

**GU4818: Asian Mobilities (Spring 2023)**  
Wednesday 2.10pm-4pm in 568 Alfred Lerner Hall

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Office hours: Wednesday 10am-12pm, IAB #933

**Course Goals:** In this course we will explore how Asian mobility since the 18th century has shaped and been shaped by local, regional and global processes such as commerce, capitalism, imperialism, colonialism, liberalism, racism, nationalism, revolution, war, patriarchy and geopolitics, as well as the agency of individual migrants themselves. What caused people to move, sojourn and migrate across and beyond the bounds of Asia? Why did governments seek to encourage, regulate or prevent that movement? What is the difference between free and unfree migration, and who gets to determine that difference? And how have the legacies of these policies shaped our world today? The geographical scope of the course covers East, Southeast and South Asia, plus migrant destinations such as the mainland US, Peru, Australia, New Zealand, Hawai'i and Guam.

**Requirements and Evaluation:**

1. Regular class attendance and active participation in discussion, informed by solid preparation. One unavoidable absence may be excused, but in such cases please contact me beforehand and arrange to submit notes or otherwise respond to the content of the missed class. (25%)
2. **Courseworks postings** each week (**due by 6pm the Tuesday before class**) and **brief presentations** on selected readings. The Courseworks postings should be 100-200 words and will discuss specific aspects of at least two of the readings. Each week one or two students will introduce the texts, formulate questions, and guide the in-class discussion. Introductory presentations should be no longer than five minutes each. (25%)
3. **Two written assignments** to be uploaded via Courseworks. If an extension has not been requested and granted in advance, overdue papers will lose one-half letter grade for each day they are late. (50%)
  - i. An annotated bibliography of 8-10 books or journal articles that are relevant to your final essay (see below). Summarise the main argument, methodology for source base of each entry. If possible draw connections with texts discussed in class so far. **1,000 words max, due Sunday 19th February by 11.59 PM**. (10%)
  - ii. Write a case study focussing on a specific historical migration route, discussing to what extent it is particular and/or representative of broader historical processes. Include functional citations, an annotated bibliography, and a 250-word abstract. **2,000 words max, due Friday 12th May by 11.59 PM**. (40%)

## Readings

All of these readings will be made available on the Courseworks site; you are expected to bring (e-)copies to class to refer to during discussion. Primary sources are highlighted in bold. There is no one course textbook assigned, but for further background reading, please consult the following general surveys:

- Christopher Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2003)
- Patricia Ebrey and Anne Walthall, *Modern East Asia Since 1600: A Cultural, Social and Political History* (Cengage, 3rd Edition, 2013)
- Andre Gunder Frank, *ReORIENT: Global Economy in the Asian Age* (University of California Press, 1998)
- Matt K. Matsuda, *Pacific Worlds: A History of Seas, Peoples, and Cultures* (Cambridge University Press, 2012)
- Mae Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton University Press, 2004)
- Mae M. Ngai, *The Chinese Question: The Gold Rushes and Global Politics* (W.W. Norton, 2022)
- Jürgen Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton University Press, 2014)
- Emily S. Rosenberg, *A World Connecting* (Harvard University Press, 2012)
- Nicholas Thomas, *Islanders: The Pacific in the Age of Empire* (Yale University Press, 2010)

## Academic Integrity Statement

Students are expected to do their own work on all tests and assignments for this class and act in accordance with the Faculty Statement on Academic Integrity and Honor Code established by the students of Columbia College and the School of General Studies. Because any academic integrity violation undermines our intellectual community, students found to have cheated, plagiarized, or committed any other act of academic dishonesty can expect [specify academic sanction] and may be referred to the Dean's Discipline process.

It is students' responsibility to ensure their work maintains the standards expected and should you have any questions or concerns regarding your work, you can:

- Talk with your TA
- Ask the instructor
- Refer to the Columbia University Undergraduate Guide to Academic Integrity.

## Disability Accommodation Statement:

If you have been certified by Disability Services (DS) to receive accommodations, please either bring your accommodation letter from DS to your professor's office hours to confirm your accommodation needs, or ask your liaison in GSAS to consult with your professor. If you believe that you may have a disability that requires accommodation, please contact Disability Services at 212-854-2388 or [disability@columbia.edu](mailto:disability@columbia.edu).

Important: To request and receive an accommodation you must be certified by DS.

