This seminar explores recent research on the history of imperialism, settlement, migration, resource extraction and trade in the Pacific Ocean from the late eighteenth through the twentieth centuries. The focus is on trans-regional and inter-cultural perspectives and on the evolution and impact of two empires: the United States and Japan. Nineteenth-century topics to be examined will include how European exploration transformed indigenous island societies and natural environments, as well as how European and American desire for products such as whale oil and sea-bird droppings (guano), along with Chinese desire for products such as otter pelts and sandalwood, further altered the relationship between humans and the ocean. The California gold rush will be considered from the perspective of Hong Kong and Southern China. We will also examine Japanese migrations into and across the Pacific, the impact of Japanese imperialism on indigenous societies, and the impact of a growing Japanese diaspora on US-Japan relations. Decades before the bombing of Pearl Harbor, there was talk of war between these two powers—not over Japan’s invasion of China but over the expansionist ambitions of both countries in the Pacific. In the years following World War II, the United States brought former Japanese territories under its control consolidated a new form of empire in the Pacific. Although the readings range widely, we will visit and revisit a few key sites in the history of these two Pacific empires: Okinawa and Hawaii, Taiwan and the Philippines, metropolitan Japan and the west coast of North America.

Through the course of this seminar, I hope our discussions will allow us to think through a few conceptual questions:

- Can we reimagine imperial space as a network of conduits and nodes of power rather than as a unilateral projection of state power?
- What do we gain from understanding empire through the cultural encounters it engenders? Can the reading of empire as a space of cultural encounter be extended beyond the boundaries of individual formal empires?
- Through the encounters of empires and peoples, can we understand the Pacific as a social and political space? If it coheres somehow as one, what are its historical characteristics?
Themes: Theories of empire, historiography of US and Japanese empires.

Readings:
- George Steinmetz, “Return to Empire: The New U.S. Imperialism in Comparative Historical Context”
- Ryuta Itagaki, Satoshi Mizutani and Hideaki Tobe, “Japanese Empire”
- Paul Kramer, “Power and Connection: Imperial Histories of the United States in the World”

**Week 2: New Regional Histories of the Pacific**

Readings
- Nicholas Thomas, “The Age of Empire in the Pacific”
- Ryan Tucker Jones, “The Environment”
- Kaoru Sugihara, “The Economy Since 1800”
- Robert Hellyer, “The West, the East, and the Insular Middle: Trading Systems, Demand, and Labour in the Integration of the Pacific, 1750-1875”

**Week 3: Exploration, Extraction and Trade**
Themes: commodity histories—sea otter pelts, guano, whales, salmon

Readings:
- Gregory Cushman, *Guano and the Opening of the Pacific World*
- Ryan Tucker Jones, “Running into Whales: the History of the North Pacific from Below the Waves”

Optional: David Arnold, *Fishermen’s Frontier*

**Week 4: Conquest and Settlement**
Themes: early modern modes of imperial rule; imperial perceptions of “natives”; racism and conquest.

Readings:
- Stuart Banner, *Possessing the Pacific*, 1-12, 128-194, 260-286. (Introduction, Chs. 4, 5, 8; ebook through Lauinger)
- Jun Uchida, “From Island Nation to Oceanic Empire”
- Kawamura Minato, “Adventures of Dankichi” (ebook through Lauinger, in dropbox)
Optional: Gregory Smits, *Visions of Ryukyu* (Abhi reports)
Brett Walker, *Conquest of Ainu Lands* (Chelsea reports)

**Week 5: Conquest and Settlement 2: Indigenous Perspectives**
Themes: Is an indigenous history of modern imperialism possible? Dilemmas of the indigenous intellectual.

Readings:
- Marshall Sahlins, “Cosmologies of Capitalism”
- Epeli Hau’ofa, “Pasts to Remember”
- Tomiyama Ichirō, “The Critical Limits of the National Community: The Ryukyuan Subject”
- David Howell, “Making ‘Useful Citizens’ of Ainu Subjects in Early Twentieth-Century Japan”

**Week 6: Migration 1: Chinese Diaspora**
Themes: Migration and the invention of national borders. Migration and the invention of “roots.” Repatriation of the dead. What is a “coolie”?

Readings:
- Philip Kuhn, *Chinese Among Others* chapters 3 and 5 (dropbox)
- Eric Han, *Rise of a Japanese Chinatown*, Ch.1 (dropbox)
- Adam McKeown, *Melancholy Order*, Introduction, Chs.6, 10
- Elizabeth Sinn, *Pacific Crossing*, Ch.7 (ebook through Lauinger)
- David Chang, “Borderlands in a World at Sea: Concow Indians, Native Hawaiians, and South Chinese in Global and National Spaces” (dropbox)

**Week 7: Migration 2: Japanese Diaspora**
Themes: Migrants as imperial subjects; migrants as geopolitical pawns or independent actors; the distant wanderings of Japanese prostitutes (*karayuki-san*).

Readings:
Bill Mihapoulos, *Sex in Japan’s Globalization, 1870-1930*, Introduction and Ch.2 (ebook through Lauinger)

**Week 8: Civilizing Missions 1: Taiwan under Japanese Rule**
Themes: “civilization” as a portable set of tools for conquest; the importance of spectacle; anthropology and imperialism.

Readings:
- Robert Eskildsen, “Of Civilization and Savages: The Mimetic Imperialism of Japan's 1874 Expedition to Taiwan”
- Paul Barclay, “‘They Have for the Coast Dwellers a Traditional Hatred’: Governing Igorots in Northern Luzon and Central Taiwan, 1895-1915.”
- Kirsten Ziomek, “The 1903 Human Pavilion: Colonial Realities and Subaltern Subjectivities in Twentieth-Century Japan”
- Jordan Sand, “Imperial Tokyo as a Contact Zone”
- Timothy Mitchell, “Orientalism and the Exhibitionary Order”

**Week 9: Civilizing Missions 2: the Philippines under U.S. Rule**
Themes: the racialization of imperial rule; policing; civilization, the body and leisure.

Readings:
- Paul Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, Ch.4
- Alfred McCoy et al, *Colonial Crucible*, introduction
- McCoy, “Policing the Imperial Periphery: Philippine Pacification and the Rise of the U.S. National Security State” (in *Colonial Crucible*)

**Week 10: Empire-Building During the War in the Pacific**
Theme: the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere

Readings:
- Terada Takefumi, "The Religious Propaganda Program for Christian Churches"
Week 11: Cold War and US Military Empire
Themes: U.S. bases, tourism, consumer culture

Readings:
● Mire Koikari, Cold War Encounters in U.S.-Occupied Okinawa, chapters 1, 2, 4, epilogue.
● Bruce Cumings, “Archipelago of Empire,” chapter 15 in Dominion from Sea to Sea
● Imamura Shōhei, dir. “Pigs and Battleships” (film, 1961).