pulling the nation's noodles: ramen and the chinese origins of modern japanese cuisine

online talk by

dr. barak kushner
university of cambridge, uk

3:30 - 5 p.m. edt wednesday, april 6, 2022

abstract: food has always played a role in empire, both for its expansion and in its destruction. imperial interaction has been fundamental to changes in social attitudes toward consumption and identity. and then there is cuisine, what ends up on our plates, cooked or creatively placed there by ourselves or others. contrary to popular belief, japanese cuisine has been in constant conversation with east asia and assorted european practices since at least the mid-1500s. and by the early 20th century this rich interaction began to forge new foodways and practices in dining habits. how food and empire forged japan’s popular noodle soup, ramen, is a complex story. this talk will explore the sometimes combative tango of slurping, supremacy, and ideology that formed this unlikely outcome of the sino-japanese relationship.