

If you are having difficulty viewing this email properly, please click here:

[View Online](#)

Thursday, November 24, 2016

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Printable Version](#) | [Send this to a friend](#)

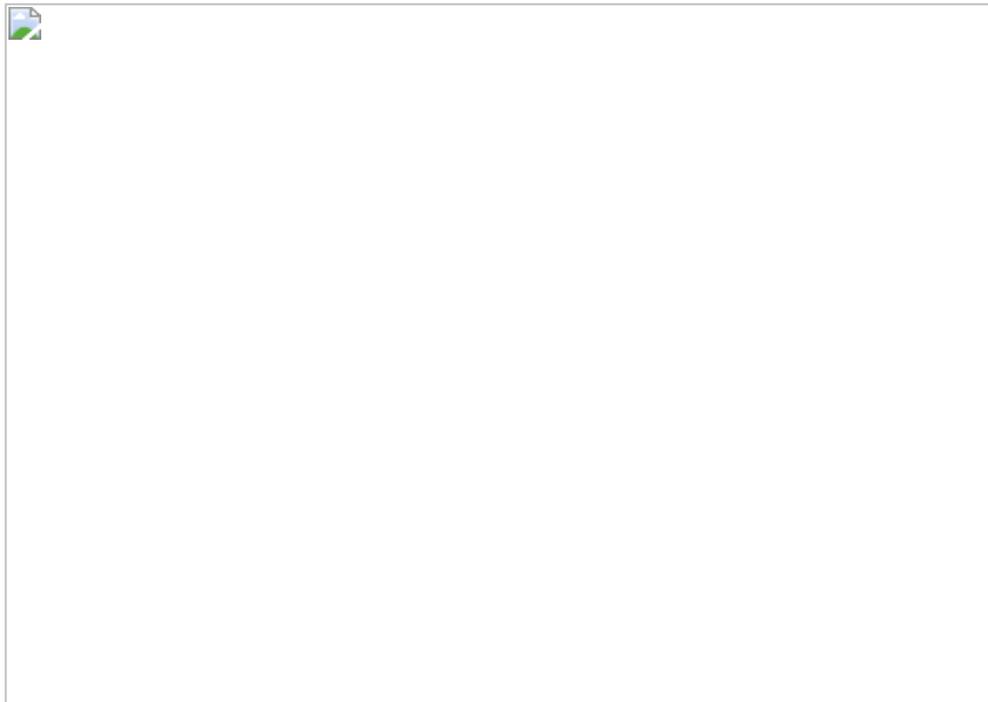
The Update

*A bi-weekly roundup of news in the [Department of Asian Studies](#)
for our Students, Faculty and Staff*



Featured Term 2 ASIA Courses

There's still room in some of our ASIA courses for this term. Take a look at the list below and register by the add/drop deadline on January 17th, 2017.



[ASIA 307 : Korean Language and Writing in Culture and Society](#)

[ASIA 369 : Asian Folklore](#)

[ASIA 382 : Buddhism in China](#)

[ASIA 392 : Classical Persian Literature in English Translation](#)

[ASIA 393 : History of Iran from the Sasanians to the Safavids](#)

Want to try a new language instead? Both [CHIN 131](#) and [JAPN 100](#) have available seats as well.

Asian Studies Letterman Jackets are coming back! Order for Spring 2017.

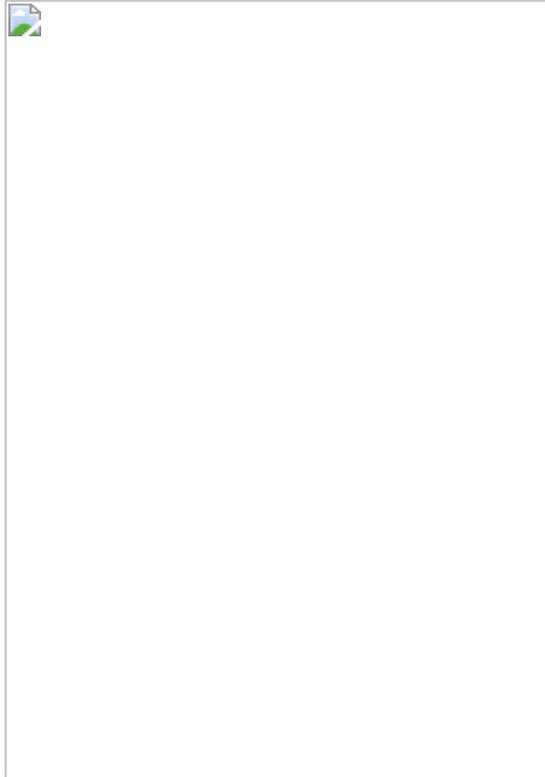
By popular demand, the Department of Asian Studies will be doing another limited run of our Asian Studies Letterman jackets (last ordered in 2014)! As we will only be ordering 50, pre-order a jacket today to make sure that you get one.



