

# History 3426: Race and Ethnicity in East Asia

Professor Gina Tam

Few social categories affect our lived experience more than race and ethnicity. The purpose of this class is to apply an historical lens to these categories as they developed in China, Japan, and Korea from 1800 to the present, drawing as well upon the experience of Southeast Asia for comparison. At its core, this class will approach race and ethnicity not as *a priori* concepts, but as historically contingent categories that emerge, evolve, and, most importantly, have the capacity to transform reality. The course will investigate ethnicity and race from multiple perspectives—from the local and regional, to the national and global—as well as how they intersected with other subjectivities, such as gender, class, and national identities. Furthermore, we will pay attention to the ways in which discourses of race and ethnicity circulated regionally between the countries of East Asia, and globally between East Asia and the Euro-American world.

The class is arranged both thematically and chronologically. We begin by examining theories about race and ethnicity in the Asian early modern, paying close attention to the Qing management of their multi-ethnic empire, Tokugawa engagement with the Ainu, and the intersection of identity-formation and travel. Unit two will focus on the role of modern imperialism in the formation of racial categories. Here, we will examine the realities of exclusion and inclusion as they intersected with violence, coercion and collaboration. This unit will also ask us to consider how those who lived between or apart from categories, such as “mixed race” people, challenged neat categorization. Unit three considers the role of the nation in identity formation, outlining how the state, popular culture, and academia forged identity. This unit also examines the ways non-elites negotiated with nation-building projects to shape categories to which they belonged. Unit four addresses the intersection of race and gender, probing how the racialization of womanhood affected the power dynamics among both gender and ethnic groups. The final unit will consider how the historical trajectories we have thus far examined shaped the world we see today, focusing on such themes as post-colonialism, globalization, and identity-construction in the diaspora.

This class is an upper-level colloquium. Throughout the course, you should focus on two goals: (1) critically analyzing class themes in order to consider how they texture our lived experience today; (2) exploring how historians construct historical knowledge and argumentation. This class is reading-intensive, and requires a substantial time commitment to both complete the coursework and grapple with the complex issues at hand.

## **Learning Objectives: Core Capacities: Global Awareness (GA)**

Upon successful completion of this Global Awareness (GA) course, students will have demonstrated the ability to:

1. Analyze major historical events and processes that have given early modern and modern Chinese society its unique cultural character and affected their relations with other regions and peoples of the world;
2. Identify and articulate the perspectives and values of diverse peoples, groups, institutions, and cultures of China, in particular as the related to race and ethnicity;
3. Gather and evaluate information from scholarly sources concerning the perspectives and values of the peoples of early modern and modern East Asia

## **Learning Objectives: Core Capacities: Written Communication (WC)**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- 1.) Write a sustained academic work with appropriate use of evidence and developed reasoning to support an argument
- 2.) Improve their writing and respond to feedback
- 3.) Craft prose that conforms to the conventions of the discipline of history

## Grading:

*Preparation and class discussion (30%):* Punctual attendance at all colloquium meetings; completion of all reading assignments and movie viewings in advance of class; and consistent participation in discussion. You should arrive prepared to succinctly articulate the arguments of each readings, synthesize their themes, and offer your opinions. You should also be prepared to actively engage your classmates, listen to their perspectives, and use them to further your own thinking.

You will also be expected to take notes on the week's readings. We will do this through a "Quote Notes" handout distributed in class. For each reading, you will pull quotes from the texts that you wish to bring up in discussion and bring those notes to class. This handout will be distributed in the first week, and will be due on T-learn the 8 PM before class.

*Two primary-source analyses (20%):* For these 500-word assignments, you will locate one primary historical source that speaks to the history of race and ethnicity in East Asia. The type of primary source is up to you; please feel free to explore photos, movies, television, art, literature, government documents, newspapers, magazines, or oral histories. In paragraph one, you should summarize the following: the author, the main argument, the intended audience, the purpose of the source, and the materiality of the source. In paragraphs 2-3, you should offer your own analysis of the source, paying close attention to how it offers historical insight into themes we have discussed in class.

## Final Project

Your final project for this class will be a "state of the field" essay, a 12-15 page paper that synthesizes the arguments of 5-10 secondary works on a given topic and compose a nuanced argument about the key arguments in the subfield of history, how those arguments have evolved, and how research on that subfield might evolve still. At least one of these secondary works must be a book. You will craft this paper over the course of the semester through several assignments.

*Proposal of topic (1%):* By week 7, you need to have chosen a topic for your state of the field essay and discuss it with me over email or in office hours.

*Three short secondary source summaries (9%):* For this assignment, you will locate three secondary sources you plan to use in your final state of the field essay summarize their main argument in 100 words or less. You will be graded upon the accuracy with which you summarize their argument and the strength of your prose. Rewrites for this assignment are permitted.

