

Chinese Diasporas: A Global History

HUMA 5530

Spring 2024

Tuesdays, 15:00 to 17:50

CYTG003

Instructor

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Course Description

Before 1700, the Chinese population was concentrated in core areas of China Proper. Nonetheless, significant numbers of Chinese people moved to the frontiers of an expanding empire and across its borders, while Chinese families adapted to migration as a way of life. Critically employing the notion of “diasporas,” this course traces this worldwide circulation of Chinese people over the ensuing three centuries. Sampling both historical and ethnographic approaches to the study of migration, we will explore the phenomena of migrant trajectories and niches, the role of states in shaping migration flows and strategies, the ways in which migration is a gendered practice, and the challenges of researching and writing transnational history.

Evaluation

Class participation	20%
Active participation in class discussions of the assigned Readings is an essential component of this course.	
Discussion lead	20%
Each student will be asked to lead one or two class discussions, posing a set of questions about key themes and arguments in the assigned readings.	
Group presentation (on primary source analysis)	20%
For the class sessions on April 9 and April 16, students will be assigned to small groups to introduce and analyze primary sources from a particular archive or database.	
Essay	40%
A critical analysis of relevant scholarly literature on a given aspect of Chinese diasporic studies.	

Course reading materials

The course textbook, *Chinese Diasporas*, is available via Amazon Kindle. Some journal articles and book chapters are available online, accessible via the HKUST Library website. Other materials will be made available on the course website on Canvas.

A list of suggested databases and primary source collections for the group presentations can be found at the end of this syllabus. I will assign the groups, taking into account student interests.

Schedule of Class Sessions and Assignments

Course Orientation: Framing Migration

February 6

Readings

Philip A. Kuhn, *Chinese Among Others: Emigration in Modern Times* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2008), Introduction.

Steven B. Miles, *Chinese Diasporas: A Social History of Global Migration* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2020), Introduction.

Critiquing and Tweaking Diaspora

February 20

Readings

Brubaker, Rogers. "The 'Diaspora' Diaspora." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28, no. 1 (January 2005), 1-19.

Chan, Shelly. "The Case for Diaspora: A Temporal Approach to the Chinese Experience." *Journal of Asian Studies* 74.1 (February 2015).

Hu-DeHart, "The Future of 'Diaspora' in Diaspora Studies: Has the Word Run Its Course?," *Verge: Studies in Global Asias* 1, no. 1 (Spring 2015): 38-44.

Shih, Shu-mei, "Against Diaspora: The Sinophone as Places of Cultural Production," in Shu-mei Chih, Chien-hsin Tsai, and Brian Bernards, eds., *Sinophone Studies: A Critical Reader* (Columbia University Press, 2013), 25-42.

Early Modern Patterns

February 27

Background Reading

Miles, *Chinese Diasporas*, chapter 1.

Readings: Migrant Trajectories and Niches

Lucille Chia, "The Butcher, the Baker, and the Carpenter: Chinese Sojourners in the Spanish Philippines and Their Impact on South Fujian (Sixteenth-Eighteenth Centuries)," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 49, no. 4 (2006): 509-534.

Steven B. Miles, "The Upriver Reach of a Delta Town: Jiujiang Migrants in the West River Basin, Sixteenth–Nineteenth Centuries," *Frontiers of History in China* 8, no. 2 (2013), 153-175.

Readings: Early Modern Migration as a Gendered Phenomenon

Antonia Finnane, *Speaking of Yangzhou: A Chinese City, 1550-1850* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2004), chapter 9 (A City of Women).

Qitao Guo, *Huizhou: Local Identity and Mercantile Lineage Culture in Ming China* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2022), chapter 4 ("A Confucian Heartland of Women").

In-class primary source analysis

"Zeng Gong desong bei" 曾公德頌碑, in *Chinese Epigraphic Materials in Malaysia*, vol. 1.

Migration in the High Qing: Resource Rushes and Gender Dynamics

March 5

Background Reading

Miles, *Chinese Diasporas*, chapter 2.

