

October 26, 2010

██████████ Search Committee
Department of History

████████████████████
████████████████████

Dear Professor ██████████,

I am writing in regards to the position of Assistant Professor of ██████████ that you advertised through H-Net ██████████. I am a Ph.D. Candidate at the University of ██████████, where I study modern ██████████ history under the direction of ██████████ and ██████████. In the course of my graduate studies, I have also taken minor fields in History of Technology with ██████████ ██████████ and Geography with ██████████. To date, I have written one chapter of my dissertation and begun work on a second. With funding this year from the Department of History and the ██████████ Fellowship in ██████████ Studies, I will complete a draft of the entire project by September of 2011. Allowing time for revisions, I expect to receive my Ph.D. in December of 2011. I believe that my research background as well as my commitment to interactive and engaged teaching make me a strong candidate for the position of assistant professor of ██████████ history at the University of ██████████.

My interests lie in the intersection of mobility, technology and knowledge in the modern world. How have people moved through the world, and how has that affected how they understood the world? How have technologies and technological systems created possibilities for new understandings of ourselves and our societies? In my dissertation, entitled "██████████ ██████████," I study tourism as a technology for place-making in ██████████ under the ██████████. Through the lens of "the interesting" – that which tourist literature described as the ought to be seen and known about a particular place – I examine the geocultural maps that the tourism industry and ██████████ travelers produced to explain how ██████████ related to each other as places within the ██████████ Empire. In the eyes of both the government and travelers, tourism was first and foremost a way to learn about the world outside of one's daily life. By the 1920s, the reliance of travelers on the modern movement infrastructure, such as railroads, steamships and discount ticketing systems, had ritualized itineraries through ██████████ and ██████████. The colonial governments, transportation companies and private citizens published tourist guidebooks in an attempt to direct the sights that tourists saw and shape the meaning that they derived from their experiences. What ensued, however, was not a coherent narrative but a ongoing debate over the boundaries of ██████████ and of the ██████████. I argue that ideology on the ground rarely corresponded to the neat categories and distinctions that historians have drawn. The battle over the ought to be seen in the ██████████ ██████████ brought to light the contradictions, schisms, and incoherency of the imagination of the nation in modern ██████████.

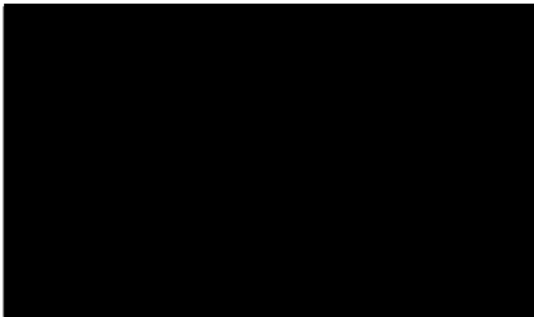
The study of tourism has led me to approach history from a global rather than national perspective. One of the main tasks of national tourism organizations in the twentieth century has been advertising the nation as a sight to be seen. From "See America First" in the United States to "Go to the West" in Republican China to "Discover Japan" in Japan, states deployed tourism as a

technology for inscribing the physical landscape with the history of nation and cultivating nationalist subjectivities. Coming face to face with the construction and dissemination of historical narratives that accompanied the making of the modern nation-state, I believe that history must be taught from a global standpoint in which the nation emerges as a historical rather than a *a priori* category. East Asian history cannot be reduced to the histories of China, Korea and Japan. Rather, we must address the region as a historical concept and the writing of history itself as a social practice. From the Zhou Period *Book of History* to Ienaga Saburô's 1953 *New Japanese History*, humans have been defining themselves as societies through the writing and rewriting of histories. I believe in teaching a history of East Asia that emphasizes the debates that the writing of history encapsulates as well as the events that give rise to such debates.

My course design reflects my commitment to teaching history as a materially and socially embedded practice. My work with Professors [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] prepared me to teach East Asian history through visual and textual primary documents that bring to life the myriad ways in which people in [REDACTED] have constructed societies over thousands of years. For undergraduate courses in modern [REDACTED] history, I would build upon this foundation by exploring the ideas of [REDACTED] that have emerged from the time of the nativists in the eighteenth century to the multicultural empire of the 1930s to [REDACTED] and Ezra Vogel's [REDACTED] in the 1980s. At the graduate level, I am prepared to offer courses in modern [REDACTED] historiography, which would integrate the study of the major works in [REDACTED] history with a critical perspective on the politics of the historiography of [REDACTED] on both sides of the Pacific. I am also interested in offering a graduate seminar that explores competing nationalisms in twentieth-century [REDACTED] and one which examines life in the archipelago from a perspective of mobility and travel. In addition, I am prepared to teach an undergraduate introductory-level course on the history of technology.

I have included my curriculum vitae, two confidential letters of recommendation, and a detailed statement of my current and future research. A third confidential letter of recommendation from Professor [REDACTED] who is currently in [REDACTED], will arrive via e-mail. I would be happy to provide writing samples and teaching evaluations upon request. I can be reached on my cell phone at [REDACTED] or through e-mail at [REDACTED]. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area of the letter.