Exploring Connections: Asian Diaspora in Puerto Rico

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Los Chinos en Puerto Rico

- A collection of both his research and personal experience growing up in Puerto Rico as mixed race Chinese–Cuban.
- It explores the history of Chinese laborers in the 19th century as well as Chinese immigrants of the 20th and 21st century.
Historical Background

Abolition of Slave Trade in Spanish America (1817)

Opium War (1839–1860)

Coolie Trade (1840’s–1870’s)

Chinese Exclusion Act (1882–1943)

Fidel Castro’s Regime in Cuba (1959–2008)

New Wave of Asian Immigration in the Caribbean (1990–Present)
Puerto Rico & U.S. Timeline

1898
- Puerto Rico Campaign—U.S. Takeover

1900
- Foraker Act

1917
- Jones Act

1952
- Commonwealth Status

1999–2003
- Navy–Vieques protests

2019–Present
- Act 20 & Act 22

Puerto Rico
The Problem with Modern Colonialism and Gentrification
The Yellow Peril in Puerto Rico

Ethnic Antagonism

- Colonizers ➞ Evil, selfish, greedy.
- Chinese as scapegoats of a bigger problem (economy crisis).

Model Minority

- Their success as a threat ➞ but are they successful or oppressed?
- Outstanding work ethic ➞ labor exploitation.
- Closed-off community ➞ Are we welcoming them into ours?
The Chinese Diaspora in Puerto Rico: Today

Population
- Total population of P.R. is 3.222 million (2022)
- Around more than 1,843 are Chinese residents.

Identity
- The Chinese community are marginalized by Puerto Rican society and its government.
- “Not-real Puerto Ricans”

Language
- There is only one Chinese school in Puerto Rico that teaches Chinese Mandarin → “Instituto de Mandarín: El Futuro – 未来中文学校”
- Most Chinese in Puerto Rico learn and speak more than three languages: Mandarin or Cantonese (or both), English and Spanish.
Importance of Asian Latino Studies

- Representation
- Ends Stereotypes and Prejudices
- Intersectionality
- Community Empowerment
References


—. "Rich people are moving to Puerto Rico and some Puerto Ricans are not happy about it." 15 April 2021. YouTube. 25 April 2024. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qq1zSTS10II&ab_channel=BiancaGraulau.


