

# HIST 2424: Global China: A History of Migration

## Gina Anne Tam

Today, overseas Chinese comprise the fourth-largest diaspora in the world, with millions of Chinese citizens creating communities in nearly every country in the world. The purpose of this class is to explore the history of these overseas communities, taking note of how migration has shaped the identities, cultures, and lived experiences of people who claim some connection to the space that today we call China. Our class is grounded in a critical exploration of the concept of diaspora, focused on the tension between the purported existence of an inherent cultural connection among overseas Chinese while also recognizing the diversity created through the transnational cultural, economic, and familial connections between and among peoples within and outside of China. Our class will begin in the sixteenth century, which saw the first sustained migrations of peoples from China into Southeast Asia following the Ming dynasty's removal of a ban on maritime trade. From there, we will explore the following topics: the role of imperialism in compelling, limiting, and shaping migration patterns; the importance of familial and kinship networks; the role of global capitalism in transnational labor networks; connections between and among Chinese overseas in China's revolutions; the effects of gendered hierarchies and racial violence on the lived experience of migrant communities; transnational political networks among overseas Chinese during the cold war; and the multifaceted constructions of intersectional identities in a globalizing world with an increasingly powerful Chinese nation.

This class is also designed to introduce students to historical writing. Students will be analyzing a wide variety of historical sources and thoughtfully and critically using them in the construction of historical narratives. We will also be critically engaging with important and cutting-edge historical scholarship so that we may thoughtfully engage with historiographical debates. This class is reading-intensive (expect to read approximately 100 pages a week), and requires a substantial time commitment to both complete the coursework and grapple with the complex issues at hand.

### **Learning Objectives:**

#### *Written Communication (WC)*

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- 1.) Write a sustained academic work with appropriate use of evidence and developed reasoning to support an argument
- 2.) Improve their writing and respond to feedback
- 3.) Craft prose that conforms to the conventions of the discipline of history

#### *Historical Perspectives*

- 1.) Analyze major historical events, contexts or processes.
- 2.) Use these events, contexts and processes to better understand the unique character of cultures, institutions or ideas.

### **Assignments**

*Attendance and participation (10%):* Punctual attendance at all colloquium meetings; completion of all reading assignments and movie viewings in advance of class; and consistent participation in discussion.

*Weekly notes (25%)* You will also be expected to take notes on the week's readings. Before each class, each student should submit a "Quote Notes" handout, which asks students to pull quotes from the readings that emphasize particular topics. This handout will be distributed in the first week, and will be due on T-learn the 8 PM before class.

*Memoir analysis (15%):* For this midterm project, students will write a 600-800 word-paper analyzing Buwei Yang Chao's *Autobiography of a Chinese Woman*. More instructions will be submitted in class.

*Final research project (50%):* For our final project, students will write a short final research paper in which they make an historical argument about the history of Global Chinese migration through the lens of one memoir. Students will choose one memoir based on the topic of Chinese migration (a list will be provided for students, but they are encouraged to seek out and find their own), and based upon this memoir, will complete several scaffolded assignments that will then result in a final research paper. Students will submit the following:

- 1.) A short reflection on the memoir chosen (600 words) (10%)
- 2.) A secondary source review of three relevant secondary sources (600-800 words) (15%)
- 3.) A rough draft (2200-2500 words) (10%)
- 4.) Final paper (15%)

\*Please note that a final paper grade will only be awarded to students who first submit a rough draft.

### **Books and readings:**

#### Books to purchase:

Buwei Yang Chao, *Autobiography of a Chinese Woman* (Buy kindle version)

#### Films to watch on TriniTV:

*Crazy Rich Asians* (2019)

*City of Sadness* (1989)

*The Farewell* (2019)

*The Search for General Tso* (2014)

*PBS Series: Asian-Americans*

#### All other reading assignments

All other readings will be posted on T-learn in weekly folders.

### **Policies:**

*Attendance:* You should do your best to attend all classes. If you need to miss more than two classes, please talk to me so we can come up with alternative ways to make up participation points.

*Quote Notes:* Quote notes will be due 8 PM the day before class. You can miss two with no penalty. If you need an extension on more than one quote notes, please talk to me in advance.

*Paper submission instructions:* Papers are due by the time class starts on T-learn. If you need an extension, please speak to me about alternative arrangements.

