Chinese Diasporas: A Global History
HUMA 5530

Spring 2024
Tuesdays, 15:00 to 17:50

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
Active participation in class discussions of the assigned Readings is an essential component of this course.

Discussion lead
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)
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
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**


**Critiquing and Tweaking Diaspora**

February 20

**Readings**


**Early Modern Patterns**

February 27

**Background Reading**

Miles, *Chinese Diasporas*, chapter 1.

**Readings: Migrant Trajectories and Niches**


**Readings: Early Modern Migration as a Gendered Phenomenon**


**In-class primary source analysis**

Migration in the High Qing: Resource Rushes and Gender Dynamics

March 5

Background Reading
Miles, *Chinese Diasporas*, chapter 2.

Readings: Resource Rushes

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
The Age of Mass Migration I
March 19

Background Reading
Miles, *Chinese Diasporas*, chapter 3.

Readings: Writing Transnational History


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


In-class primary source analysis
Chinese States, Host States, and the Politics of Diaspora
April 2
Background Reading

Readings: The Politicization of Diaspora

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
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

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

Readings: Early Assessments of the Pandemic’s Impact

Historiography/literature review essay due
May 11
Databases/Antithologies 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)


Chung Sai Yat Po 中西日報
(http://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 功報
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