

# ANTH 1410/UGEC 1835. Spring 2024

## Culture of Hong Kong

**Lecture:** Wed. 12:30-2:15, TC Cheng Bldg. C1

**Tutorials:** Various: We will largely follow the existing tutorial slots, but we have a degree of flexibility

**Tutor:** Angelini Gabriela [g.angelini793@hotmail.com](mailto:g.angelini793@hotmail.com)

**Teacher:** Gordon Mathews, NAH 410, [cmgordon@cuhk.edu.hk](mailto:cmgordon@cuhk.edu.hk)

In this course, we will explore the cultural panorama of Hong Kong from an anthropological perspective. We will examine Hong Kong's Chinese traditional heritage; its colonial legacy; its senses of cultural identity as formed over the past fifty years; ethnic minorities in the city; gender, marriage and family; language and education; religion; consumption; wealth, poverty and housing; migration; and finally Hong Kong culture today and tomorrow, particularly considering Hong Kong's recent upheavals. The basic perspective of the course is that Hong Kong is both a Chinese and a global city in its history and culture, and this class will view Hong Kong from both perspectives, balancing them. The essence of the course is critical thinking: multiple viewpoints will be read about and discussed, and, using all the different readings and discussions in the class, you will be asked to think for yourselves about Hong Kong, China, and the world.

### Learning Outcomes

After taking this course, you will be able to

- a) comprehend the cultural complexity of Hong in a wide range of areas;
- b) understand Hong Kong from an anthropological perspective, particularly in terms of Hong Kong cultural identity; and
- c) think more broadly about Hong Kong culture and society past, present, and future

### Grading

- 1) interview a Hong Kong person, preferably someone with a different view from yourself, on the question "what does it mean to be a Hongkonger?" (20%): 4 pages, interview guide handed out Jan. 31; interview and analysis due Feb. 21
- 2) take-home midterm examination (20%): 4 pages, handed out Feb. 28, due March 20
- 3) take-home final examination (40%): 8 pages, handed out April 3, due April 24.
- 4) class participation (20%)

The take-home midterm and final examinations will focus on your comprehension of the readings and lectures. These exams will require you to synthesize what you have learned in thinking more deeply about anthropological questions relating to Hong Kong's culture and society.

Required readings are available on Blackboard for all registered students. Students are required by university policy to submit soft copies of all papers to VeriGuide. Check the website <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/> for how to submit papers through VeriGuide.

## **Grade Descriptors**

**A** Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes, through work that has creatively synthesized course materials and key ideas, to the extent that you show a truly deep understanding of the course in all its ideas. Your arguments in your work are logical and cohesive, the discussion is well-organized, and the writing is clear. All relevant course materials have been fully utilized in your work, and additional material as well has been used from your own research.

**A-** Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes, through work has creatively synthesized course materials and key ideas. Your arguments in your work are logical and cohesive, the discussion is well-organized, and the writing is clear. All relevant course materials have been fully utilized in your work, and perhaps additional material as well from your own research.

**B+** Substantial performance on all learning outcomes. Your arguments in your work are largely logical and cohesive, the discussion is generally well-organized, and the writing is clear. Most relevant course materials have been fully utilized in your work. There are areas for improvement with respect to building a cohesive argument, organizing the discussion, communicating clearly, and/or identifying relevant evidence and using all course materials, but by and large you have turned in good, solid work.

**B** Satisfactory performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall satisfactory performance. Your arguments in your work are somewhat logical and cohesive, the discussion is somewhat well-organized, and the writing is somewhat clear. Much relevant course materials have been fully utilized in your work. There are areas for improvement with respect to building a cohesive argument, organizing the discussion, communicating clearly, and/or identifying relevant evidence.

**B-** Adequate performance on all learning outcomes, OR satisfactory performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall largely adequate performance. Your arguments in your work are partially logical and cohesive, the discussion is partially organized, and the writing is somewhat clear. Some relevant course materials have been fully utilized in your work. There are areas for improvement with respect to building a cohesive argument, organizing the discussion, communicating clearly, and/or identifying relevant evidence.