*On class discussion:* We will be discussing difficult topics with contemporary significances today. In order to ensure that our discussions are inclusive and productive, we will create community guidelines that will help us, collectively, create the kind of environment where we can discuss those difficult topics. All students are expected throughout the semester to adhere to these community guidelines.

#### *Honor code:*

All students are covered by a policy that prohibits dishonesty in academic work. Under the Honor Code, a faculty member will (or a student may) report an alleged violation to the Academic Honor Council. It is the task of the Council to investigate, adjudicate, and assign a punishment within certain guidelines if a violation has been verified. **Students who are under the Honor Code are required to pledge all written work that is submitted for a grade: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received any**

**unauthorized assistance on this work” and their signature. The pledge may be abbreviated 'pledged' with a signature.**

*Students with disabilities:*

If you have a documented disability and will need accommodations in this class, please speak with me privately early in the semester. All discussions will remain confidential. In order to receive accommodations, you must be registered with Disability Services for Students. If you are not already registered with DSS, please contact their office at 999-7411 or [dss@trinity.edu](mailto:dss@trinity.edu).

*Title IX Mandatory Reporting:* All faculty are mandatory Title IX reporters, which means that, by law, I am required to report any instances of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, non-consensual sexual intercourse, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual exploitation, intimate partner violence, stalking, and related retaliation that I am aware of to the Title IX Coordinator. This means that if you share information with me about any incidents that implicate the Sexual Misconduct or Anti-Harassment Policies, I am required to report all information to the Title IX Coordinator. My report does not initiate the complaint process, and you are in control over how you choose to engage with our Title IX Coordinator.

If you have any questions, you may email me at [gtam@trinity.edu](mailto:gtam@trinity.edu). Give me 24 hours to respond.

## Weekly Schedule

### August 26: Introduction

#### Week 2: Conceptualizing diaspora

August 31:

- Adam McKeown, "Conceptualizing Chinese diasporas, 1842 to 1949." *Journal of Asian Studies* (1999) [306-337].

September 2:

- Shelly Chan. "The case for diaspora: A temporal approach to the Chinese experience." *The Journal of Asian Studies* (2015) [107-128].
- Madeline Hsu, "Decoupling Peripheries from the Center: The Dangers of Diaspora in Chinese Migration Studies." *DIASPORA* 20, no. 2 (2019) [204-215].

#### Week 3: Chinese migration in the age of Western imperialism

September 7:

- Wang Ta-hai, *The Chinaman Abroad: or, a Desultory Account of the Malayan Archipelago, Particularly of Java*, (1791) [x-xv, 28-41].

September 9:

- Craig A. Lockard, "'The Sea Common to All': Maritime Frontiers, Port Cities, and Chinese Traders in the Southeast Asian Age of Commerce, ca. 1400-1750." *Journal of World History* (2010) [219-247]
- Movie: *Crazy Rich Asians* (2018)

#### Week 4: Nineteenth century emigration part 1: Immigration infrastructures

September 14:

- The Chinese Exclusion Act (Full Text) (1882)  
[https://www.ourdocuments.gov/print\\_friendly.php?flash=false&page=transcript&doc=47&title=Transcript+of+Chinese+Exclusion+Act+%281882%29](https://www.ourdocuments.gov/print_friendly.php?flash=false&page=transcript&doc=47&title=Transcript+of+Chinese+Exclusion+Act+%281882%29)

- Yan Phou Lee, "The Chinese Must Stay," (1889).  
<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=chi.17984155&view=1up&seq=493>

September 16:

- Adam M. McKeown, *Melancholy order: Asian migration and the globalization of borders* (2008) [119-184]

### **Week 5: Nineteenth century emigration part 2: Labor and Exclusion**

September 21:

- Grace Delgado, *Making the Chinese Mexican: Global Migration, Localism, and Exclusion in the US-Mexico Borderlands* (2013) [1-40].
- Oral History of the Fong See Family, *Chinese Railroad Oral History Project*

September 23:

- Benjamin N. Narváez, "Abolition, Chinese Indentured Labor, and the State: Cuba, Peru, and the United States during the Mid Nineteenth Century." *The Americas* 76, no. 1 (2019) [5-40].
- Madeline Y. Hsu, *Dreaming of gold, dreaming of home: Transnationalism and migration between the United States and South China, 1882-1943* (2000) [55-89]

### **Week 6: Chinese Revolution + Library Day**

September 28: LIBRARY DAY: how to find and use memoirs for research (meet in the library)

- Jennifer Jensen Wallach. *Closer to the Truth Than Any Fact: Memoir, Memory, and Jim Crow* (2008), Chapters 1-2.

