

HH1003 Asia-Pacific in Global History: From 1800

Semester 2, AY 2024-25

Tutorials: Wednesday, 15:30-16:20

Asst Prof Florence MOK
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HSS05-24

Lecture: Wednesday, 13:30-15:20
HSS-B1-14

I. Course Description

The history of Asia, global history, and interdisciplinary history are three key areas of the NTU History curriculum. This course will familiarize you with aspects of each of those key areas and their entanglements. It will provide you with an insight into the historical processes that shaped the modern Asia-Pacific, how these processes were connected to global developments such as colonialism, capitalism, labour problems and migration. It is intended to introduce students to the history in modern times and to the Asia-Pacific as a region, not just as a collection of disparate nation-states. For this purpose, the instructor will draw a distinction among “East Asia,” “South Asia,” and “Southeast Asia” through four overlapping chronological phases: under pre-modern Asian connectivity between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries; under Western imperialism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; under the two World Wars in the first half of the twentieth century; and during the Cold War. Each week we shall concentrate on different geographical focuses within this historical framework, examining what changes took place and how people reacted to those changes. The lectures will address these questions broadly, while the tutorial meetings will provide opportunities for students to respond.

II. Learning Objectives

1. Investigate and explain the role of a range of broader historical processes in the formation of the political, cultural, and societal formation of modern Asia and how these processes connect to global developments
2. Analyze and interpret primary and secondary sources pertaining to the political, cultural, and societal formation of modern Asia
3. Demonstrate an understanding of how to appropriately acknowledge and build upon the work of others
4. Articulate evidence-based historical arguments about the formation of modern Asia in both written and oral form
5. Present historical ideas and evidence regarding the formation of modern Asia in a variety of media

III. Assessment

- a. **Online Quizzes (25%).** In week 8-12, there will be online quiz each week on the NTULearn. The quizzes will be available at 12:00 p.m. on Thursdays. Please complete before 12:00 p.m. on the following Wednesday. Please complete within 30 minutes in ONE SETTING (cannot save and resume).
- b. **Tutorial Discussion (10%).** You are required to actively participate in each tutorial class, having completed the week's readings.
- c. **One Essay (40%).** 1,500 words. Papers are to be written in response to the discussion questions listed in the syllabus and should be based primarily upon the required readings each week. You may consult other texts (and we will be happy to suggest relevant items), but you are not required to do so.
Due dates: 12:00 p.m., March 12. Please submit both in Word document to the NTULearn.
- d. **Final Take-Home Assignment (25%).** The questions will be released on NTU **April 16, 12:00 p.m.** The answers are due through Turnitin by **12:00 p.m. April 23.**

Policy on AI and plagiarism:

Research and assignments should be original work completed by students. Detection of AI and plagiarism in student assignments is available, and current NTU policy provides such tools for the determination of plagiarism cases. It is the department's policy that students who plagiarize will receive serious penalty.

Policy on late submission:

Students should submit their work on time. If students submit their work more than one week after the original deadline without legitimate reasons, the instructor has the right not to mark the assignment.

IV. Reference Books

Rhoads Murphey, with Kristin Stapleton, *A History of Asia*, 7th edition (London and New York: Routledge, 2014).

V. Course Schedule:

Week 1 Introduction

Short Lecture

Introduction: background information on the geography and culture of the Asia-Pacific; the politics of the production of knowledge; course outline and assessment.

Assigned Readings:

- Joseph Esherick, “Harvard on China: The apologetics of imperialism,” *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, 4:4 (1972), 9-16, DOI: 10.1080/14672715.1972.10406305
- James Millward, “We need a new approach to teaching modern Chinese history: A review of Klaus Mühlhahn, *Making China Modern: From the Great Qing to Xi Jinping*. Harvard University Press, 736 pp, £31.95, January 2019, ISBN 9780674737358,” October 8, 2020, <https://jimmillward.medium.com/we-need-a-new-approach-to-teaching-modern-chinese-history-we-have-lazily-repeated-false-d24983bd7ef2>

Further readings:

- Catherine B. Asher and Cynthia Talbot, *India before Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1-24.
- Barbara D. Metcalf and Thomas R. Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1-28.
- Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (W. W. Norton, 1999), 1-48.

Tutorial

No meeting this week

Week 2 East Asia: The Qing Empire and the Opium Wars

Lecture

Keywords: The Manchus, Treaty Ports and the Taiping Rebellion

Assigned Reading:

- Murphey, *A History of Asia*, 300-309, 327-343.