[Details >>](#)

Mars over America: The New Wave of Chinese Science Fiction

Professor Mingwei Song (Wellesley University) examines the contemporary new wave of Chinese science fiction. This lecture explores the cutting-edge literary experiments that characterize the new wave, which evoke sensations ranging from the uncanny to the sublime, from the corporeal to the virtual, and from the post-human to the transcendent.



Wednesday, January 11th, 2017

3pm - 5pm

Fairmont Social Lounge, St. John's College, UBC

[Details > >](#)

The Writing Center as a Globalized Pedagogy: A Case Study of an Internationalized University in Japan

With Speaker Tomoyo Okuda (Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Language and Literacy Education) as part of the [Centre for Japanaese Research](#) Lunchtime Lecture Series. This multi-layered case study investigates how the educational philosophy, pedagogical rationale, and concepts of a writing center are interpreted by administrators and enacted in pedagogical practice.



Wednesday, January 11th, 2017

12:30pm - 1:30pm

Asian Centre 604, 1871 West Mall

[Details > >](#)

Colloquium on Religion, Literature and the Arts

Hosted by Dr. [Anne Murphy](#), this colloquium will feature different speakers every other week throughout Term 2. Students who wish to present in March can submit a paper title, 250 word abstract, and contact information to anne.murphy@ubc.ca by Feb 1st, 2017.



Tuesday, January 17th, 2017

[Islamic Law as a Social Contract: Lessons from the Early Hanafi School](#)

With guest speaker Rumea Ahmed (Associate Professor of Islamic Law & Associate Dean, Communications and Innovation, Arts).

12:30pm - 2pm

Room 604, Asian Centre, 1871 West Mall

Tuesday, January 31st, 2017

[Renaissance Magic, the Theatres, and the Word](#)

With Guest Speaker Katherine Sirluck

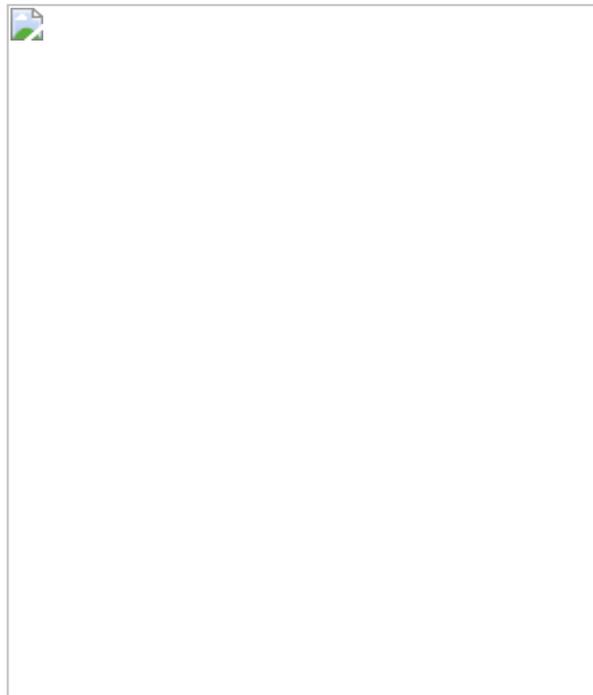
12:30pm - 2pm

Room 604, Asian Centre, 1871 West Mall

[Details > >](#)

Social and Cultural Implications of 'Nature Studies' in Late Choson Korea

A Korean Studies visiting scholar seminar with guest Professor Moonyong Kim (Korea University).



