Provided through the gracious contribution of Dr. Wing Chung Ng

Spring 2008  **HIS 3843 MIGRATION AND HISTORY: THE GLOBAL CHINESE**

Name: ____________________________

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Class  
BB 3.04.06  
TR 11am-1215pm

According to various estimates, over 30 million people of Chinese ancestry live outside Mainland China and Taiwan at the dawn of the new millennium. The ethnic Chinese are one of most remarkable human diasporas that helped shape the modern world. From a trading minority of old, through the rise of European empires in the early modern, to the age of the great migrations of the late 1800s, and now, another century later, in the contemporary era of intensified mobility and increasingly porous borders, the Chinese had long been and still are on the move. This course on the Chinese diaspora is a study of human mobility, of travels near and far, of personal dreams and family aspirations, of encounters between different societies and cultures, and of adaptation and accommodation in every conceivable arena of human activity, economic pursuit, and social behavior.

This upper-division history course is designed for students to explore the geographic reach of Chinese migratory activities around the globe, even though we will refer most often to Southeast Asia and the Americas because these two regions were historically the principal arena of Chinese overseas activities. The approach is historical, seeking to tackle questions of origins, of processes, and of change across space and time, even as we draw on a wide array of disciplinary perspectives – such as sociology, anthropology, ethnic studies, to name just a few – to inform our inquiry.

Students are NOT expected to have much prior exposure to the subject. Our expectations are high but reasonable. In terms of learning objectives, this class will offer students an opportunity to:

1. Develop a general knowledge on the subject of the Chinese diaspora, including an outline of major developments within a chronological framework
2. Appreciate underlying concepts and key issues in the study of migration, such as the importance of social and business networks in different migration contexts, community and identity formation, the salience of race and ethnicity as historical constructs, the persistent influence of the sending country, and the critical response of the receiving society
3. Construct meaningful comparisons among Chinese migrants in different places and over times, and between Chinese and other migrant groups
4. Cultivate critical thinking and analytical skills in reading and writing
The following books are required for the course:
Lynn Pan, Sons of the Yellow Emperor
Erika Lee, At America’s Gates: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943
Wing Chung Ng, The Chinese in Vancouver, 1945-80: The Pursuit of Identity and Power
Ronald Skeldon, ed., Reluctant Exiles? Migration from Hong Kong and the New Overseas Chinese

In addition, there are a number of journal articles and book chapters assigned throughout the semester. They are available for download on Web CE in due course.

Course agenda:

January 15, 17, 22, 24
Part I – Introduction to the course, contemporary context and historical background

Readings:
Lynn Pan, Chapter 1
Wang Gungwu, “Patterns of Chinese Migration in Historical Perspective,” in Hong Liu, ed., I: 33-49

January 29, 31, February 5, 7, 12
Part II – On the edges of empires: Imperial China, Western expansion and colonialism through the nineteenth century

Readings:
Lynn Pan, Chapters, 2-4
February 14, 19, 21, 26

Part III – The “White Wall was built”: Exclusion and the ideology of race

Readings:
Lyann Pan, Chapter 5
Erika Lee, At America’s Gates

February 28, March 4, 6, 11, 13

Part IV – Chinese nationalism and migrant communities, late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries

Readings:
Lynn Pan, Chapters 6-10
Prasenjit Duara, “Transnationalism and the Predicament of Sovereignty, China, 1900-1945,” in Hong Liu, ed., I: 373-397
Madeline Hsu, “Migration and Native Place: Qiao kan and the Imagined Community of Taishan County, Guangdong, 1893-1993,” in Hong Liu, IV: 27-56
Ta Chen, “Livelihood,” in Hong Liu, ed., IV: 3-26

March 27, April 1, 3

Part V – Red China, the Chinese Overseas and the Cold War

Readings:
Lynn Pan, Chapters 11-14, and Afterword
Wing Chung Ng, Chinese in Vancouver
April 8, 10, 15, 17  
**Part VI – The rise of the peripheries: Hong Kong and “Greater China”**

Readings:  
Lynn Pan, Chapters 16-end, including epilogue  
Ronald Skeldon, ed., *Reluctant Exiles*?