Further Reading:

- Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, 49-132.
- Podcast: <http://popchinese.com/lessons/sinica/the-manchu-legacy>

Tutorial

Questions for Discussion and Essays: Did the Manchus, as an ethnic minority, succeed in ruling the Qing Empire because they assimilated and adopted Han Chinese styles of rule and other cultural values?

Assigned Readings:

- Jeremiah Jenne, “Chinese Historian: To Exaggerate the Size of China’s Historical Territory is not Patriotic,” <https://www.jeremiahjenne.com/the-archives/2018/5/7/chinese-historian-to-exaggerate-the-size-of-chinas-historical-territory-is-not-patriotic>
- Ping-ti Ho, “The Significance of the Ch’ing Period in Chinese History”, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 26: 2 (Feb 1967), 189-195.
- Evelyn S. Rawski, “Presidential Address: Re-envisioning the Qing: The Significance of the Qing Period in Chinese History”, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 55:4 (Nov. 1996), 829-850.

Week 3 Chinese New Year- no class

Week 4 Southeast and South Asia: The Age of Commerce Disrupted?

Guest Lecture by Ms. Doris Chan, PhD candidate, Nanyang Technological University
Keywords: Maritime Trade, Age of Commerce, East India Company (EIC), The Mughal Empire decline and the establishment of British dominance

Assigned Readings:

- Murphey, *A History of Asia*, 245-262.
- Anthony J.S. Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450-1680: Volume 2 Expansion and Crisis* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 267-303, 326-330.

Further Readings:

- Anthony J.S. Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450-1680: Volume 1 The Lands Below the Winds* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 1-10, 62-119, 120-152.
- C.A. Bayly, *Indian Society and the Making of British Empire* (Cambridge University Press, 1988), Introduction, Chapter 2 and 3.

Tutorial

Question for Discussion and Essays: Did the arrival of Western imperial powers cause the decline of polities in South and Southeast Asia in the 17th century? Can Western colonialism be exploitative in design but beneficial to the colonies in outcome?

Assigned Readings:

- Jules Ferry, *On French Colonial Expansion* (1884)
- Dadabhai Naoroji, *The Benefits of British Rule* (1871)
- Rudyard Kipling, *The White Man's Burden* (1899) [All three documents in one PDF entitled "Ferry Naoroji Kipling"]
- "Oxford University accused of backing apologists of British colonialism", *The Guardian*, 22 Dec 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/dec/22/oxford-university-accused-of-backing-apologists-of-british-colonialism>

Week 5 Asia under High Imperialism: Resistance and Collaboration

Lecture

Keywords: Imperial Ideologies; Modern Colonial States; Rule, and Resistance

Assigned Readings:

- Murphey, *A History of Asia*, 266-294, 315-324.

Further Readings:

- John Carroll, *Edge of Empire* (2005), Chapter 1.

Tutorial

Question for Discussion and Essays: Using Hong Kong as an example, how do Asian elites appropriate parts of an imperial idea/managed to be absorbed into the colonial administration?

Assigned Readings:

- John Carroll, *Edge of Empire* (2005), Chapters 1 and 2.
- Law Wing Sang, *Collaborative Colonial Power: The Making of the Hong Kong Chinese* (2009), Chapters 1 and 4.

Week 6 Migration, Indenture and the Plantation in Southeast Asia (19th - 20th centuries)

Guest Lecture by Mr. Sahil Bhagat, Research Associate, Nanyang Technological University

Keywords: Labour Migration, Addiction, Resistance, Plantations

Assigned Readings:

- Hugh Tinker, *A New System of Slavery: The Export of Indian Labour Overseas 1830-1920* (Oxford University Press: London, 1974), Chapter 1 (The Legacy of Slavery)
- Sunil Amrith, *Crossing the Bay of Bengal: The Furies of Nature and the Fortunes of Migrants* (Harvard University Press, 2013), Chapter 4 (Human Traffic)

Tutorial

Questions for Discussion and Essays:

- To what extent was the indenture system an extension of chattel slavery?
- How were narcotics (opium, toddy, samsu) used as tools of social control on plantations?
- What was the impact of the Japanese occupation of Malaya on Indian estate labourers?

Assigned Readings (Choose 2 out of 3)

- Evelyn Hu-Dehart, "Opium and Social Control: Coolies on the Plantations of Peru and Cuba", *Journal of Chinese Overseas* 1, 2 (November 2005), pp. 169-183.
- Darinee Alagirisamy, "The Problem with Neera: The (Un)Making of a National Drink in Late Colonial India", *The Indian Economic & Social History Review* 56, no. 1 (1 January 2019), pp. 77-97.
- Arunima Datta, *Fleeting Agencies A Social History of Indian Coolie Women in British Malaya* (Cambridge University Press, 2020), Chapter 5 (Becoming "Ranis": Coolie Women as Rani Jhansi Regiment Recruits in World War II).

