

ASIAN STUDIES U OF L NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2022 - VOL. 6

Asian Studies is an interdisciplinary program at the University of Lethbridge which seeks to understand the human experience in Asia and the Asian diaspora. We create opportunities for students to learn about Asia through courses, presentations, exchange programs, and faculty and student research. Many thanks to our colleagues, students, Bev Garnett, the International Office, A&S Deans, and many more for your support!

Michael Chan Prize in Asian Studies

The 2022 Michael Chan Prize was awarded to Delena Grakist for her Honours thesis paper, "It is not very comfortable to be in the middle these days": Lester B. Pearson, Canada, and the Korean War" Delena's study, supervised by Dr. Kristine Alexander and Dr. Amy Shaw, explores the Canadian diplomatic contribution to the Korean War through Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs, Lester B. Pearson. She analyses how the hostilities and their resolution were perceived by participating states and how these perceptions, influenced by global structures, had significant impacts on the war.

Adjudicators, Dr. Richard Mueller and Dr. Gideon Fujiwara, were impressed by the thesis including the parallels between Canada and the Koreans, "two small states caught in a global system of competing politics, ideology, and military capability, each restricted to the position this structure allotted them." Delena is now pursuing a MA in international relations at Carleton U.

Michael Wing-Cheung Chan (1952-2001) was a Chinese Canadian scientist and humanitarian known for his brilliance in mathematics and his passion in promoting Canada-Asia understanding. The award was established by Dr. Bonnie Lee and family and friends of Michael Chan. **Next submissions due Aug 20, 2023.** Learn more at www.uleth.ca/artsci/asian-studies/scholarships

Asian Studies Courses in Spring 2023

HIST 2290 Main Themes in East Asian History
(G Fujiwara) M/W 10:30-11:45

JPNS1100 Beginners' Japanese II (T Greenshields)
MTR 12:00-12:50 (plus 1 hr/wk JPNS 1100 Lab 1)

JPNS 2020 Intermediate Japanese II (A McMeekin)
MWF 10:00-10:50 (plus 1 hr/wk JPNS 2020 Lab 1)

RELS 2330 Chinese Religions (J Harding) T/R 12-1:15

WGST 3020 Globalization, Gender and Development
(G Bonifacio) T/R 3:00-4:15

Find details about courses or the Asian Studies minor on our website:
<http://www.uleth.ca/artsci/asian-studies>

Contact the coordinator at
gideon.fujiwara@uleth.ca (from January 2023)
john.harding@uleth.ca (2022)

U of L Students, are you interested in learning about Asia's societies, cultures, and histories? Want to make your degree international? Considering traveling Asia or pursuing work with ties to Asia?

If so, declare your Minor in Asian Studies!

Required courses: ASIA 1000 Introduction to Asia plus 5 courses with at least 1 at the 3000/4000 level.

Consider structuring the Asian Studies Minor into one of the following combinations:

Major/Minor; Major/Double Minor; or within a General Humanities/Social Science degree. Be creative!

Congratulations to Darcy Tamayose (PhD student CSPT), whose book, *Ezra's Ghosts*, was named as one of five finalists (from 132 titles submitted) for the 2022 Atwood Gibson Writers' Trust Fiction Prize and selected as a CBC Books pick for Best Canadian Fiction of 2022!

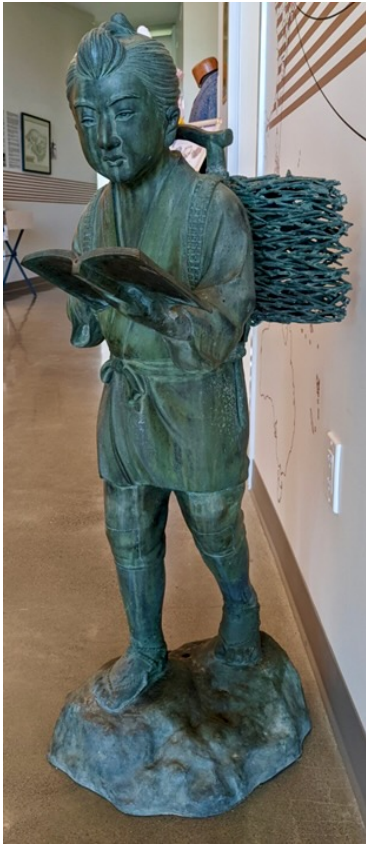


Visit **Winter Light Festival at Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden**, Nov 30 to Feb 26, 2023. Book tickets: <http://winterlightfestival.eventbrite.ca>

New Projection Dome Experience



Dr. Gideon Fujiwara's Golden Maple Keynote Address in Nikka Yuko's New Bunka (Culture) Centre