**C+** Adequate performance on the majority of learning outcomes. Your written work shows some effort, but course materials have not been sufficiently engaged. The argument and the writing is not clear, and/or there is less than full evidence for statements and claims made. There are areas for improvement with respect to building a cohesive argument, organizing the discussion, communicating clearly, and/or identifying relevant evidence.

**C, C-** Barely adequate performance on a number of learning outcomes. These grade will be awarded to students who have missed a large number of classes and/or have failed to use course materials in their written answers.

**Jan. 10: Introduction: Hong Kong as a Global Laboratory**

Optional reading: Grant Evans and Maria Tam, 1997, "Introduction: The Anthropology of Contemporary Hong Kong," in Grant Evans and Maria Tam Siu-mi, *Hong Kong: The Anthropology of a Chinese Metropolis*, p. 1-21

**Jan. 17: Hong Kong's Chinese Tradition**

--Basier, Barbara, 1993, "Hong Kong Women Fight to be Heirs." *The New York Times*, Sept, 14.  
--Sidney C. H. Cheung, 1999, "The Meaning of a Heritage Trail in Hong Kong," *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26(3), p. 570-588

**Jan. 24 Hong Kong's Colonial Legacy**

--Dan Waters, 2013, "A Stroll Up the Hong Kong Mid-Levels Escalator with a Few Digressions along the Way," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Hong Kong Branch*, Vol. 53, p. 263-284  
--Jason Ng, 2010, "All Downhill From There," "Laws of Nature," "The Dark History of Sedan Chairs," p. 18-21, 39-43, 68-71, *Hong Kong State of Mind: 37 Views of a City That Doesn't Blink*

**Jan. 31: Hong Kong Identity**

--Gordon Mathews, Eric Kit-wai Ma, and Tai-lok Lui, 2008, "The Significance of Hong Kong" (part), in *Hong Kong, China: Learning to Belong to a Nation*, p. 1-13  
--Gordon Mathews, 2020, "The Hong Kong Protests in Anthropological Perspective: National identity and What it Means." *Critique of Anthropology* 40(2): 264-269  
--Chiu, Andy, 2021, "Challenges and Complexities of Imagining Nationhood: The Case of Hong Kong's Naturalized Footballers," *Sport in Society*, 24(11): 1878-1892

I'll hand out interview guide Jan. 31; interview is due Feb. 21

**Feb. 7: Ethnic Minorities**

--John Nguyet Erni and Lisa Yuk-ming Leung, 2014, "A Cultural History of South Asians in Hong Kong," (part) in *Understanding South Asian Minorities in Hong Kong*, p. 17-50  
--Jason Y. Ng, 2014, "Maid in Hong Kong," in *No City for Slow Men: Hong Kong's Quirks and Quandaries Laid Bare*, p. 209-223

**Feb. 14: Lunar New Year Holiday****Feb. 21: Gender, Marriage, Family**

--Nicole Constable, 2014, "A Very Tiny Problem" (part) in *Born Out of Place: Migrant Mothers and the Politics of International Labor* (part), p. 1-13  
--Petula Sik-ying Ho, 2014, "An Embarrassment of Riches: Good Men Behaving Badly in Hong Kong," in Deborah S. Davis and Sara L. Friedman, *Wives, Husbands and Lovers: Marriage and Sexuality in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Urban China*, p. 165-188  
--Harris, Paul G., 2023. "Denial of Equal Rights for Hong Kong's Gay Citizens Dovetails with China's Human Rights Playbook." *Hong Kong Free Press*. Dec. 17.

**Feb. 28: Language and Education**

--Po King Choi, 2010, "'Weep for Chinese University': A Case Study of English Hegemony and Academic Capitalism in Higher Education in Hong Kong," *Journal of Education Policy*, 2010, p. 233-252

--Skim: Yiu Wai Chu, 2018, "Who Speaks for the Lion Rock? Cantonese and the Linguaging of Hong Kong Identities," p. 91-116, *Found in Transition: Hong Kong Studies in an Age of China*

I'll hand out the midterm examination Feb. 28; it is due March 20

### **March 6: Reading Week (No Classes)**

#### **March 13: Religion**

--Joseph Bosco, 2015, "Chinese Popular Religion and Hong Kong Identity." *Asian Anthropology* 14(1), p. 8-20