Week 7 Environment, Ecology, and Disease in Colonial Asia

Guest Lecture by Dr. Jack Greatrex, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Nanyang Technological University

Keywords: Disease; plantations; commerce; bacteriology; ecology.

Assigned Readings:

- Peckham Robert. *Epidemics in Modern Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), Chapters 1 ‘Mobility’ and 3 ‘Environment’.
- Lenore Manderson, *Sickness and the State: Health and Illness in Colonial Malaya, 1870-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), Introduction and Chapter 1, ‘Biology, Medical Ideas and the Social Context of Illness’.

Further Readings:

- Richard Grove, *Green Imperialism, Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism, 1600-1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), Introduction.
- Michael G Vann, “Colonial Sewers Led to More Rats”, in Anna Tsing et al. ed., *The Feral Atlas*, online access, <https://feralatlans.supdigital.org/poster/colonial-sewers-led-to-more-rats>.

Tutorial

Question for Discussion and Essays: How did European colonialism transform environments and ecosystems in Asia — and what were the implications for disease emergence and transmission? How did European biomedicine and public health understand and respond to the links between environment and disease? “The sole excuse for colonialism is medicine” — Hubert Lyautey. Using case studies of colonial Asia, discuss.

Assigned Readings:

- Warwick Anderson, ““Where Every Prospect Pleases and Only Man is Vile”: Laboratory Medicine as Colonial Discourse”, *Critical Inquiry*, 18:3 (1992), 506-529.
- David Arnold, *The Problem of Nature: Environment, Culture, and European Expansion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), Chapter, ‘The Place of Nature.’
- Michitake Aso, *Rubber and the Making of Modern Vietnam: An Ecological History, 1897-1975* (North Chapel, N. C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2018), Chapters 4 ‘Managing Disease’ and 5, ‘Turning Tropical.’

Recess Week

Week 8 Southeast Asia: From WWII to Independence

Lecture

Keywords: Imagined communities, print capitalism, Pan-Asianism, Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere

Assigned Readings:

- Benedict Anderson, “Japan: ‘The Light of Asia’”, in Josef Silberstein ed., *Southeast Asia in World War II: Four Essays* (New Heaven, CT: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1966), 13-50

Tutorial

Question for Discussion and Essays: Did Japan liberate Southeast Asia from Western imperialism?

Assigned Readings:

- “The Japanese Blueprint for Southeast Asia”, in Harry J. Benda and John A. Larkin eds., *The World of Southeast Asia: Selected Historical Readings* (New York: Harper& Row, Publishers, 1967), 219-223. [on NTULearn]
- Pramodya Ananta Toer, *The Mute’s Soliloquy* (NY: Hyperion East, 1999), “Death in a Time of Change” and “Working for the Japanese”, 153-191.
- Pang Yang Huei, “A Tangled Web of Wartime Collaboration & Survival in Singapore: A Chinese Farmer’s Experience,” in *Reflections and Interpretations, Oral History Centre 25th Anniversary Publication*.

Week 9 Chinese Civil War, Migration and Displacement across Asia

Lecture

Keywords: Partition, the Chinese Civil War, refugees, diaspora, nationalism, trade, migration

Assigned Reading:

- Suzanne Pepper, *Civil War in China: The Political Struggle, 1945-1949* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978), chapters 2, 3 and 7

Tutorial

Question for Discussion and Essays: The Chinese Civil War between 1945 to 1949 led to a mass exodus from mainland China to many parts of the world. How did the emergence of this Chinese diaspora affect development in Asia-Pacific?

Assigned Readings:

- Peter E. Hamilton, *Made in Hong Kong: Transpacific Networks and a New History of Globalization* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2021), introduction and chapter 1.
- Karen M. Teoh, *Schooling Diaspora: Women, Education, and the Overseas Chinese in British Malaya and Singapore, 1850s-1960s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), chapter 5

Week 10 Asia's Cold War

Lecture

Keywords: Cold War in Asia, Cultural Cold War, Sino-British relations, Sino-American relations

Assigned Readings:

- Michael Szonyi and Hong Liu, "New Approaches to the Study of the Cold War in Asia", in Zhang Yangwen, Hong Liu & Michael Szonyi eds, *The Cold War in Asia: The Battle for Hearts and Minds*, (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 1-11.
- Ng, Michael, Mok, Florence, Wong, John and Wu, Wallace, "Hearts and Minds in Hong Kong's New Territories: Agriculture and Vegetable Marketing in a Cold War Borderland, circa 1946-1967", *Modern Asian Studies*, 57:6 (2023), 1931-58.