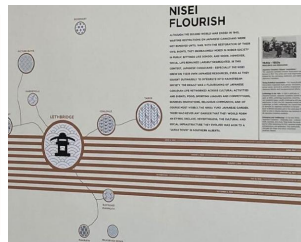
Japanese Art Crossing the Pacific to the Prairies: Tokugawa to Meiji Societies Reflected in the Shumiatcher Collection at Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden

by Gideon Fujiwara

In September 2022, I was honoured to give the 4th annual Golden Maple Lecture, the first one hosted in the beautiful new Bunka Centre at Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden. This presentation explored the art collection that was generously donated to the Garden by the Shumiatcher Estate. We viewed sculptures of a Japanese carp and a pair of Okinawan Shisa lions, both known as protectors of dwellings and communities. We then focused on Ninomiya Sontoku (1787-1856), whose statue had made the trek from a school in Hawaii across the Pacific to southern Alberta. The “peasant sage of Japan,” Ninomiya restored hundreds of farming communities, then posthumously inspired generations of farmers and students across Japan and overseas in the age of empire, war, and the postwar as a symbol of hard work, frugality, and benevolence.

I reflected on the remarkable lives of Drs. Morris and Jacqui Shumiatcher, the collectors of these pieces, who loved and supported art and learning. Ninomiya’s teaching of “passing something on to others” resonates with the philanthropy of the Shumiatcher’s, and with the dedication of the many visionaries and builders who have made this Garden the special place that it is today. They include Professors John Harding, Carly Adams, Darren J. Aoki, and members of the Centre for Oral History and Tradition (COHT) and Asian Studies at the U of L who have worked hard to provide valuable input in the time map, exhibits, and concepts surrounding the Bunka Centre. I encourage you to check it out, along with the Winter Light Festival and its new attractions!

At the same September 2022 Golden Maple Event, **Elaine Toth** (PhD student CSPT) represented UL's COHT (Centre for Oral History and Tradition) and the Nikkei Memory Capture Project by presenting the video about the late **George Takashima**, which she produced in collaboration with Cheryl Lenthall



Related news story about Dr. Carly Adams and Dr. Darren Aoki's Nikkei Memory Capture Project including Memory Booth and Time Map 2022 additions

Dr. Christopher Churchill (HIST) on recent experience teaching ASIA 2020, Japan, Asia, and the World:

A business magnate from a samurai background, a postwar motorcycle brand, and contemporary manga. These subjects were taught by Professor Aki Kinjo. He is just one of my colleagues at Gakushuin Women's College who energized students at the University of Lethbridge in fall, 2022. Students were enrolled in ASIA 2020: Japan, Asia, and the World. I had the opportunity to teach the course jointly with six scholars in Japan. Students at both institutions connected live online every week, expanding their cultural literacy and international connections.

We worked with specialists and guest lecturers in both countries. They covered interdisciplinary topics including agriculture, anime, business, diplomacy, disability, sport, theatre, and the making of modern history and myth.

The course recenters Japan as key to global modernity while Canada's history comes into better focus learned through the experiences of Japanese Canadians. This course is as much about local connections as global ones. Students studied the links between specific communities in Okinawa and southern Alberta. Meanwhile, the students in both Lethbridge and Tokyo connected across borders and time zones as they cooperated and learned from one another.

Did I mention my colleagues in Japan are some of the best teachers I have ever worked with? In over two decades teaching across Canada and the United States, as a historian and as a global studies program director, teaching this course was one of the most challenging and enjoyable experiences of my career.

The ASIA 2020 course featured here is an innovative team-taught course with our partner institution, Gakushuin Women's College, in Tokyo. Dr. Gideon Fujiwara taught the UL part of the initial offering, and we hope Dr. Churchill will be in the rotation for future offerings following rave reviews of the fall 2022 course he reflects on in the blue box to the left.



2023 UL Summer Courses in Asia
<https://www.ulethbridge.ca/international>

Study Tour of Japan (IDST 2600)
June 5 - June 23; Apply by Jan. 23, 2023
MGT 2640 Malaysia Work Study 2023

Coordinator's Desk: This newsletter reflects on aspects of 2022 including welcome continuities. At the same time, it was a difficult year, and my note at the cusp of 2023 addresses challenges and changes at this transitional time, one decade after Asian Studies was established at the U of L.

Consistent with Dr. Gideon Fujiwara's newsletter a year ago, we are completing a fall term that featured both our ASIA 1000 and ASIA 2020 courses (thanks go out to Dr. Glenda Bonifacio and Dr. Christopher Churchill respectively), we have quality courses advertised for spring that count toward the Asian Studies minor, we have the pleasure of announcing another worthy Chan Prize winner, Delena Grakist, and the Winter Light Festival at Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden once again provides a wonderful spectacle during our darkest months.

