

**Michael Alan Thornton**

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## ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- 2022- Visiting Assistant Professor, History Department, Northeastern University
- 2018-22 Postdoctoral Associate and Lecturer in History,  
Council on East Asian Studies, Yale University

## EDUCATION

- Ph.D. **Harvard University**, Cambridge, MA  
History, May 2018  
Dissertation: *Settling Sapporo: City and State in the Global Nineteenth Century*  
Andrew Gordon (chair), David Howell, Ian Miller, Daniel Botsman
- Hokkaido University**, Sapporo, Japan  
Fulbright Scholar, 2014-15
- A.M. **Harvard University**  
History, May 2013  
Exam Fields: Modern Japan, Early Modern Japan, Modern China, Urban Theory
- University of Heidelberg**, Germany  
Visiting Student, Fall/Winter 2010-11
- B.A. **Yale University**, New Haven, CT  
History (with distinction), *cum laude*, May 2010

## PUBLICATIONS

- 2022 “A Capitol Orchard: Botanical Networks and the Creation of a Japanese ‘Neo-Europe,’” *American Historical Review*.
- 2022 *Mito and the Politics of Reform in Early-Modern Japan*. Lexington Books.
- 2021 *Mito ishin: kindai Nihon wa kakushite tsukurareta [The Mito Restoration: How Modern Japan Was Built]*. Tokyo: PHP kenkyūjo.

## **Under Contract**

*A People's Guide to Tokyo*. Coauthored with Daniel Botsman, Sabine Frühstück, Yoshida Nobuyuki, and Sakurai Ryōju. University of California Press.

## **Manuscripts in Preparation**

*Settling Sapporo: City and State on Japan's Northern Frontier*

## **Book Reviews**

- 2020            *Constructing Empire: The Japanese in Changchun, 1905–45* (University of British Columbia Press) by Bill Sewell. Reviewed for the *Journal of Asian Studies*
- 2020            *In Search of Our Frontier: Japanese America and Settler Colonialism in Japan's Borderless Empire* (University of California Press) by Eiichiro Azuma. Reviewed for H-Net Diplo.

## **Web-based Publications**

- 2016            “Cultural Nationalism and the Making of Modern Japan,” in *Byzantine Empire to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century in World History*, edited by Celeste Chamberland, Gale, *Gale Researcher*.
- 2016            “Urban Growth in the Age of Industrialization,” with Brian Ladd. In *Byzantine Empire to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century in World History*, edited by Celeste Chamberland, Gale, *Gale Researcher*.
- 2016            “Living Conditions in Industrial Cities,” with Brian Ladd. In *Byzantine Empire to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century in World History*, edited by Celeste Chamberland, Gale, *Gale Researcher*.

## **Translations**

- 2016            Iwasaki Yoshinori, “The Book Collection of a Literati Daimyo,” *Copper in the Early-Modern Sino-Japanese Trade*, ed. Keiko Nagase-Reimer (Leiden: Brill).
- 2016            Matsuura Akira, “The Trade in Dried Marine Products from Nagasaki to China During the Edo Period,” *Copper in the Early-Modern Sino-Japanese Trade*.
- 2016            Matsuura Akira, “The Import of Chinese Sugar in the Nagasaki Junk Trade and Its Impact,” *Copper in the Early-Modern Sino-Japanese Trade*.

## **AWARDS, HONORS, AND FELLOWSHIPS**

- 2018-19 Reischauer Institute Postdoctoral Fellowship, Harvard University (declined)
- 2016 Second Prize, European Association for Urban Historians Student Prize
- 2016 Weatherhead Center for International Affairs Dissertation Writing Fellowship, Harvard University
- 2016 Asia Center Summer Research Grant, Harvard University
- 2016 Reischauer Institute Summer Research Grant, Harvard University
- 2015 Reischauer Institute Dissertation Research Grant, Harvard University
- 2014-15 Fulbright Grant (Japan)
- 2014 Frederick Sheldon Travelling Fellowship, Harvard University
- 2014 Certificate of Distinction in Teaching, Harvard University
- 2013 Reischauer Institute Summer Research Grant, Harvard University
- 2013 Certificate of Distinction in Teaching, Harvard University
- 2012-13 Whipple V.N. Jones Graduate Fellow, Harvard University
- 2012 GSAS Summer Language Study Tuition Waiver (Chinese), Harvard University
- 2010 Williams Prize, Outstanding Paper in an East Asian Subject, Yale University

