

History Programme
Academic Year 2018-2019, Semester 2
Subject to change

HH3003
Migration and Diaspora:
Chinese Experiences in Comparative Perspective

Academic Units: 3 AUs
Instructor: Asst. Prof. Els van Dongen

Time and Venue:
Fridays, 13.30-16.30, TR+68

Contact details:

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Content

“Diaspora” has become a buzzword in the last decades—with scholars referring to the proliferation of the term as a “diaspora diaspora”—but what do we mean when we talk about “diaspora”? Is there such a thing as a “Chinese diaspora”? And why do some use terms such as “overseas Chinese” and “Chinese overseas” instead? In this course, we will critically engage with different research paradigms to study the movement of Chinese to Southeast Asia, the Americas and Europe.

We will first outline the broader historical patterns of migration, focusing on traders in Southeast Asia, mass migration since the mid-nineteenth century, migration after 1945, and the rise of the “new migrants” after 1978. Following this, we will look at distinct migration patterns in more detail: why and when did Chinese migrate to Southeast Asia, the Americas, and Europe? Apart from local and global factors, what policies existed in host societies (and in China) and how did this affect the formation of Chinese communities? This brings us to the third area of concern, namely the organizational aspects of the Chinese communities: what were the principles behind community organizations? How did they materialize in different contexts? And how did they change over time? Finally, we will look into questions of identity and representation through media such as film, TV series, and literature. Throughout the course, we will engage with

various types of primary sources, such as cartoons, photographs, novels, films, magazines, and historical artefacts.

Learning Objectives

- Investigate and explain the basic historical and geographical patterns of Chinese migration and how they relate to broader regional and global restructuring and other migration patterns;
- Compare and contrast research paradigms such as “diaspora,” “migration,” “Chinese overseas,” and “overseas Chinese”;
- Analyze and interpret various types of primary and secondary historical sources pertaining to Chinese migration and diaspora;
- Formulate novel historical arguments on Chinese migration and diaspora based on historical evidence;
- Present historical ideas and evidence on Chinese migration and diaspora.

Course Outline (Subject to Change)

S/N	Topic	Seminar Hours
	<i>PART I: Macro-Overview</i>	
1	Introduction	3
2	What’s in a Name? An overview of changing approaches	3
3	Broad Historical overview (1500s-today)	3
4	Community Organizations I (<i>huiguan</i> , secret societies)	3
5	Community Organizations II (schools, newspapers, <i>qiaokan</i>)	3
	<i>PART II: Communities around the Globe</i>	
6	Geographical dispersion I Southeast Asia [visit to Peranakan Museum]	3
7	Geographical dispersion II the Americas [primary source discussion/paper outline peer review]	3
8	Geographical dispersion III Europe [visit to Chinese Heritage Centre and exhibition]	3
	<i>PART III: Presentations</i>	
9	Group Presentations I	3
10	Group Presentations II	3
	<i>PART IV: Identity and Representation and Wrap Up</i>	
11	Identity and representation I (Film, TV series, novels)	3
12	Revision and Wrap up	3
13	Paper consultations and writing (to replace class on Good Friday)	3

Student Assessment

(a) Class participation	10 %
(b) Group presentation	20 %
(c) 1500 word essay	20 %
(d) Final examination	50 %

(a) Class participation

Students are required to do the weekly readings and to prepare for discussion by posting short answers/questions on NTULearn

(b) Group presentation

Students are to explore the course themes in/with reference to a Singaporean context. Using a primary source/primary sources, the presentation needs to engage critically with course themes. Students need to consult the instructor regarding the presentation before deciding on a final topic.

(c) Essay

Students can choose their topic of interest, but should include a primary source for the essay. They should bring a basic outline of the paper, including the primary source, during week VIII. We will do an in-class discussion based on the primary source and a peer review exercise of the outline.

References (Subject to Change)

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Kuah-Pearce, Khun Eng and Evelyn Hu-Dehart, eds. *Voluntary Organizations in the Chinese Diaspora*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2006.

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

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Riemenschneider, Andrea, and Deborah L. Madsen, eds. *Diasporic Histories: Cultural Archives of Chinese Transnationalism*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009.

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