However, 2022 was characterized by significant disruption and uncertainty. Following multiple years of severe budget cuts to postsecondary education from our provincial government, we had to temporarily reduce scheduling of the ASIA 1000 course, which is required for our minor, to two offerings every three years. It has been offered every fall since 2014, but will be missed this coming fall of 2023, before resuming the next year. Shifting plans for the academic structure of our university fomented additional anxiety, and morale was severely strained by an extended lock-out in the wake of failed negotiation and labour action last spring.

So, what does this mean for Asian Studies? Not all is certain, but I will provide an update — at least a speculative snapshot in time. While most major structural changes proposed across faculties stalled, one relevant merger within Arts & Science remains likely to move forward. The proposed Department of History and Religion would administer the programs for History, Religious Studies, and Asian Studies. Although Asian Studies spans the entire university, in its initial decade Dr. John Harding (RELS) and Dr. Gideon Fujiwara (HIST) have been the two members who have served as coordinator. This merger should assist in scheduling that role and course offerings relative to Asian Studies in these disciplines, as well as the two most frequently offered courses with our ASIA designation: ASIA 2020 and ASIA 1000. The merger increases efficiency and sustainability to a degree, and could provide safe haven from the converging storms that will likely see all programs (at least those linked to A&S) absorbed into departments.

Asian Studies will continue to rely on the goodwill of colleagues throughout our university who teach courses that count toward the minor, offer guest lectures and community presentations, adjudicate the Chan Prize, and help to fund, advertise, and support the program in a variety of ways.

I would like to thank all supporters of Asian Studies, and extend special appreciation to two members of the Asian Studies Program Advisory Committee who will retire in mid-2023. Both Dr. Trevor Harrison (Sociology) and Dr. Hillary Rodrigues (Religious Studies) have been closely involved with Asian Studies from the very beginning, more than a decade ago. They will be missed, and we wish them well!

Most of the core group from the program's origin remains and continues to enrich Asian Studies in multiple ways from courses and events on campus to service in the community. Nevertheless, the loss of research expertise in Asia and related courses eligible for the Asian Studies minor is a concern. In addition to the loss of Dr. Rodrigues' courses in Asian religions, the recent retirement of Dr. Steve Ferzacca in Anthropology, as well as the earlier departure of Dr. Judith Whitehead from that department, exemplify this danger to our program's breadth until hiring resumes. Past cycles suggest that renewal is likely, though it is difficult to predict the timing of resurgent growth. We hope it will not be too long, and that future hires across disciplines and faculties will connect with Asian Studies — strengthening, replenishing, and diversifying our program — through their participation, research projects, and course offerings.

There is already some good news on that front. Among the positive changes in 2022, we would like to welcome our colleague in Kinesiology, Dr. Yeomi Choi. Please see the related entry in this newsletter. And finally, some other very good news that marks continuity as much as change, Dr. Gideon Fujiwara will resume his exemplary role as Coordinator of Asian Studies in January 2023 upon the completion of his year-long study leave.

Happy Holidays to all of you, thank you for all of your support to Asian Studies, and all best wishes for the New Year (Year of the Water Rabbit)!

— John Harding



Dr. Yeomi Choi joins U of L

Dr. Yeomi Choi is an assistant professor in the Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education. She completed her doctoral degree in Kinesiology at the U of North Carolina at Greensboro specializing in Sociohistorical Studies. Prior to this, she gained a BSc in Sport and Leisure Studies and a MA in Sport History at Korea National Sport University.



Dr. Choi has expressed interest in future Asian Studies participation.

Research Interests

Theoretically informed by critical race studies, cultural feminism, and post-colonial scholarship, Dr. Choi's research interests focus on interrogating power relations in the cultural construction of sporting subjectivities. Her recent publications include topics such as racialized masculinities in MLB, sporting naturalization and in/flexible citizenship, and sexism and misogyny in esports. Her more recent projects aim to examine the discursive re/production of transnational ice hockey players in Canada and South Korea.

Here is a recent article of Dr. Choi's published in *Disruptive Asia*, Asia Society Australia, "How Asian women are challenging the digital ceiling in esports"

[How Asian Women are Challenging the Digital Ceiling in Esports](#)

Reflecting its phenomenal popularity in Asia this competitive video gaming will be an official medal event at the 2022 Asian Games in Hangzhou, China, and was already featured as a medal event at the 2019 Southeast Asian Games. The International Olympic Committee has also been discussing integrating the activity into the Olympics. Unlike traditional sports,...

[View Article](https://disruptiveasia.asiasociety.org)
disruptiveasia.asiasociety.org