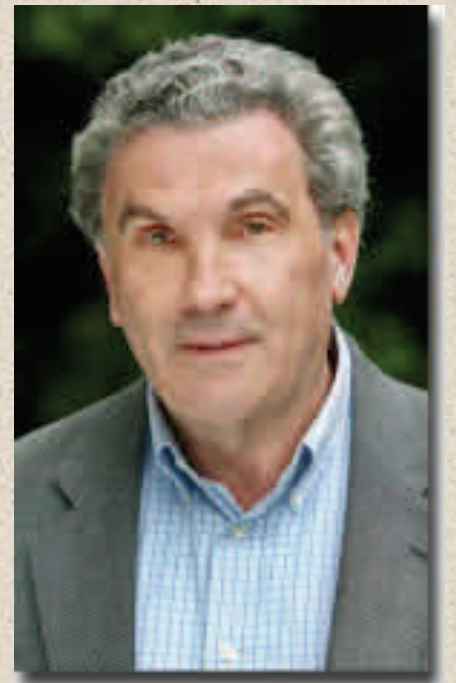




CORNELL EAST ASIA PROGRAM *presents*  
**The 2015 Hu Shih Distinguished Lecture**

**PROFESSOR BENJAMIN ELMAN**

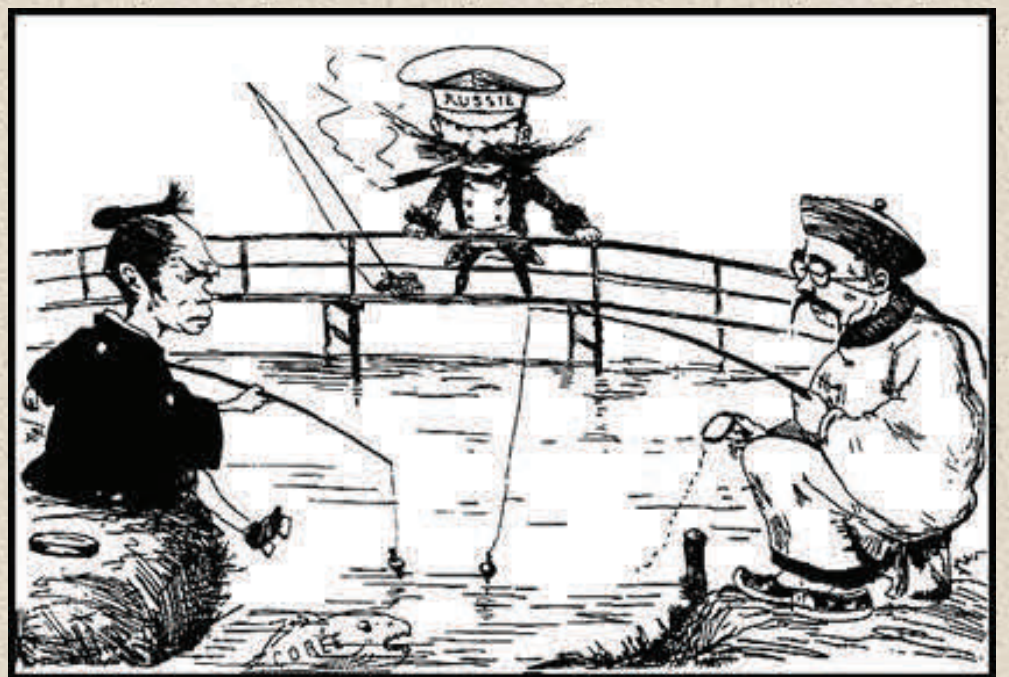
Gordon Wu '58 Professor of Chinese Studies  
East Asian Studies, Princeton University



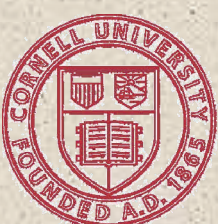
**THE GREAT REVERSAL:  
China, Korea, and Japan in the  
Early Modern World**

**FRIDAY  
APRIL 10, 2015**

**4:30pm - 6:00pm  
401 Physical Sciences  
Building**



The “rise of Japan” and the “fall of China” in the late 19th century are story lines that dominated Sinology and Japanology in the 20th century. In the inaugural Hu Shih Lecture, Benjamin Elman will use Japan’s victory in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 to indicate that in the 21st century we are entering new historical terrain vis-à-vis “modern” China and Japan. Wars and cultural history are inseparable. The competing/complementary narratives constructed by the victors and the losers of wars on the ground and at sea enshroud the past in a thick ideological fog. Seeing through the fog created by the “First” (or was it the “Second”? the “Third”?) Sino-Japanese War in 1894-95 allows us to place Sino-Japanese cultural interactions before 1894 in a new light with less teleology and fewer blind spots. The Meiji “rise of Japan” as event and narrative empowered uniquely “modernist” critiques of the “decadence” of Chinese art, traditional Chinese history, and conveniently provided Chinese revolutionaries with a “failed China” in a post-war East Asian world.



**Cornell University**

**LECTURE IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

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