Friday, January 20th, 2016

3pm-6pm

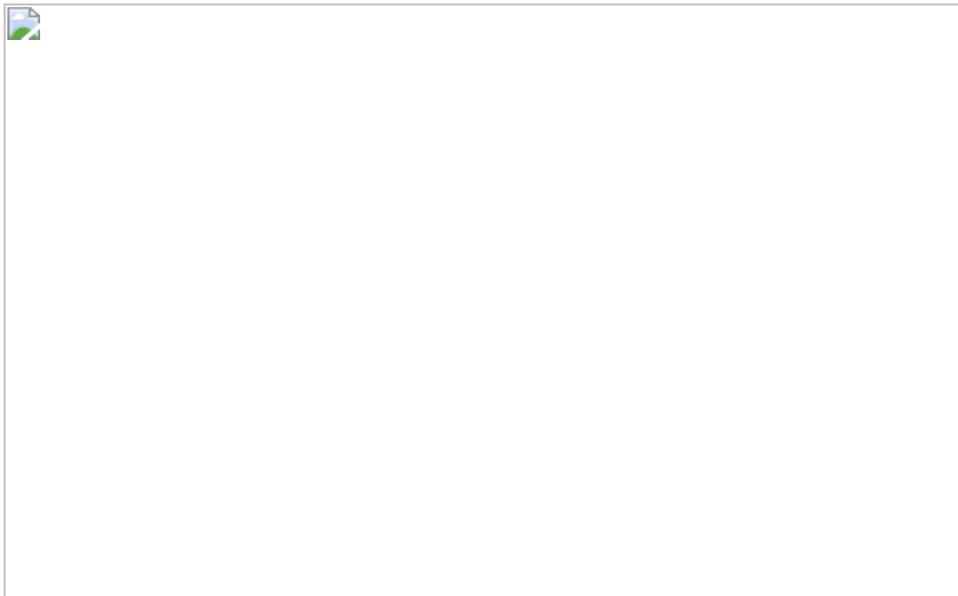
Room 604, Asian Centre, 1871 West Mall

Open to the public. All are welcome.

This seminar will be instructed in Korean.[Details >>](#)

Welcome to Washington Heights: American Towns and Americanization in Occupied Japan

Guest speaker Dr. Jeff Hanes (University of Oregon) examines the places called Lincoln Center, Grant Heights, and Washington Heights in occupied Japan. These were communities of "dependent housing" for American troops and their families. Yet, these were communities fashioned not just as comfortable "America towns" for the American occupiers, as one might imagine, but as the forerunner to a new way of living for the Japanese people who they were occupying.

**Friday, January 20th, 2017**

3pm - 4:30pm

Institute of Asian Research Room 120 (C.K. Choi Building), 1855 West Mall

[Details >>](#)

Okinoshima: A Field Visit Report With Dr. Christina Laffin

From October to November 2016, [Professor Christina Laffin](#) and four graduate students of Japanese literature travelled to the remote islands of Okinoshima in Shimane Prefecture to present an exhibit, workshop, and series of lectures aimed at making local cultural heritage more accessible. This presentation will offer an explanation and visual introduction into our journey through the Dozen Islands of Okinoshima while inviting us to consider the global and national issues Japan is currently facing.



Wednesday, January 25th, 2017

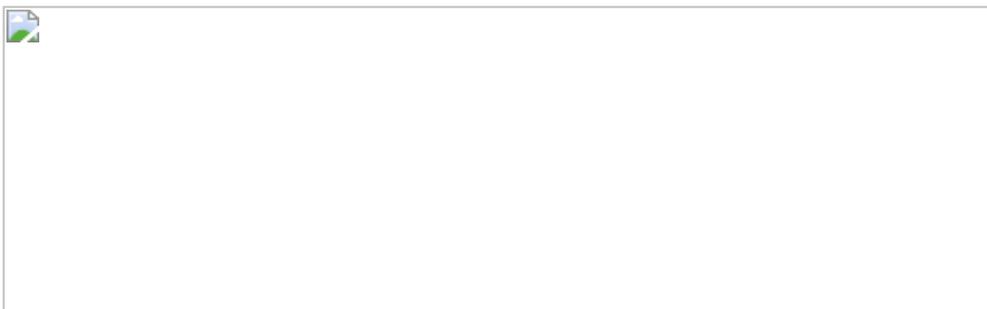
12:20pm–1:30pm

Room 604, Asian Centre, 1871 West Mall

[Details >>](#)

2017 Asian Studies Annual Careers Night

The Department of Asian Studies is pleased to invite you to our Annual Asian Studies Careers Night on Wednesday, February 15th. This is a wonderful opportunity to gain advice and network with people who have found exciting careers after an Asian Studies degree. We will be inviting alumni with diverse experiences – at home and in Asia – to come share their inspiring stories with you.