Readings: Resource Rushes

Anthony Reid, "Chinese Trade and Southeast Asian Economic Expansion in the Later Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries: An Overview," in Nola Cooke and Li Tana, eds., *Water Frontier: Commerce and the Chinese in the Lower Mekong Delta Region, 1750-1880* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), 21-34.

Jonathan Schlesinger, *A World Trimmed with Fur: Wild Things, Pristine Places, and the Natural Fringes of Qing Rule* (Stanford; Stanford University Press, 2017), chapter 3, "The Mushroom Crisis."

Carl A. Trocki, "Chinese Pioneering in Eighteenth-Century Southeast Asia," in Anthony Reid, ed., *The Last Stand of Asian Autonomies: Responses to Modernity in the Diverse State of Southeast Asia and Korea, 1750-1900* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 83-101.

Readings: Gender Dynamics

Luther Cox Cenci, "Wounding Our Customs: Law, Gender, and Pluralism in Chinese Batavia, 1740-1811," *Late Imperial China* 42, no. 1 (June 2021): 131-175

Emma Jinhua Teng, "An Island of Women: The Discourse of Gender in Qing Travel Writing about Taiwan," *The International History Review* 20, no. 2 (June 1998): 353-370

In-class primary source analysis

palace memorial 奏摺, De-feng and Bo-qing-e, 1774.

routine memorial 題本, She-he-de, et al, 1776.

Contemporary Interlude

March 12

Guest: Dr. Linling Gao-Miles (*Washington University in St. Louis*)

Readings: "Ethnic Enclaves" in the Twenty-First Century

Linling Gao-Miles, "Beyond the Ethnic Enclave: Interethnicity and Trans-spatiality in an Australia Suburb," *City & Society* 29, no. 1 (2017), 82-103

The Age of Mass Migration I

March 19

Background Reading

Miles, *Chinese Diasporas*, chapter 3.

Readings: Writing Transnational History

Madeline Yuan-yin Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold, Dreaming of Home: Transnationalism and Migration Between the United States and South China, 1882-1943* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), chapter 5 (Magazines as Marketplaces).

Adam McKeown, "Global Migration, 1846-1940." *Journal of World History* 15.2 (2004).

Julia María Schiavone Camacho, *Chinese Mexicans: Transpacific Migration and the Search for a Homeland, 1910-1960* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012), Introduction and chapter 5 (The Women Are Neither Chinese nor Mexican).

Elisabeth Sinn, "Moving Bones: Hong Kong's Role as an 'In-between Place' in the Chinese Diaspora," in David Strand and Sherman Cochran, eds., *Cities in Motion: Interior, Coast, and Diaspora in Transnational China* (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 2007):247-271.

In-class primary source analysis

case of Wong Ahee, Foreign Office Records, National Archives, Kew.

The Age of Mass Migration II

March 26

Readings: Early Ethnographic Studies

Paul C. P. Siu, "The Chinese Laundryman: A Study of Social Isolation," Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Chicago, 1953, chapters 1 (Introduction), 5 (Physical Structure), 6 (Social Structure), 10 (Laundryman's Social World), 16 (Sex and Personal Disorganization), 17 (Out-Group Contacts), and 18 (Sojourner).

Henry Yu, *Thinking Orientals: Migration, Contact, and Exoticism in Modern America*. (Oxford University Press, 2001), chapter 7 (Language of Discontent).

Adam McKeown, "The Sojourner as Astronaut: Paul Siu in Global Perspective," in Josephine Lee, Imogene L. Lim, and Yuko Matsukawa, eds., *Re/collecting Early Asian America: Essays in Cultural History* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002), 127-142.

In-class primary source analysis

Rong Anmin essay, *The Chinese Times* 大漢公報, June 25, 1958.

Chinese States, Host States, and the Politics of Diaspora

April 2

Background Reading

Miles, *Chinese Diasporas*, chapter 4.

Readings: The Politicization of Diaspora

Karen M. Teoh, *Schooling Diaspora: Women, Education, and the Overseas Chinese in British Malaya and Singapore, 1850s-1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), Introduction and chapters 3 (Honor) and 4 (Rare Flowers).

Jayde Lin Roberts, *Mapping Chinese Rangoon: Place and Nation among the Sino-Burmese* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2016), chapter 2-3.