## INVITED TALKS

- 2021 Panel on Mito history, GLOBIS, Tokyo, 9 April 2021. (Virtual seminar)
- 2020 Lecture on *Mito ishin*, Mito/Tokyo, 24 October 2020. (Virtual seminar)
- 2019 “Meiji Ishin no kiten to natta Mito-han rīdā no ketsudan to eikyōryoku” [Leadership in Mito Domain: Origins of the Meiji Restoration], GLOBIS Tokyo, 11 September, and Mito History Project, Mito, 13 September
- 2019 “Mitogaku kara hajimaru Meiji Ishin: Aizawa Seishisai no eikyōryoku” [Mitogaku and the Origins of the Meiji Restoration: The Influence of Aizawa Seishisai], GLOBIS Tokyo, 8 May, and Mito History Project, Mito, 10 May
- 2018 “Ishin no genryū ‘Mitogaku’ kara manabu” [Learning from the Mito School, origin of the Meiji Restoration; in Japanese], GLOBIS Tokyo, 23 October

- 2018      Amerika no kenkyū genba kara mita Mito to Meiji Ishin” [Mito and the Meiji Restoration as Seen from the U.S. Academy; in Japanese], Ibaraki Prefecture Meiji Restoration 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference, 22 October
- 2015      “Burari, Bakumatsu Ishin no Satsueki shūhen” [Wandering around Sapporo Station in the 1850s and 60s], with Professor Tanimoto Akihisa, (Hokkaido University), local history talk, Kinokuniya Bookshop, Sapporo, 14 February.

### **CONFERENCE PAPERS AND CAMPUS TALKS**

- 2022      “Indigeneity and Settler Colonialism in Modern Sapporo,” Association for Asian Studies, 25 March
- 2022      “Mapping Sapporo: Past and Future in Plans for a Colonial Capital, 1869-1893,” Global Urban History Project Mentorship Program, 28 January
- 2020      “Indigeneity and Settler Colonialism in Nineteenth-Century Sapporo,” Urban History Association, October [Paper accepted; conference cancelled]
- 2020      Discussant, “Japan from its Peripheries,” Durham University, 9 October
- 2019      “Sapporo, Otaru, and Japanese Colonization in Nineteenth-Century Hokkaido,” Global Urban History Project Conference, Leicester, 10-12 July
- 2019      “Justice in Japan’s Northern Borderlands: Ethnicity and Empire in Nineteenth-Century Hokkaido and Sakhalin,” International History of East Asia Workshop, Oxford University, 29 April
- 2019      “Sapporo and Transnational Colonial City Planning in the Japanese Empire,” Association for Asian Studies, Denver, 21-24 March
- 2018      “A Capitol Orchard: Settler Colonialism and Botanical Networks in Nineteenth-Century Hokkaido,” Yale University, 4 October
- 2018      Discussant, The Wood Age in Asia, Yale University, 21-23 September
- 2018      “A Capitol Orchard: Botanical Networks and the Colonization of Sapporo,” Association for Asian Studies, Washington, D.C., 22-25 March
- 2017      “Scholars, Soldiers, and Spies: The Purposes of Censorship in Occupied Japan,” German Historical Institute, Nuremberg, 29-30 September
- 2017      “Sapporo and the Urban Colonization of Hokkaido,” Association for Asian Studies, Toronto, 15-18 March.