Tutorial

Question for Discussion and Essays: How did Cold War unfolded in Asia? Why is it impossible to study Cold War in Asia?

Assigned Readings:

- Florence Mok, "Disseminating and Containing Communist Propaganda to Overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia through Hong Kong, the Cold War Pivot, 1949-1960", *The Historical Journal*, 65:5 (2021), 1397-1417.
- Choo Chin Low, "The Repatriation of the Chinese as a Counter-Insurgency Policy during the Malayan Emergency", *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 45:3 (2014), 363-392.
- Patrick Major and Rana Mitter, "East is East and West is West? Towards a comparative Socio-Cultural History of the Cold War", *Cold War History*, 4:1 (2003), 1-22.
- Wen-Qing Ngoei, "The deeper roots of a potential new Cold War with China", *The Washington Post*, April 5, 2022
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2022/04/05/deeper-roots-potential-new-cold-war-with-china/>.
- Tintin Wulia, "The Name Game", *Inside Indonesia*, October 12, 2008,
<https://www.insideindonesia.org/the-name-game>

Week 11 Decolonization without Democratization?

Lecture

Keywords: Hong Kong, Decolonization, Democratization, China, Retrocession

Assigned Readings

- John Darwin, "Hong Kong in British Decolonization", in Judith M. Brown and Rosemary Foot eds, *Hong Kong's Transitions, 1842-1997* (London, 1997), 16-32.

- Florence Mok, “Town Talk: Enhancing the ‘Eyes and Ears’ of the Colonial State in British Hong Kong, 1950s-1975”, *Historical Research*, 95:268 (2022), 287-308.

Tutorial

Question for Discussion and Essays: Unlike other colonial societies that were experiencing rapid demographic change, industrialization and the Cold War after the Second World War, it did not experience mass rebellions, high crime rates and regime changes. It also did not undergo significant “democratization”. Was Hong Kong an anomaly?

Assigned Reading:

- Florence Mok, “Public Opinion Polls and Covert Colonialism in British Hong Kong”, *China Information*, 33:1 (2019), 66-87.
- Lau Siu-kai, “Chinese Familism in an Urban-Industrial Setting: The Case of Hong Kong”, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 43:4 (1981), 977-992.
- Ambrose Yeo-chi King, “Administrative Absorption of Politics in Hong Kong: Emphasis on the Grass Roots Level”, *Asian Survey*, 15:5 (1975), 422-439.

Week 12 Migration in Post-WWII Asia-Pacific

Guest Lecture by Ms. Doris Chan, PhD candidate, Nanyang Technological University
Keywords: migration, late colonialism/decolonization, Cold War, Chinese/Overseas Chinese/Chinese Overseas/Chinese diaspora

Assigned Readings:

1. Adam McKeown, ‘Chinese Emigration in Global Context, 1850-1940,’ *Journal of Global History* 5, no. 1 (2010): 95-124.
2. Sunil Amrith, ‘Reconstructing the “Plural Society”’: Asian Migration between Empire and Nation, 1940-1948,’ *Past & Present* 210, no. 6 (2011): 237-57.
3. Sunil Amrith, *Migration and Diaspora in Modern Asia* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), Chapter 4, “Migration, Development, and the Asian City, 1950-1970.”

Tutorial

Questions for Discussion and Essays: Consider different Chinese migrational/diasporic experiences after the Second World War. How did they differ (or not) from the pre-war experiences and what were the major concerns?

(Alternatively, you can replace Chinese with other Asia-Pacific groups.)

Assigned Readings: (Choose 2 out of 3)

1. Madeline Y. Hsu, ‘The Disappearance of America’s Cold War Chinese Refugees, 1948-1966,’ *Journal of American Ethnic History* 31, no. 4 (2012): 12-33.

2. Ting-Hong Wong, 'College Admissions, International Competition, and the Cold War in Asia: The Case of Overseas Chinese Students in Taiwan in the 1950s,' *History of Education Quarterly* 56, no. 2 (2017): 331-57.
3. Rachel Leow, 'Beyond Diaspora's Horizons: Mass Deportations to China and an Alternative to the Diaspora Paradigm,' *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 24, no. 4 (2023): 585-605.

Week 13 Review Session

Individual Consultations on the Final Research Paper & Exam

PROVISIONAL