Wednesday, February 15th, 2017

6:00 PM

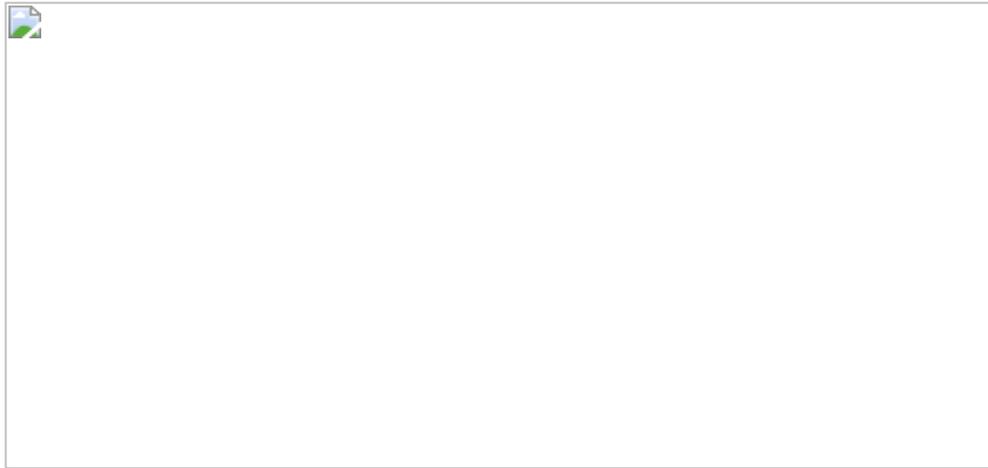
Auditorium, Asian Centre, 1871 West Mall

Free – **Registration required**

[See the event program and our growing list of alumni speakers >>](#)

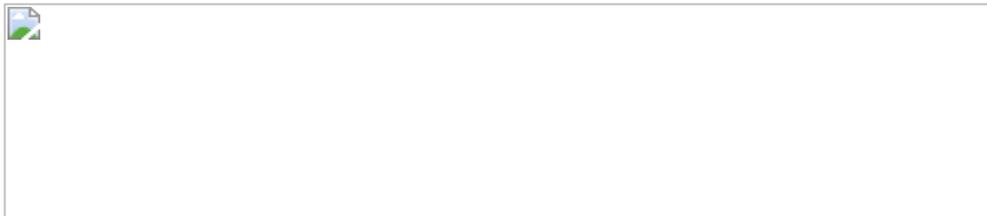
Donate Toiletries to the Downtown Eastside Center

The Asian Studies Department will be collecting toiletries throughout the month of January to donate to the women of the Downtown Eastside Center. Make a positive impact in someone's life by donating simple things like toothbrushes and toothpaste, feminine hygienic products, shampoo & conditioner (travel size preferred), hand cream, and makeup.



You can drop off toiletry donations at the Asian Studies office (room 607 in the Asian Centre).

Student Opportunities



[The Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada \(APF Canada\) is inviting Canadian youth who are interested building Canada's connections to Asia to apply for one of its Asia Connect Student Working Groups. The application deadline for January-May working groups is January 13, 2017.](#)

[Looking for student moderators: Talk to Me About Asia Conference. Application due January 15, 2017](#)

[Make Community Connections! Reading Week Projects for Asian Studies students. Apply online by January 22, 2017.](#)

[UBC's Speech and Linguistics Student Association \(SALSA\) and UBC Language Sciences are pleased to present the brand new *Language Sciences Undergraduate Research Conference \(LSURC\)* taking place February 2 - 3, 2017 at the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre \(IBLC\) Room 261. Doors open at 4:30pm and the conference will run in the evenings from 5:00 - 8:00pm. To register for the conference, fill out the \[LSURC Registration Form\]\(#\) by Wednesday, January 25, 2017.](#)

[The Graduate Students' Association at the University of Toronto's Department for the Study of Religion is dedicating its annual Symposium to the centrality of this tension to the practice of the study of religion in its call for papers. Please submit abstracts of no more than 300 words to \[2017symposium@gmail.com\]\(mailto:2017symposium@gmail.com\) by Monday, January 30th, 2017.](#)