*Comparative secondary source paper (10%):* For this 1000-word paper, you will take two secondary sources you plan to use in your state of the field essay and compare their arguments. Your paper should have a thesis that explains their primary disagreements or point of contention. You should then, in a multi-paragraph essay, explain how these two sources came to different conclusions, and the implications of those disagreements for the broader field of race and ethnicity studies in East Asia. Rewrites for this paper are permitted.

## Final paper (30%)

- Rough draft (15%): The Sunday before week 12, you will submit a rough draft of your final paper. It *must* have a clear thesis, clear organization, and clear prose. You are permitted to draw upon work from earlier assignments, but you cannot simply cut-and-paste it.
- Peer review (4%): In class, we will critique the rough drafts of two of your classmates and offer feedback and suggestions. You will submit your feedback in the form of a worksheet distributed in class.
- Final paper (11%): Final papers will be due during finals week.

**Readings Recommended for Purchase:**

John Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (1986)

Adam McKeown, *Melancholy Order* (2008)

Eddie Huang, *Fresh off the Boat* (2013)

**Films (Held on reserve at the library)**

*Hafu* (Directed by Megumi Nishikura and Lara Perez Takagi) (2015)

*Wolf Warrior II* (2016)

**Policies:**

*Attendance:* You are expected to attend every class. Absences or consistent lateness will negatively affect your grade. *Missing or being late for three classes will result in a zero for your attendance grade. Missing or being late for four or more class will result in an automatic fail for the course.*

*Late paper policy:* Papers are due by the time class starts on T-learn. Extensions are granted at my discretion.

*Technology inside and outside the classroom:* Cell phones must be switched off and remain off for the duration of each class. Laptops are permitted for class activities only. Taking notes and accessing readings are appropriate uses; social media, email, or entertainment are not. Inappropriate use of technology will result in being asked to leave class.

If you have any questions, you may email me at [gtam@trinity.edu](mailto:gtam@trinity.edu). Please give me 24 hours to respond.

*Honor code:*

All students are covered by a policy that prohibits dishonesty in academic work. Under the Honor Code, a faculty member will (or a student may) report an alleged violation to the Academic Honor Council. It is the task of the Council to investigate, adjudicate, and assign a punishment within certain guidelines if a violation has been verified. **Students who are under the Honor Code are required to pledge all written work that is submitted for a grade: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received any unauthorized assistance on this work” and their signature. The pledge may be abbreviated 'pledged' with a signature.**

*Students with disabilities:*

If you have a documented disability and will need accommodations in this class, please speak with me privately early in the semester. All discussions will remain confidential. In order to receive accommodations, you must be registered with Disability Services for Students. If you are not already registered with DSS, please contact their office at 999-7411 or [dss@trinity.edu](mailto:dss@trinity.edu).

## Weekly Schedule

**January 15: Introduction to the course**

- Rotem Kowner and Walter Demel, “Modern East Asia and the Rise of Racial Thought: Possible Links, Unique Features, and Unsettled Issues,” in *Race and Racism in Modern East Asia: Western and Eastern Constructions* [T-Learn]
- Stephen Cornell, Douglas Hartmann *Ethnicity and Race: Making Identities in a Changing World* (Chapter 2)

**January 22: Ethnic difference in East Asian colonialism**

- Emma Teng, *Taiwan’s Imagined Geography* (2006) [Introduction, Chapter 4, Chapter 6]
- David L. Howell, “Ainu Ethnicity and the Boundaries of the Early Modern Japanese State,” *Past and Present*

- (1994) [pp. 69-93]
- The Shores of Sorachi River (1902)
- Hokkaido Former Natives Protection Law (1899)
- Yu Yonghe's Small Sea Travels (1697)
- SMALL PERIODIZATION QUIZ Due on T-learn

## UNIT 1: The Nation

### January 29: Race and Nation

- Kai-wing Chow, "Narrating Nation, Race, and National Culture: Imagining the Hanzu Identity in Modern China," in *Constructing Nationhood in Modern East Asia* (1997)
- Zou Rong, "On Revolution" (1903)
- Vladimir Tikhonov, "The Race and Racism Discourses in Modern Korea, 1890s—1910s."
- Ramón Grosfoguel, "Race and Ethnicity or Racialized Ethnicities: Identities within global coloniality" (ONLY 315-328)

### February 5: Racial Science and eugenics

- Jaehwan Hyun, "Racializing Chōsenjin: Science and Biological Speculations in Colonial Korea" (2019)
- Jennifer Robertson, "Blood talks: Eugenic modernity and the creation of new Japanese"
- *The Manual of Home Cuisine* (1939)
- "How can we curb the spread of scientific racism?" <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/cross-check/how-can-we-curb-the-spread-of-scientific-racism/>

