THE CHINESE IN MODERN JAPAN

1:10-4:25
Kyoto Consortium for Japanese Studies
Fall Semester, 2017-18
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Objectives

It is not often that modern Japan is studied from the perspective of immigration, much less from that of Chinese immigration. Japan today still tends to see itself—and is seen by many foreigners—as a mono-racial, homogeneous country that rejects immigration in both explicit and subtle ways. In fact, immigration has been an enduring feature of modern Japanese history, from the country’s “opening” to the West in the mid-nineteenth century through the Pacific War and the U.S. Occupation to the early twenty-first century. Moreover, Chinese immigration has been central to this neglected dimension of Japanese history, even though the numbers involved are small compared to the Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia and North America. In this course we are going to trace the history of Chinese immigration to Japan from the late Tokugawa period to the present day with three broad objectives. First, we will analyze the experience of Chinese migrants in Japan from the perspectives of politics, economics, society, and culture. We will try to understand how they coped with the challenge of living and working in Japan while contributing to—and in some cases detracting from—the host country’s economic, social, and cultural development. Second, we will seek a “lateral view” on modern Japanese history through the prism of Chinese immigration on such topics as Japan’s encounter with Western modernity in the treaty ports, Japan’s economic and social penetration of colonial Korea, Japan’s economic expansion into colonial Southeast Asia, and the evolution of Japanese views on such issues as Pan-Asianism, racial competition, and migration. Finally, we will also consider how Chinese immigration continues to impact Japanese society—replenishing the shrinking labor force, propping up the retailing and service sectors, and fueling nationalist discontent—in the twenty-first century when the relation between Japan and China enters turbulent, uncharted territory.

This course will appeal to students interested in social and cultural history, Japan-China relations, migration, and ethnicity.
Content & Organization

This course is divided into three parts. Part One deals with the Tokugawa background to modern Chinese immigration to Japan and the Meiji period in which Chinese played active, varied, and in some cases instrumental roles in the treaty ports of Yokohama, Kobe, and Nagasaki. We will place the Chinese migrant community in Japan in the broader context of Chinese migration to Southeast Asia, Australia, Hawaii, and North America in the same period. There will be a half-day fieldtrip to the Kobe Municipal Museum and Nankinmachi Chinatown and a one-day trip to observe the Chinese Yulanpen Festival (for the benefit of ancestral spirits and “orphaned ghosts”) over the third weekend of September.

Part Two deals with the first half of the twentieth century up to the end of the Second World War. The focus of this portion of study will be the changing character of Chinese immigration to Japan in the context of rising nationalism among Chinese and Japanese and increasing conflicts between the two countries. We will pay attention to the transformation of the Chinatowns in Yokohama, Kobe, and Nagasaki into tourist attractions. This component of the course comprises a half-day fieldtrip to Osaka’s Korean Town in Tsuruhashi. The purpose of this trip is to obtain a comparative perspective on the merits and limitations of Chinese performance of identity through festivals and Chinatown.

Part Three covers the late twentieth century and early twenty-first century. We will examine the contradictory dynamics of Chinese ethnic stereotypes in late-twentieth-century Japanese society. Drawing on recent sociological and anthropological studies, we will analyze the latest experience of Chinese immigrants in a host society that both needs them and is wary of not just of their numbers but the growing strength of their home country. Meanwhile, through Chinese immigration we will gain a better perspective on the political, economic, and social dilemmas facing Japan today. There will be a half-day fieldtrip to the Chinese Sunday market in eastern Osaka as an emerging and controversial “Chinatown” in contrast to the traditional three.

Format

This course comprises 3 half-day fieldtrips to the Kobe Municipal Museum & Nankinmachi Chinatown, Osaka Korean Town, and the Chinese market in eastern
Osaka as well as a one-day fieldtrip to the Yulanpen Festival at Manpukuji in Uji, Kyoto. There will also be 3 presentations (with accompanying short essays) by students on groups and background lectures by the course instructor.

## Requirements

Graded assignments include 3 oral presentations (10%X3), 3 short essays (to accompany the oral presentations, 10%X3), and a 4,000-word research paper (40%) on one of the presentation topics (or any topic relevant to the course).

| Unit #1 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| **19th-Century Chinese Migration to Japan & the Global Context** | |
| **Sept 8** | Lecture #1: Explanation of syllabus; The big picture; Reasons for studying the Chinese in Japan. |
| **Sept 15 Fieldwork** | Meeting at JR Sannomiya Station at 1:00 Visit: Kobe Municipal Museum 神戸市立博物館, Kobe Chinese Museum 神戸華僑博物館 & Kobe Nankinmachi 神戸南京町 Read: |
| **Sept 22** | Lecture #2: The Treaty-Port Chinese Read: |
| **Sept 24 (Sun) Fieldwork** | Meeting at JR Kyoto Station Visit: Manpuku-ji 万福寺, Uji, Kyoto [http://www.obakusan.or.jp/gyouji.html](http://www.obakusan.or.jp/gyouji.html) (Chinese Yulanpen Festival) |
| **Sept 29 No class** | Preparation for Presentation #1 Read: |
| | • *Han, Eric. 2014. Expatriate Nationalists and the Politics of Mixed
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Read</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 6</td>
<td>Presentation #1</td>
<td>Discuss the characteristics of the Chinese community in Bakumatsu and Meiji Japan in the context of the global Chinese migration from 1800 to 1910. How did it differ from the movement of Chinese to Southeast Asia, Australia, and the Americas? What factors contributed to the differences?</td>
<td>End of Unit #1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 22</td>
<td>Meeting at JR Osaka Station</td>
<td>Visit: Tsuruhashi Korean Town 鶴橋コリアンターン</td>
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<td>Nov 10</td>
<td>Presentation #2</td>
<td>Discuss the cultural politics of ethnicity/identity as seen in the Yulanpen festival at Manpukuji, Kobe Chinatown, and Tsuruhashi Korean Town. What are the pros and cons of performing ethnicity through</td>
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### Unit #2

Do ethnic enclaves such as Chinatown and Korean Town advance or undermine the interests of immigrant communities?

### End of Unit #2

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### Unit #3

#### The Future of Chinese in Japan

| Nov 17 | Lecture #6: Late 20th Century Chinese Migration to Japan  
Read:  
  [http://positions.dukejournals.org/content/19/1/133.abstract](http://positions.dukejournals.org/content/19/1/133.abstract)  

| Nov 19 (Sun) Fieldwork | Meeting at Kyōbashi Station  
Visit: Osaka Chinese Sunday Market |

| Nov 24 | Lecture #7: 21st Century Development  
Read:  

| Dec 1 No class | Preparation for Presentation #3  
Read:  
  [https://journals.sub.uni-hamburg.de/giga/jcca/article/view/883](https://journals.sub.uni-hamburg.de/giga/jcca/article/view/883)  

| Dec 8 | Presentations #3  
Read:  
Discuss:  
- What is the future of Chinese migration to Japan? Is migrating to Japan a “good” choice? What should be the strategy for migrants, Chinese or other nationals, in 21st-century Japan? What should
Japan do with its immigration policy, accept, reject or what?

| Dec 15 | Hand in 4,000-word essay as email attachment.  
|        | Suggested topic: One of the three groups of questions in the syllabus. |

End of Unit #3

Suggested Further Readings

Unit #1


Dower, John. *Throwing off Asia II.*


Huang, Fu-Ch’ing. 1982. *Chinese Students in Japan in the Late Ch’ing Period.* Tokyo: Center for East Asian Cultural Studies.


Perdue, Peter. *Rise and fall of the Canton system I.*

Unit #2


Unit #3