[Call for papers: The March meetings of the Colloquium will be reserved for undergraduate student presentations; please send paper title, 250 word abstract, and contact info. to \[anne.murphy@ubc.ca\]\(mailto:anne.murphy@ubc.ca\) by Wednesday, February 1, 2017.](#)

[Call for Proposals: Second Racialized Student Resistance! Conference. Deadline February 3, 2017](#)

[The deadline for 2017 BC Japanese Speech Contest is Monday, February 6, 2017 at 5pm.](#)

[Anamesa, a graduate students' journal based at New York University, is pleased to send out the new Call for Submissions for our Spring 2017 issue. This issue's theme is Subversion. The submission deadline is February 26, 2017.](#)

[Study Abroad in Japan: Summer Program at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University \(APU\). The Gateway Program offers intensive Japanese language courses from beginner to intermediate](#)

[level. Apply by March 1st, 2017.](#)

[The Asian Conference on Education & International Development 2017 theme is "Educating for Change." Call for Papers deadline is from Sunday, March 26 to Wednesday, March 29 2017](#)

[For September 2017, the Department of Pacific and Asian Studies at the University of Victoria, Canada, welcomes applications for postgraduate students to work on the themes and subjects listed here. Apply soon!](#)

On-Campus Events

Thursday, January 12, 2017

Devil in the Digital: Ambivalent Results in an Object-Based Teaching Course
4pm - 5pm
Room 213, Museum of Anthropology

Friday, January 20th, 2017

[CJR Annual Open House Reception](#)
12:30pm - 1pm
C.K. Choi Building

Thursday, January 26, 2017

Images, Freedom, Global Consciousness
4pm - 5pm
Room 213, Museum of Anthropology

Friday, January 27th, 2017

[Film Screening & Discussion: "The Last Tear," a Documentary About Comfort Women in Asia and Korea](#)
4:30pm - 6pm
Room 120, C.K. Choi Building

Thursday, February 9, 2017

Mending Cracks: Trauma and Art Production
4pm - 5pm
Room 213, Museum of Anthropology

Asian Studies Faculty Spotlight Interview: Peter Nosco

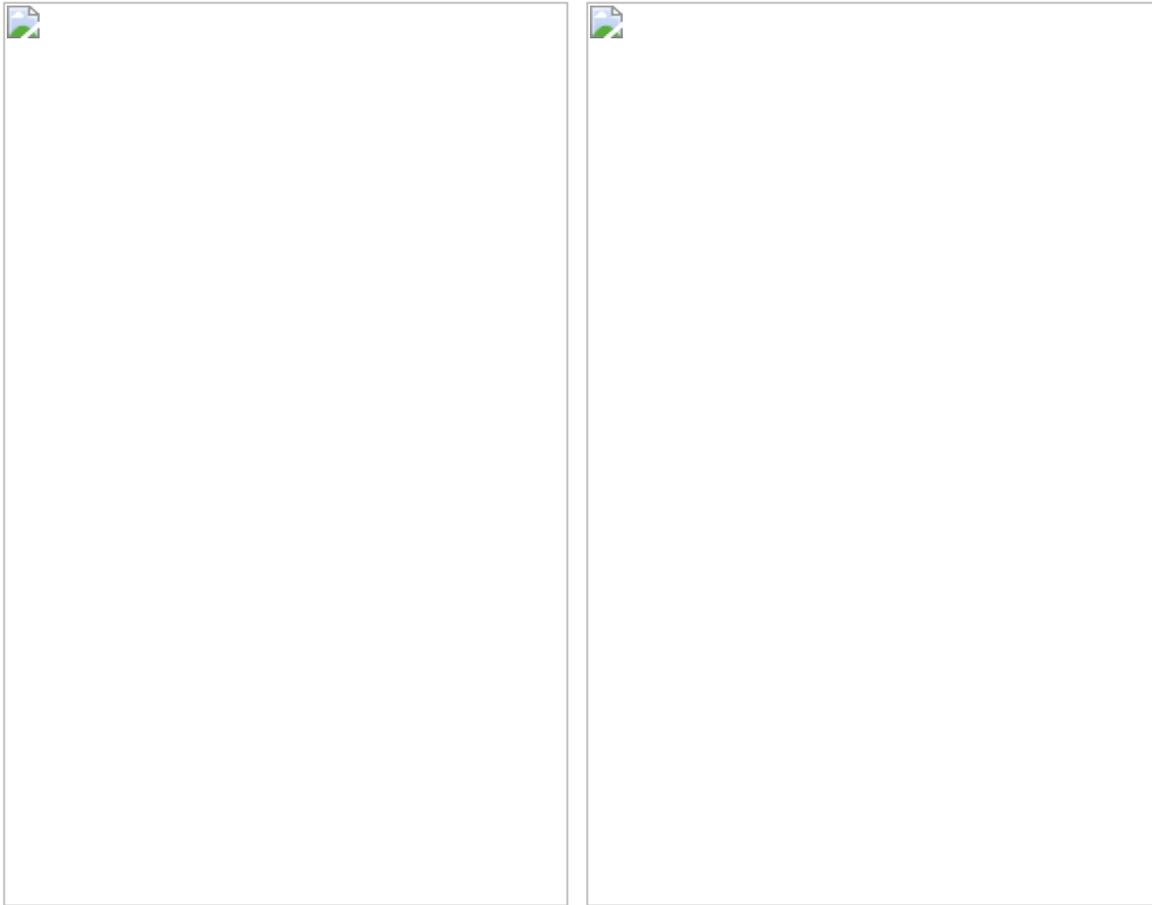
A new series where we ask our instructors about their early lives, career development and proudest accomplishments. Our fifth interview features Dr. [Peter Nosco](#), Professor in Japanese History and Culture.