April 22, 24, 29  
**Part VII – Globalization and the new “Chinese Diaspora”**

Readings:  
Frank Pieke, et al, *Transnational Chinese*  

**Evaluation**

Assessment in this class is based entirely on written assignments/presentations spread across the semester. There is NO exam. Essay questions and instructions will be available on Web CE about 2 weeks before the assignment is due.

- Part I - Short reflective essay, 500 words: 5%  
- Part II - Critique of lecture and readings, 750 words: 15%  
- Part III - Synthetic essay on readings and films, 1000 words: 20%  
- Part IV - Reflective essay, 1000 words: 20%  
- Part V or VII - Reflective essay 1000 words: 20%  
- Part VI - Team project: 20%

90% and above = A  80-89% = B  70-79% = C  60-69% = D  Below 60% = F
This course introduces students to the history of Cantonese opera as a popular entertainment in Cantonese society. It focuses on the issue of institutional development and adaptation, paying attention to how Cantonese opera had evolved since its origins as a form of local theater in Guangdong in the Ming-Qing period. The internal organization of the opera community, the functions of the performing troupe, the role of actors in society, the involvement of commercial capitals, the relationship with state authorities, and popular receptions in local society are important topics to be explored. The course is organized chronologically to suggest a timeline, even though it will examine the early part of the twentieth century in greater depth as this was the formative period when Cantonese opera acquired many "definitive" features still discernible today.

The following is a list of our learning objectives. This course will provide students an opportunity to:

1. Develop a historical outline of Cantonese opera, with an understanding of the principal features and developments over time;

2. Acquire basic knowledge of the internal dynamics of the opera community, such as troupe organization, role-types, and the functions of the opera guild;

3. Cultivate a historical perspective on critical issues such the importance of the performance context, the role of ritual opera, the urbanization of popular theater, the interaction with the state, and audience analysis;

4. Encounter life performance on field trip(s);

5. Learn to interpret historical sources in the form of documents or artifacts.

The course is divided chronologically into three parts. Each topic will take about one week:

**Part I: Historical background to about 1900**

1. The Ming-Qing origin of local opera in the Guangdong
2. Local opera and the imperial state
3. Red boat and ritual opera in rural Guangdong in the late nineteenth century
4. Institutional development of an opera community: the guild organization
Readings:

Chan Sau Yan, Xianggang yueju daolun (Cantonese opera in Hong Kong). Hong Kong: Cantonese Opera Research Programme, Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1999.


Part II: The first half of the twentieth century

1. Popular theater and the anti-dynastic movement

2. Merchant capital and commercialization of Cantonese opera

3. Guangzhou-Hong Kong city troupes of the 1920s

4. From itinerant performers to opera stars

5. Actresses and gender dynamics on the Cantonese stage

6. Traditional opera and the new media: gramophone, radio and movies

7. Popular theater in the Cantonese Diaspora

Readings:


Ng Wing Chung, and Chan Chak Lui, eds., Yueju liushinian (Sixty years of Cantonese opera: Chan Fei Nong’s memoir). Hong Kong: Cantonese Opera Research Programme, Chinese University of Hong Kong, revised edition, 2007.


**Part III: Post Pacific War**

1. Popular theater under reform in the People’s Republic
2. Cantonese opera in Cold War Hong Kong
3. Traditional opera, cultural identity and local history in contemporary Hong Kong

**Readings:**


In addition, we will reference essays in the following conference collections:


- Li Siu Yan, Cheng Ling Yan, and Tai Su Yan, eds., Xianggang xiqu de xiankuang yu qianzhan (Music opera in Hong Kong: Current and future developments). Hong Kong: Cantonese Opera Research Programme, Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2005.

- Chow Sze Sum and Cheng Ling Yan, eds., Yueju guoji yantaohui lunwenji (Collected essays from the international symposium on Cantonese opera), 2 vols. Hong Kong: Cantonese Opera Research Programme, Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2008.