Adam McKeown, *Chinese Migrant Networks and Cultural Change: Peru, Chicago, Hawaii, 1900-1936* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), chapter 5 (Becoming Foreigners in Peru).

Primary Source Analysis Presentations

April 9

Group presentations

(See the list of recommended database at the end of this syllabus.)

Primary Source Analysis Presentations

April 16

Group presentations

(See the list of recommended database at the end of this syllabus.)

Disruptions and Diasporic Communities

April 23

Background Reading

Miles, *Chinese Diasporas*, chapter 5.

Readings: Negotiating Diasporic Identities: Class, Gender, and Politics

Lok C. D. Siu, *Memories of a Future Home: Diasporic Citizenship of Chinese in Panama* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), chapter 2 (Queen of the Chinese Colony).

Eric C. Han, *Rise of a Japanese Chinatown: Yokohama, 1894-1972* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2014), Introduction, chapter 5 (A Town Divided).

Donald M. Nonini, *"Getting By": Class and State Formation among Chinese in Malaysia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015), Introduction, chapter 5 (Class Dismissed!), and chapter 6 (Men in Motion).

The “Floating Population” and the “New Migrants”

April 30

Background Reading

Miles, *Chinese Diasporas*, chapter 6

Readings: Two Ethnographic Studies of Fuzhou and New York

Julie Y. Chu, *Cosmologies of Credit: Transnational Mobility and the Politics of Destination in China* (Duke University Press, 2010), pp. 1-58, 217-256.

Kenneth J. Guest, *God in Chinatown: Religion and Survival in New York’s Evolving Immigrant Community* (New York: NYU Press, 2003), pp. 1-44, 86-119, 147-204.

Transnational Chinese Before and During the Pandemic

May 7

Background Reading

Miles, *Chinese Diasporas*, chapters 7 and 8.

Readings: Community and Identity in the Late Twentieth Century

Li Wei, “Anatomy of a New Ethnic Settlement: The Chinese Ethnoburb in Los Angeles,” *Urban Studies* 35, no. 3 (March 1998), 479-501.

Ien Ang, *On Not Speaking Chinese: Living between Asia and the West* (London: Routledge, 2005), chapter 1.

Readings: Early Assessments of the Pandemic’s Impact

Xuemei Cao and Ken Chih-Yan Sun, “Seeking Transnational Social Protection during a Global Pandemic: The Case of Chinese Immigrants in the United States,” *Social Science & Medicine* 287 (2021).

Yang Hu, Cora Lingling Xu, and Mengwei Tu, “Family-Mediated Migration Infrastructure: Chinese International Students and Parents Navigating (Im)mobilities during the COVID-19 Pandemic,” *Chinese Sociological Review* (2020).

Historiography/literature review essay due

May 11

Databases/Anthologies for Primary Source Analysis Presentations on March 28

Chinese in Cuba Archive 古巴華僑華人檔案, CUHK
(<https://repository.lib.cuhk.edu.hk/en/collection/cuhkcuba>)

Chinese Migrants Write Home: A Dual-Language Anthology of Twentieth-Century Family Letters, edited by Gregor Benton, Huimei Zhang, and Hong Liu. New Jersey: World Scientific, 2020.

Chung Sai Yat Po 中西日報
(<https://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt0g5016h6/>)

Guba Hua Gong Diao Cha Lu 古巴華工調查錄, Columbia University Libraries
(<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/digital/collections/eastasian/texts/gubahua/>)

Kong Koan Papers 吧城公館, from the Chinese Council of Batavia, Leiden University Library Digital Collections
(<https://digitalcollections.universiteitleiden.nl/kongkoanpapers>)

Lat Pau 叻報
Via NUS Library (<https://nus.edu.sg/nuslibraries>)

Old HK Newspapers
(<https://mmis.hkpl.gov.hk/old-hk-collection>)

Singapore archives, oral history interviews
(https://www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline/oral_history_interviews/)

Tung Wah Museum Archives Catalogue
(http://www.twmarchives.hk/archives_catalogue_overview.php?lang=en)