**Can you explain to a non-expert what you research?**

Basically my work sits at the intersection of the intellectual and social history of Japan about two-to-three hundred years ago. I'm currently wrapping up work on a book that will come out next year on the theme of individuality in Japan from about the 1680s through to the end of the Tokugawa period in the 1860s. One of the more common stereotypes of Japanese people is that they are homogenous and behave collectively rather than individually. This book basically argues the exact opposite, i.e., that there were probably higher levels of individuality in Japan 200 years ago than today.

Why did you start your journey in Asian Studies?

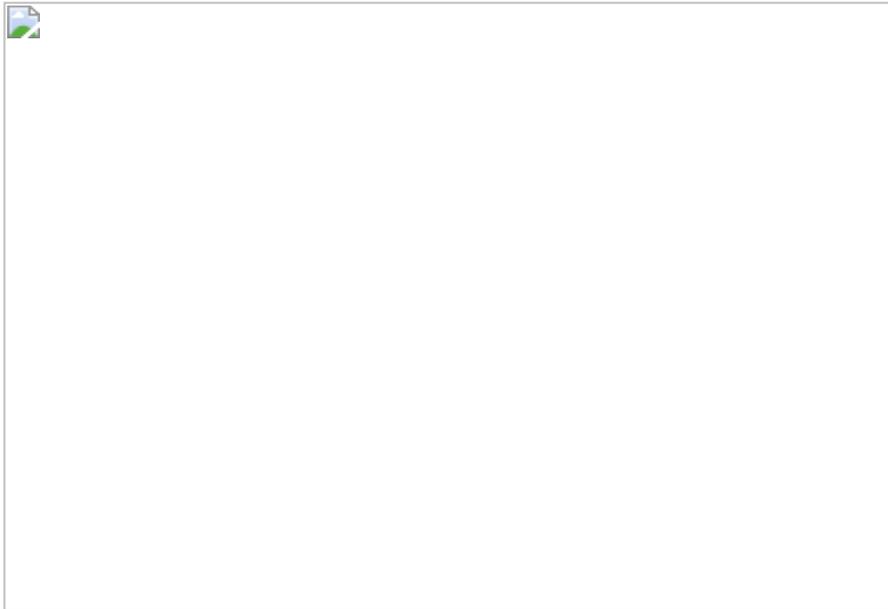
When I was a first-year student at Columbia, my roommate dared me to take up an Asian language. I ruled out Chinese because in those days a U.S. citizen couldn't visit China; I ruled out Korean because in those days there were only six students studying Korean at Columbia, and all were graduate students funded by the CIA. I thought about doing Sanskrit which seemed cool, but the truth is I don't like hot climates so I ruled that out. This just left Japanese by process of elimination. I intended to go to law school because I thought that having a Columbia law degree and knowing Japanese would lead to my making a fortune. I unexpectedly got a scholarship to Cambridge University, where I was forced to learn classical Japanese, Japanese linguistics, traditional literature and history. To my surprise I discovered that I actually loved this study, and I quickly abandoned the study of law, which was really just about money anyway.