**NOTE: Primary source paper 1 due**

## UNIT 2: Migration

### February 12: Chinese belonging in the United States

- "Lum vs. Rice" Full text
- Leslie Bow, "Racial Interstitiality and the Anxieties of the "Partly Colored": Representations of Asians under Jim Crow."
- Jeff Guo, "The real reasons the U.S. became less racist toward Asian Americans," <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/11/29/the-real-reason-americans-stopped-spitting-on-asian-americans-and-started-praising-them/>

### February 19: Global Migration

- Adam McKeown, *Melancholy Order* [Introduction and Part 2] (2008)
- Full Text of the Chinese Exclusion Act
- Kat Chow, "As Chinese Exclusion Act Turns 135, Experts Point To Parallels Today" <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2017/05/05/527091890/the-135-year-bridge-between-the-chinese-exclusion-act-and-a-proposed-travel-ban>

**NOTE: Primary source paper 2 due**

### February 26: Mixed Race

- Emma Teng, *Eurasian: Mixed Identities in the United States, China, and Hong Kong, 1842-1943* [Introduction, Chapters 4, 5, and 6] (2013)

- Lambert, “The Eurasian in Shanghai”
- Movie: *Hafu* (Directed by Megumi Nishikura and Lara Perez Takagi) (2015)

**NOTE: Topic for final paper due**

**March 4: Afro-Asian solidarity**

- W.E.B. Du Bois, *W.E.B. Du Bois on Asia* (2005) [“The Color Line Belts the World”; “List, Japan and China”; “Japan and Ethiopia”; “What Japan Has Done”; “China and Japan”; “The Color of Asia”]
- Yuichiro Onishi, *Transpacific Antiracism: Afro-Asian Solidarity in 20th-Century Black America* (Introduction and Chapter 2) (ON LIBRARY WEBSITE)

## UNIT 3: Empire

**March 18: Race, gender, and colonial law**

- “Mui-tsai in Hong Kong.” Report of the committee appointed by His Excellency the Governor, Sir William Peel. Hong Kong. Mui-tsai Committee (1924).
- Lata Mani, “Contentious Traditions: The Debate on Sati in Colonial India,” *Cultural Critique*. No. 7, *The Nature and Context of Minority Discourse* (1987)
- Edward Said, *Orientalism* (1978) [Introduction]

**NOTE: Short summaries due**

**March 25: Race and Ethnicity in Japan’s Empire**

- Jun Uchida, “A Sentimental Journey: Mapping the Interior Frontier of Japanese Settlers in Colonial Korea,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* (2011) [pp. 706-729]
- Shimada Keizo, “The Adventures of Dankichi.” (1933)
- Yi Kwangsu, *The Heartless* (1917)

**NOTE: Comparative paper due**

**April 1: Race Wars**

- John Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (1986) [147-233]
- Takashi Fujitani, “Right to Kill, Right to Make Live: Koreans as Japanese and Japanese as Americans During World War II,” *Representations* (2007) [pp. 13–39]
- “Know your Enemy, Japan” (1944)

**April 8: Race in Post-war East Asia**

- Lori Watt, *When Empire Comes Home: Repatriation and Reintegration in Postwar Japan* (2009) [Introduction, chapter 3]
- Jessie Kindig, *War for Peace: Race, Empire and the Korean War* (2014) [The entire dissertation is on T-learn, but please only read Introduction and Chapters 2-3]
- “The Philosophy of Occupation” and “Representative Government in Japan” (1945)

**April 15: Classification**

- Thomas S. Mullaney, *Coming to Terms with the Nation: Ethnic Classification in Modern China* (2010) [Benedict Anderson Foreword, Chapters 1, 2, & 3: “Identity Crisis in Post-Imperial China”; “Language as Ethnicity”; “Plausible Communities”] (ON LIBRARY WEBSITE)

- James Leibold, “Surveillance in China’s Xinjiang Region: Ethnic Sorting, Coercion, and Inducement” (2019)

**NOTE** Rough drafts due by Sunday

## **UNIT 4: Race and Ethnicity Today**

### **April 22: The Asian Diaspora today**

- Eddie Huang, *Fresh off the Boat* (2013)
- Allen Chun, “Fuck Chinese-ness”
- “Given Away: Korean Adoptees Share Their Stories”  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/23/opinion/korean-adoptees.html>

**In-class activity—peer review**

**NOTE: Peer review worksheets due before class**

### **April 29: Race and nation today**

- The Great Han (Introduction and Chapter 6)
- Thoms Mullaney, “Critical Han Studies: Introduction and Prolegomenon”
- Wolf Warrior II (On TriniTV)

**NOTE: Final papers due during finals week**