

Yunchen Tian

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EMPLOYMENT

2025- Program-Specific Associate Professor, Kyoto University Faculty of Law, Japan
2024-2025 Japan Foundation – Nichibun Fellow, International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibun), Kyoto, Japan
2022- 2024 Assistant Professor of Political Science, Saint Martin’s University, Lacey, WA
2020-2021 Dean’s Teaching Fellow, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD
2019-2020 Visiting Researcher, Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo, Japan

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Political Science, Johns Hopkins University, August 26th, 2022

Dissertation title: “National Regime or Local Implementations? The Technical Intern Training Program and the Multilevel Governance of Labor Migration in Japan”

Advisor: Erin Aeran Chung

B.A. with Distinction, Political Science, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, May 2015

TEACHING

Instructor of Record,

Civil Society and the State I, Introduction to Political Science, Fall 2025, *Kyoto University Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences*

Multiculturalism in Modern Society, Fall 2025 *Doshisha Women’s University*

Asia and the World, Global Issues, Exploring Japanese-ness – the Politics of Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Sexuality in Japan, Research Methods, Senior Research Seminar and Comparative Labour Migration Policy, 2022-2024, *Saint Martin’s University*

Dean’s Teaching Fellow (Independent Course Instruction), Comparative Labour Migration Policy, Spring 2021, *Johns Hopkins University*

Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Comparative Politics, Japanese Politics, and Policy Failure 2017-2019, *Johns Hopkins University*

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Single-authored Refereed Publications

Tian, Yunchen. 2026. “Maintaining Sovereignty at the Margins: Internal Migration Governance in Okinawa.” *Territory, Politics, Governance*. Forthcoming

<https://doi.org/10.1080/21622671.2026.2625848>

Tian, Yunchen. 2022. “Workers, Neighbours, or Something Else? Local Policies and Policy Narratives of Technical Intern Training Program Participants.” *Social Science Japan Journal*, 26(1): 77-92.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/ssjj/jyac023>

Article awarded 2023 ISS/Oxford Prize for Modern Japanese Studies

Translated into Japanese as: “外国人技能実習生は労働者？隣人？それ以外の何者か？” *社会科学研究*, 76: 271-294.

Tian, Yunchen. 2019. “Workers by Any Other Name: Comparing Co-Ethnics and ‘Interns’ as Labour Migrants to Japan.” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 45 (9): 1496–1514.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2018.1466696>.

Co-authored Refereed Publications

Chung, Erin Aeran, Darcie Draudt, and **Yunchen Tian**. 2023. “The Developmental Migration State.” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, December.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1369183X.2023.2269781>

Chung, Erin, James F Hollifield, and **Yunchen Tian**. 2023. "Migration Governance in East and Southeast Asia." *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, September, lcad010. <https://doi.org/10.1093/irap/lcad010>.

Chung, Erin Aeran, Darcie Draudt, and **Yunchen Tian**. 2020. "Regulating Membership and Movement at the Meso-Level: Citizen-Making and the Household Registration System in East Asia." *Citizenship Studies* 24 (1): 76–92. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13621025.2019.1700914>.

SELECTED HONORS AND GRANTS

SPIRIT2 Grant, Kyoto University Research Accelerator, Kyoto, Japan, April 2026 – March 2028.

Nomura Foundation Social Science Research Grant, Japan, April 2026 – March 2027.

Cohort 7, Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation US-Japan Network for the Future

ISS/Oxford Prize for Modern Japanese Studies, *Social Science Japan Journal*, Dec 2023

Research Travel Grant, Program in East Asian Studies, Fall-Winter 2021-22

Johns Hopkins University Dean's Teaching Fellowship, AY 2020-2021

Japan Foundation Dissertation Research Fellowship in Japanese Studies, AY 2019-2020

Departmental Award for Best Graduate Student Paper, May 2018

Japan Foundation Fellowship in Japanese Studies, AY2016-2017

EDITORIAL PUBLICATIONS AND PUBLIC APPEARANCES

Yunchen Tian: "Institutional barriers hinder the integration of Japan's foreign population", *East Asia Forum*, June 2025.

Erin Chung and Yunchen Tian: "Immigration Systems in Labor-Needy Japan and South Korea Have Evolved—but Remain Restrictive" *Migration Information Source*, January 28, 2025.

Yunchen Tian: "Refugee rights in Japan are fading fast", *East Asia Forum*, September 2023

Yunchen Tian: "Kishida reopens the door to Japan", *East Asia Forum*, October 4, 2022

Guest appearance as expert commentator on radio episode titled *Japan, an immigration nation?* on *Counterpoint with Amanda Vanstone*, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Broadcast September 2, 2018

Yunchen Tian and Erin Chung: "Is Japan Becoming a Country of Immigration?" *Foreign Affairs*, August 3, 2018.

ADDITIONAL EDUCATION

ECPR Summer School in Methods and Techniques, Budapest, August 2017

Automated Collection of Web and Social Data

Big Data Analysis in the Social Sciences

Critical Language Scholarship, United States Department of State at the University of Shiga Prefecture, Hikone, Japan, June to August 2016

LANGUAGES

English – native, Chinese – native, Japanese – fluent, Spanish - intermediate