**What was the experience for you learning a second language?**

Before I studied Japanese I knew Czech, Slovak, French, Latin. Japanese was by far the most difficult language I ever studied and I liked the challenge very much; I have a gift for languages. On that first day of Japanese class, there were about 22 students in the class at Columbia. On the second day of class, there were 16. 13 were graduate students. For those graduate students, an A- was like a failing grade. So it was without question the most intensely competitive atmosphere I'd ever been in. There were many times when I thought about quitting. I talked to one of my teachers and expressed my intention to quit and they inevitably told me what, in retrospect, I call "the big lie" which is "Stay with it Peter because next semester it gets easier." It never actually got easier but it certainly was satisfying. At the end of my second-year at Columbia, having studied Japanese for two years, I did go to Japan for 8 weeks basically to see the country whose language I was studying. Could I reasonably imagine living there, and things like that. I travelled like a crazy man, from Hokkaido to Kyushu, tip to tip. Rarely stayed in any one place for more than two days. I took hundreds of photographs and when I got home I couldn't tell what was what because I didn't label them properly.

Was there a point in your journey when you struggled or questioned yourself?

My career, if one puts it under a microscope, has been a story of advances and reversals and there have been any number of reversals from which I have in every instance emerged stronger, but there was no way to assume that would happen at the time of the reversal. So have I questioned myself? Many, many times. I've been determined to put one foot in front of the other, pick myself up, dust myself off, and see what happens.

**Is there a project that you are most proud of?**

I'm proud of all my projects; I'm sorry if that sounds vain or anything like that. I'm at a moment in my life where I've had a long career, and I've been reflecting on my career with immense satisfaction because of the extent to which my scholarship has moved the field. There are topics relating to Christianity in Japan, Kokugaku nativism, ways of looking at Confucianism, ways of looking at underground religions, a whole series of areas where the common wisdom now is different from where I started. I was immensely gratified when Pope Francis, a couple years ago, acknowledged the legitimacy of the underground Christians. I can't say that that was a direct result of my scholarship, but Catholic scholarship on the underground Christians did not accept their legitimacy because they were a non-sacramental church. I've long argued that these pockets of believers followed their beliefs with astonishing fidelity in the late 1500s and early 1600s. Pope Francis, without emphasizing me or my scholarship (I have to clarify that,) he resoundingly endorsed my perspective. That was very gratifying. And when my scholarship was translated into Japanese, the book I'm probably best known for, *Remembering Paradise*, it was a controversial book because it wrote about the taboo topics I studied as a doctoral student in Tokyo. When that book was translated to Japanese, it became an important book very quickly. I have to say that the book I'm working on now might have an even greater impact.

In class we study about events that shape Asia. Have you witnessed any such event firsthand?

I witnessed the student demonstrations in 1969 at Tokyo University, I also participated in them. They were protesting the Vietnam War, the Japan-America security treaty, and the renewal of that treaty.

What change do you hope your work can make in the world?

If people ask me what I teach, I sometimes say that I teach reading and writing. I teach a certain way of close reading, looking at documents, looking at things that people have looked at in some cases for hundreds of years and showing how they can be seen differently. I think, if I have a gift, it's probably that, the ability to look at things that many other people have looked at and go beyond the accepted narrative regarding those matters. I discovered a different way to look at these things, a different way that now many people find compelling and the correct way. That's very gratifying. There's so many things that I'm trying to do. With my students, we talk about thinking critically in university and that's a kind of half-truth. I think if one looks carefully at the kinds of opinions that are expressed in the modern academy, they actually move in a very narrow-minded way. I try to teach my students to look at something that at the start of the day seems completely true and at the end of the day they start to question it, and the day after they realize there are alternative explanations that actually are superior. You teach a student to do that with one thing, now you've given the student the tool to do that with other things. This sounds self-congratulatory but I routinely get e-mails from students that I had ten, twenty, thirty years ago saying that they had just thought of something I had said and

they were thinking about me. When a student I haven't seen for decades says, "You've changed my life a little bit," that's gratifying.



[Read more interviews >>](#)

We Welcome your Submissions

If you have a story that you would like featured in our biweekly update please submit your story [here](#) and it could be featured in the next Update!

Missed an Update?

All past newsletters may be found [here](#).



[Subscribe](#) | [Unsubscribe](#) | [Send this to a friend](#)

asia.ubc.ca

1871 West Mall
#607
Vancouver, British Columbia
Canada
V6T 1Z3