Anthropology 175S: Ethnographic Approaches to Japan

Winter 2003
Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30-10:45
Room: Fowler A139
Office Hours: Tuesday 12-2

Mariko Tamanoi
Office: Haines 325
Phone: 206-8399
mtamanoi@ucla.edu

Course Description

Japan is perhaps the first “non-Western” society that became a highly industrialized society. This made Japan as a society that the West must maintain extensive communication. Nevertheless, the more is spoken and written about Japan, the more “exoticized” Japan seems to have become. What is interesting is that the Japanese society has taken over this exoticized version of Japan, attempting to set itself apart from the West.

The main objective of this course is twofold. First, we will examine the discourse of Orientalism: why and how the West has exoticized Japan; why and how Japan has exoticized itself; and what the consequences of the production of such discourses have been in the history of the US-Japan relationships. Second, we will try to understand what is behind this exoticized image through our reading of ethnography of Japan.

Course Reading

Book required- available at UCLA Store (any inquiry should be addressed to the store).

John Dower. War Without Mercy.

(A library copy will be placed on 2-hour reserve at the Powell Library.)

Reading Packet- available at PRINTRUN by January 5th, 2002 (Tel: 824-5150, located at the corner of Le Conte and Gayley).

Course Schedule

Week 1:
Business

Topic 1: Orientalism


Pierre Lotti, Madame Chrysantheme (selections).
Week 2:
Topic 2: The legacy of Orientalism: The American View of Japan during the Crisis Period
Video: Know Your Enemy: Japan

Week 3 (and possibly Tuesday of Week 4):
Topic 3: Japan: History and People: Overview

This week, I will give you the lecture that I offered to K-12 teachers in the greater Los Angeles area on "postwar Japan" in the summer of 2002. I combine lecture with film clips. Note that these films, from which I made clips, are NOT available at the media library. If you miss my lecture, you will miss them all. Note also that the mid-term exam covers this lecture as well.

Week 4 (Thursday)
Topic 4: Founding "Mother" of the anthropology of Japan

Week 5
Topic 5: How do the Japanese people present themselves to the West?
Read: Dower, Parts III and IV.
Jared Tylor, "Uniqueness" from his Shadows of the Rising Sun.

Mid-term Exam.

In the second half of the course, we will read mainly the ethnographies of Japan, and cover such topics as family, religion, economy, and the "marginal beings" in the Japanese society.

Week 6:
Read: Gail Lee Bernstein, Haruko's World (excerpts).
Harumi Befu, "Corporate Emphasis and Patterns of Descent in the Japanese Family."
Week 7:

Week 8:
Read: Dorinne Kondo, Crafting Selves (excerpts).
Video: Title to be announced.

Week 9:
Read: Norma Field, In the Realm of a Dying Emperor (excerpts).
Video: Finger-printing.

Week 10:
Review and adjustment.

Requirements
Regular attendance and preparation for the class (reading required books and articles) are taken seriously.

There will be one mid-term in-class exam (that covers the first half of the lecture and reading/visual materials) and one final take-home exam (that covers the entire course materials). While I cannot specify the date of the mid-term exam yet, the final exam is due to the departmental office on 4 p.m. on Thursday of the exam week. **THERE IS NO RE-TAKE OF THE MID-TERM EXAM AS YOU ARE REQUIRED TO ATTEND EVERY CLASS (MEDICAL EMERGENCY IS THE ONLY EXCEPTION WITH A NOTE FROM YOUR DOCTOR).**

Points distribution:
Mid-term--- about 45 to 50%
Final--- about 50 to 55%

Grading
For the sake of fair grading, please refrain from aggressive requests of "re-grading." The reader and I grade your exams on the following two criteria.
1) your ability to understand and digest the course materials; and
2) your ability to express in writing your critical thinking.