, and Spring 2009
- *Twentieth Century Chinese History through Films(co-instructor)*, Carnegie Mellon University, Spring 2007

Online Courses:

- *Global Environmental History (7000 level)*, University of Memphis, Fall 2013, Fall 2015
- *Modern China (4000 and 6000 level)*, University of Memphis, Fall 2013, Fall 2014, Fall 2015
- *Traditional East Asia (3000 level)*, University of Memphis, Spring 2014, Spring 2015, Spring 2016
- *War and the Environment (4000 level)*, University of Memphis, Fall 2015
- *Rebellion and Revolution: Transforming China in a Global Context (4000 level)*, University of Memphis, Spring 2015
- *World Civilizations I: To 1500(1000 level)*, University of Memphis, Spring 2015, Spring 2016
- *Environmental History*, Saylor Foundation, July-September 2012
- *Modern Northeast Asia*, Saylor Foundation, September 2012-June 2013

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

- H-Water Review Editor, 2016-2018
- Faculty Affiliate, International Studies, University of Memphis, Spring 2016
- Graduate Award Committee Member, Department of History, University of Memphis, 2015-2016
- Online Program Committee Member, Department of History, University of Memphis, 2013-2015

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

- American Historical Association (AHA)
- Association for Asian Studies (AAS)
- Association of East Asian Environmental History (AEAEH)
- American Society for Environmental History (ASEH)

LANGUAGES

Chinese (Native)

English (High Proficiency)

German (Elementary)