Anthropology 175S: Images of and Ethnographies from Japan

Winter 2006
Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:00-9:15
Room: Fowler A139
Office Hours: Tuesdays 11-1

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.

After a brief overview of the modern history of Japan, this course begins with the examination of the Western “images” of Japan, dealing with such concepts as “Orientalism” and “Counter-Orientalism.” The course will also ask what the consequences of the production of such images have been for the history of the US-Japan relationships. Second, the course will read several ethnographies of Japan to understand what is behind the Western images of Japan.

Course Reading

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

John Dower. War Without Mercy.
Dorinne Kondo. Crafting Selves.

(Both textbooks will also be placed at the Powell Library 2-hour reserve.)
Reading Packet- available at COPYMATIC at 925 Westwood Blvd (310-709-3791).

Course Schedule

Part 1: Japan: History and People: Overview

In this introductory section, 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 some of these films, from which I made clips, are NOT available at the media library. If you miss my lecture, you will miss them all.

Part 2: Orientalism: The Western Images of Japan

Pierre Lotti, Madame Chrysanthème (selections).
John Dower, War without Mercy (Preface, Parts I and II).
Ruth Benedict, The Chrysanthemum and the Sword (selections).

Video: Know Your Enemy: Japan

Part 3: Ethnography from Japan

3-1 What is Interpretive Anthropology?

Read: Kondo, Chapter 1
Read also: Clifford Geertz. “Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture.”
3-2 Work and Identity in Japan
   Read: Kondo, Chapters 2 & 3
   Video: Camp Hell or Gung Ho
3-3: Family as Company, Company as Family
   Read: Kondo, Chapters 4, 5 & 6
   Read also: Harumi Befu, “Corporate Emphasis and Patterns of Descent in the Japanese Family.”
   Read also: David W. Plath. “Where the Family of God is the Family: The Role of the Dead in Japanese Households.”
3-4: Multicultural Japan?

Part 4: Conclusion, back to images: How do the Japanese people present themselves to the West?
   Read: Dower, Parts III and IV.
   Video: Things Japanese
   Read also: Harumi Befu. “Symbols of Nationalism and Nihonjinron.”
   Read also: Joseph J. Tobin. “Re-Made in Japan” (excerpts).

Requirements (tentative)
1) Regular attendance: Attendance is taken seriously. Remember that everything happens in class, NOT on the class website. Unreasonable absences will be noted and taken into consideration in the grade.

2) A response paper at the end of Part 1 (one page, single spaced). The question will be given at the end of Part 1.

3) A short in-class quiz at the end of Part 2.

4) An in-class exam at the end of Part 3.

5) Another response paper at the end of Part 4 (one page, single spaced). The question will be given at the end of Part 4.