- 2016 “Temporary Residence and Urban Society in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Sapporo,” Urban History Association, Chicago, 13-16 October.
- 2016 “Settling Sapporo: Transience and Identity in Japan’s First Colonial Capital,” European Association of Urban History, Helsinki, 24-27 August.
- 2016 “Planning Sapporo: A Transnational Approach to Japanese Urban History”, Urban History Group Conference, University of Cambridge, 31 March-1 April.
- 2016 “Planning Sapporo: City and State in Nineteenth-century Ezochi/Hokkaido,” Modern Japan History Workshop, Waseda University, 13 January.
- 2015 Facilitator, Reischauer-Keio Workshop on the ‘Constitution’ of Postwar Japan, Keio University, 9, 16-18 December.
- 2014 “A Capitol Orchard: Botanical Networks and the Production of Urban Space in Meiji Sapporo,” UC Berkeley Center for Japanese Studies Graduate Conference *Ecology x Space*, 2-3 May.

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

### **Yale University**

Instructor, “Tokyo” (First-Year Seminar, Spring 2022)

Instructor, Independent Study, Topics in Japanese History (Fall 2019)

Instructor, “The City in Modern East Asia” (History Junior Seminar, Spring 2019)

### **Harvard University**

Departmental Writing Fellow (2016-17)

Administrative Tutor, “History Department Sophomore Tutorial” (Spring 2017)  
Coordinated and oversaw five faculty, ten tutors, and 60 students.

Teaching Fellow, “Japan in Asia and the World,” (Spring 2014, 2017)

Senior Thesis Tutor, East Asian Studies (2013-14; 2016-17)

History Department Undergraduate Advisor (2013-14, 2016-17)

Teaching Fellow, “What Is the History of History?” (Spring 2016)

Teaching Fellow, “Visualizing Modern Japan,” HarvardX MOOC (2016)

Teaching Fellow, “Asia in the Making of the Modern World” (Spring 2014)

Teaching Fellow, “Japan’s Samurai Revolution” (Fall 2013)

## **OTHER RESEARCH EXPERIENCE**

2021-22      Research Consultant, America’s Test Kitchen Podcasts

2016-20      Research Consultant, PBS *Finding Your Roots*

2014-15      Japanese Daily Press Digest Author, Greenmantle LLC

2014          Course Developer, “Visualizing Modern Japan,” HarvardX MOOC, project leads Andrew Gordon, John Dower, and Shigeru Miyagawa

2012-13      Research Assistant for Ian Miller, History Department, Harvard University

## **OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

2021-22      Co-Convener, Work-in-Progress Workshop, Yale Council on East Asian Studies

2021          Manuscript Reviewer, *Pacific Historical Review*

2020          Manuscript Reviewer, *Essays in History*, University of Virginia

2019          External Examiner, Senior Thesis Committee, Marlboro College

2016-18      Book Reviews Editor, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*

2016-17      History Department Renovations Committee, Harvard University

2016          Interpreter (Japanese-English), Harvard Film Archive, November

2013          Interpreter (Japanese-English), Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies, Conference on Japan Disaster Digital Archive, 24-25 January

2012-13      Interpreter (Japanese-English), Harvard Film Archive

## **VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES**

2021-23      Vice President, Telluride Association

- 2016- Board Member, Telluride Association
- 2017 Operations Committee, Pan-Harvard LGBTQ conference: “A Call to Action: Activism, Agency, and Alliances for a Changing Globe,” 24-25 February

## **LANGUAGES**

English (native)  
Modern Japanese (fluent reading/writing/speaking)  
Classical Japanese (fluent reading)  
German (intermediate reading)  
Mandarin Chinese (intermediate reading)

## **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

Association for Asian Studies  
American Historical Association  
Global Urban History Project

## **REFERENCES**

Andrew Gordon  
Lee and Juliet Folger Fund Professor of History  
Department of History  
Harvard University  
Center for Government and International Studies, Room S236  
1730 Cambridge St, Cambridge, MA 02138  
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Robert K. and Dale J. Weary Professor of Japanese History  
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