## SCHEDULE

### Week 1 (January 18th) Introduction

- Self-introductions and housekeeping
- Goals and structure of this course

### Week 2 (January 25th) Political Economy

Discussant: Paul Kreitman

- James C. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (Yale University Press, 2015): Ch. 5
- Thomas Barfield, "Nomadic Pastoralism in Mongolia & Beyond" in Paula Sabloff (ed.), *Mapping Mongolia: Situating Mongolia in the World from Geologic Time to the Present* (University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archeology, 2011)
- Tony Ballantyne, "Mobility, Empire, Colonisation" in David Cannadine, ed. *Empire, the Sea and Global History: Britain's Maritime World, c.1760-c.1840* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007)
- Tiejun Cheng & Mark Selden, "The Origins and Social Consequences of China's Hukou System," *The China Quarterly* 139 (September 1994)

### Week 3 (February 1st) Mobility and Identity

Discussant: Meghan Morris

- Amy Stanley, "Maidservants' Tales: Narrating Domestic and Global History in Eurasia, 1600–1900," *American Historical Review* (April 2016): 437-460.
- Sujit Sivasundaram, "Ethnicity, Indigeneity, and Migration in the Advent of British Rule to Sri Lanka," *The American Historical Review* 115, no. 2 (2010): 428–52
- Mark Frost, "Emporium in Imperio: Nanyang Networks and the Straits Chinese in Singapore, 1819-1914," *Journal of South East Asian Studies* (2005)
- Magnus Fiskesjö, "Slavery as the commodification of people: Wa 'slaves' and their Chinese 'sisters'" *Focaal—Journal of Global and Historical Anthropology* 59 (2011).

### Week 4 (February 8th) Seclusion?

Discussant: Gabriel Yu

- Engelbert Kaempfer, *The History of Japan* (1727): Appendix
- Thomas Nelson, "Slavery in Medieval Japan," *Monumenta Nipponica* 59 No. 4 (Winter, 2004).
- Robert I. Hellyer, "The Missing Pirate and the Pervasive Smuggler: Regional Agency in Coastal Defence, Trade, and Foreign Relations in Nineteenth-Century Japan," *The International History Review* 27, no. 1 (2005): 1-24.
- Arano Yasunori, "The Entrenchment of the Concept of 'National Seclusion'" in Koichirō Matsuda (ed.), *Japan and the Pacific, 1540-1920* (Routledge, 2006)
- OPTIONAL: Brett L. Walker, "Reappraising the Sakoku Paradigm: the Ezo Trade and the Extension of Tokugawa Political Space into Hokkaido," *Journal of Asian History* 30 No.2 (1996): 169-192.

Week 5 (February 15th) Empire

Discussant: Yuxin Chen

- Sunil Amrith, *Crossing the Bay of Bengal: The Furies of Nature and the Fortunes of Migrants* (Harvard, 2015): Intro, Ch. 4
- Dean Itsuji Saranillio, "Why Asian settler colonialism matters: a thought piece on critiques, debates, and Indigenous difference," *Settler Colonial Studies*, 3:3-4 (2013): 280–294.
- Mariko Iijima, "'Nonwhiteness' in nineteenth-century Hawai'i: sovereignty, white settlers, and Japanese migrants," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* (2020): 1-16.
- Vicente M. Diaz, "Bye Bye Ms. American Pie: The Historical Relations Between Chamorros and Filipinos and the American Dream," *ISLA: A Journal of Micronesian Studies*, 3:1 (Rainy Season, 1995): 147-160.

Week 6 (February 22nd) Indenture (with Idriss Paul-Amand Fofana)

Discussant: Idriss Paul-Amand Fofana

- Edward Melillo, "The First Green Revolution: Debt Peonage and the Making of the Nitrogen Fertilizer Trade, 1840–1930," *American Historical Review*, October 2012
- Adam McKeown, "The Social Life of Chinese Labor" in Eric Tagliacozzo, Wen-chin Chang (eds.), *Chinese Circulations: Capital, Commodities and Networks in Southeast Asia* (Duke University Press, 2011)
- Richard B. Allen, "Slaves, Convicts, Abolitionism and the Global Origins of the Post-Emancipation Indentured Labor System," *Slavery & Abolition*, 35:2 (2014): 328-348.
- Alessandro Stanziani, "Utilitarianism and the question of free labor in Russia and India, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries," *International Journal of Asian Studies* 18 (2021): 153–171.
- OPTIONAL: Daniel V. Botsman, "Freedom without Slavery? 'Coolies,' Prostitutes, and Outcasts in Meiji Japan's 'Emancipation Moment,'" *American Historical Review* (December 2011)

Week 7 (March 1st) Exclusion

Discussant: Brenda Jiang

- Alex Chase-Levenson, *The Yellow Flag: Quarantine and the British Mediterranean World, 1780-1860* (Cambridge University Press, 2020): Intro.
- Marilyn Lake, "The White Man Under Siege: New Histories of Race in the 19th Century and the Advent of White Australia," *History Workshop Journal* 58 No. 1 (Autumn 2004)
- Mae M. Ngai, "Chinese Gold Miners and the 'Chinese Question' in Nineteenth-Century California and Victoria." *The Journal of American History* 101, no. 4 (2015).
- Alison Bashford, "Immigration Restriction: Rethinking Period and Place from Settler Colonies to Postcolonial Nations," *Journal of Global History* 9 (2014).