September 30:

- Chimin Chu, "The Present Revolution in China," *Chinese Students Monthly* (1911)
- Prasenjit Duara. "Nationalists among Transnationals: Overseas Chinese and the Idea of China, 1900-1911." (1997)
- C. Yen, "Overseas Chinese Nationalism in Singapore and Malaya 1877-1912." (2006) [137-162].

### **Week 7: Memoirs across the Pacific**

October 5

- Buwei Yang Chao, *Autobiography of a Chinese Woman* (Read chapters 1-33)

October 7

- Buwei Yang Chao, *Autobiography of a Chinese Woman* (Read the rest)
- **DUE: Memoir analysis on Chao's biography**

### **Week 8: Race, marriage, and the law**

October 12

- Emma Teng, *Eurasian: Mixed Identities in the United States, China, and Hong Kong, 1842-1943* [Introduction, Chapter 1] (2013)
- Sheila Chin Morris, "All the daddies were Chinese and all the mommies were white": growing up biracial in Minnesota (2002)

October 14

- Mary Ting Yi Liu, *The Chinatown Trunk Mystery: Murder, miscegeny, and other dangerous encounters in turn-of-the-century New York* (2005) (Introduction, Chapter 1 and Chapter 5)
- David Ambaras, "In the Antlion's Pit: Abduction Narratives and Marriage Migration between Japan and Fuqing," in *Japan's Imperial Underworlds: Intimate Encounters at the Borders of Empire* (2018)

### **Week 9: War and migration**

October 19: No readings

- **DUE: Memoir reflection on memoir for final project**

October 21:

- Movie: *City of Sadness* (1989)
- Dominic Meng-Hsuan Yang, *The Great Exodus from China: Trauma, Memory, and Identity in Modern Taiwan*. (2020) [Introduction, Chapters 2-3].

### **Week 10: Post-war Hong Kong + Library day**

October 26: LIBRARY DAY: How to find secondary scholarship (meet in library and bring devices for doing research)

October 28:

- Peter Hamilton, *Made in Hong Kong: Transpacific Networks and a New History of Globalization* (Introduction, Chapter 3, and Chapter 5)

### **Week 11: Cold War connections in Southeast Asia**

November 2

- No readings
- **DUE: Secondary source review**

November 4

- Taomo Zhou, *Migration in the Time of Revolution: China, Indonesia, and the Cold War* (2020) [Chapters 3-5]
- Asian-Americans (PBS series) Episode 3
- Chinese Confession Program Investigation Case File (1955)

### **Week 12: Chinese overseas and the fight for Civil Rights**

November 9

- Asian-Americans (PBS Series) (Episode 4)

November 11

- Ellen D. Wu, *The color of success: Asian Americans and the origins of the model minority*. Vol. 100. Princeton University Press, 2015 (Chapter 3)
- Daryl Maeda, *Rethinking the Asian-American Movement*, 2012 (Introduction, Chapter 5).

### **Week 13: The Chinese-ness debate**

November 16

- Allen Chun, "Fuck Chinese-ness: On the Ambiguities of Ethnicity as Cultures as Identity."
- Ien Ang, "On Not Speaking Chinese" in *On Not Speaking Chinese: Living between Asia and the West*, (2001) 21-36

November 18

- Movie: *The Farewell*

### **NOVEMBER 21: ROUGH DRAFT DUE**

### **Week 14: Global Chinese food**

November 23

- Documentary: *The Search for General Tso* (2014)
- Martin F. Manalansan, Anita Mannur, Robert Ji-Song Ku, "Introduction" in *Eating Asian America* (2013)
- Buwei Yang Chao, *How to Cook and Eat in Chinese* (1943) (Selections)

### **Week 15: Migration and the Belt and Road initiative**

November 30

- Julia Lovell, “Into Africa,” in *Global Maoisms* (2020).
  - Taomo Zhou, “Revolution Offshore, Capitalism Onshore,” *Made in China Journal* (2021).
- December 2 NO CLASS; WORK ON FINAL DRAFTS

**Week 16: Chinese voices in a global context**

December 7 (HELD ON ZOOM)

- Jiayang Fan, “Motherland,” *The New Yorker* (2020)
- Yangyang Cheng, “The Grieving and the Grievable.” *SUP China* (2021)

FINAL PAPERS DUE DECEMBER 13