Week 8 (March 8th) Exit Controls:

Discussant: Zhang Jingkun

- Mitziko Sawada, "Culprits and Gentlemen: Meiji Japan's Restrictions of Emigrants to the United States, 1891-1909," *Pacific Historical Review* 60, no. 3 (August 1991).
- Yukari Takai, "Recrafting Marriage in Meiji Hawai'i, 1885-1913," *Gender & History*, 31 No. 3 (October 2019).
- Kalathmika Natarajan, 'The privilege of the Indian passport (1947–1967): Caste, class, and the afterlives of indenture in Indian diplomacy,' *Modern Asian Studies* (2022): 1–30.
- Richa Shivakoti, Sophie Henderson & Matt Withers, "The migration ban policy cycle: a comparative analysis of restrictions on the emigration of women domestic workers," *Comparative Migration Studies* (2021).

**SPRING RECESS - NO CLASS MARCH 15TH**

Week 9 (March 22nd) Revolutionaries

Discussant: Sahil Baghat

- Tim Harper, *Underground Asia: Global Revolutionaries and the Assault on Asia* (Harvard University Press, 2021): pp.1-97, 617-658 Prelude, Ch. 1-2, Epilogue

Week 10 (March 29th) War

Discussant: Emily Wang

- Sayaka Chatani, "Between 'Rural Youth' and Empire: Social and Emotional Dynamics of Youth Mobilization in the Countryside of Colonial Taiwan under Japan's Total War," *American Historical Review* (April 2017): 2371-398.
- Takuma Melber, "The Labour Recruitment of Local Inhabitants as *Rōmusha* in Japanese-Occupied South East Asia." *International Review of Social History* 61 (2016): 165–85.
- Yuri W. Doolan, "Transpacific Camptowns: Korean Women, US Army Bases, and Military Prostitution in America," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 38 No. 4. (Summer 2019)
- "Prostitution Tourism," *Asian Women's Liberation* 3 (June 1980).

Week 11 (April 5th) READING WEEK - NO CLASS

Week 12 (April 12th) Decolonisation

Discussant: Aoma Caldwell

- Amrith, *Crossing the Bay of Bengal*, Ch.6-7.
- Vazira Fazila-Yacoobali Zamindar, *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories* (Columbia University Press, 2007): Intro, Ch.1, Ch.3
- Tessa Morris-Suzuki, "Guarding the Borders of Japan: Occupation, Korean War and Frontier Controls," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* Vol 9, Issue 8 No. 3 (February 21, 2011)

- OPTIONAL: Anita Anand, William Dalrymple & Kavita Puri *Empire* podcast: “Partition”: <https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/16-partition/id1639561921?i=1000585421114>

### Week 13 (April 19th) Cold War Diasporas

Discussant: Kaitlin Hao

- Taomo Zhou, *Migration in the Time of Revolution: China, Indonesia, and the Cold War* (Cornell University Press, 2019): Intro, 1-2, 5-6 Ch. 9-10.
- Robert Loh and Humphrey Evans, *Escape from Red China* (Kessinger Publishing, 1962): pp.5-14, Chs. 12-13 (pp.295-378).

### Week 14 (April 26th) Conclusion

Discussion: Rebecca Chae Lambert

- Clark L. Gray & Valerie Mueller, “Natural disasters and population mobility in Bangladesh,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 109, No. 16 (17 April 2012): 6000-6005.
- Etienne Piguet, “From ‘Primitive Migration’ to ‘Climate Refugees’: The Curious Fate of the Natural Environment in Migration Studies,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 103, No. 1 (January 2013): 148-162.
- Denise Y. Ho, “Hong Kong, China: The Border as Palimpsest,” *Made in China Journal* 5, No. 3 (Sept-Dec 2020): 94-101.
- Xin Sun, “Politically Correct Masks: Navigating the China–Hong Kong Border During COVID-19,” *Made in China Journal* 5, No. 3 (Sept-Dec 2020): 132-141.
- Sebastian Rotella and Kirsten Berg, “Operation Fox Hunt: How China Exports Repression Using a Network of Spies Hidden in Plain Sight,” *ProPublica* (22 July 2021).