--Jason Y. Ng, 2018, "Ghost of Yulan Past," in *Hong Kong Noir*, pp. 19-32

--Skim: Joseph Bosco, 2016, "The Sacred in Urban Political Protests in Hong Kong," *International Sociology* 31(4), p. 375-395

#### **March 20: Consumption**

--Selina Ching Chan, 2019, "Tea Cafes and the Hong Kong Identity: Food Culture and Hybridity," *China Information* 33(3), P. 311-328

--Jason Y. Ng, 2011, 2015, "The Secrets of Self-Preservation," in *Hong Kong State of Mind*, p. 108-112, "Horo-logic" in *No City for Slow Men*, p. 42-47

#### **March 27: Wealth, Poverty, Housing**

--Leo Goodstadt, 2013, "Housing: Unending Crisis," in *Poverty in the Midst of Affluence*, pp. 91-114

--Jason Y. Ng, 2015, "Lords and Serfs," in *No City for Slow Men*, p. 22-32

#### **April 3: Migration**

--Nicole Dejong Newendorp, 2008, "Split Families, Reunited Families, and Political Difference (part). In *Uneasy Reunions: Immigration, Citizenship and Family Life in Post-1997 Hong Kong*, p. 1-25

--Lars Hamer and Harvey Kong, 2023, "'You Have to Adapt': Why Hongkongers Living in UK Feel Move Was Worth It, Despite Less Money and Fewer Friends," *South China Morning Post*, Nov. 29.

--Kanis Leung, 2023, "Chinese Arrivals Replace Hong Kong Exodus. For them, the City is Still Freer Than the Mainland," AP, Nov. 1

I'll hand out the take-home final exam April 3; it is due April 24

#### **April 10: Hong Kong Since the Handover: A City of Protest**

--Sebastian Veg, 2017, "The Rise of 'Localism' and Civic Identity in Post-Handover Hong Kong: Questioning the Chinese Nation-State," *China Quarterly* (230), p. 323-347.

--Jeffie Lam, 2020, "The Dynamics of Demonization," in Zuraidah Ibrahim and Jeffie Lam, eds., *Rebel City: Hong Kong's Year of Water and Fire*, p. 199-208

#### **April 17: The Future of Hong Kong**

---BBC News, 2021, "Hong Kong: How Life Has Changed under China's National Security Law," June 30.  
 --News.gov.hk. 2021, "Security Law Brings Stability: CE," July 5.  
 --*Hong Kong Free Press*, 2024, "Explainer: Hong Kong's National Security Crackdown – Month 42" Jan. 4  
 --Richburg, Keith B. 2021, "There are Two Hong Kongs: China is Betting One Can Survive Without the Other," *Washington Post*, Sept. 5.  
 --Stevenson, Alexandra, 2023, "Hong Kong Stocks Plunge to Losses for 4<sup>th</sup> Straight Year," *New York Times*, Dec. 29

### **Assigned or Recommended Books on Hong Kong Culture and Society**

Abbas, Ackbar. 1997. *Hong Kong: Culture and the Politics of Disappearance*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Carroll, John M. 2007. *A Concise History of Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Chan Kwok-bun, ed. 2012. *Hybrid Hong Kong*, Oxon: Routledge.

Cheng, Joseph Yu-shek, Jacky Chai-kiu Cheung, and Beatrice Kit-fun Leung, eds. 2017. *Mainlandization of Hong Kong: Pressures and Responses*. Hong Kong: City University of Hong Kong.

Chiu, Stephen, and Tai-lok Lui. 2009. *Hong Kong: Becoming a Chinese Global City*. Oxon: Routledge.

Chu, Yiu-Wai. 2013. *Lost in Transition: Hong Kong Culture in the Age of China*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Chu, Yiu-Wai. 2018. *Found in Transition: Hong Kong Studies in the Age of China*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Constable, Nicole. 1997. *Maid to Order in Hong Kong: Stories of Filipina Workers*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Constable, Nicole. 2014. *Born Out of Place: Migrant Mothers and the Politics of International Labor*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Davis, Deborah S., and Sara L. Friedman, eds. 2014. *Wives, Husbands and Lovers: Marriage and Sexuality in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Urban China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Erni, John Nguyet and Lisa Yuk-ming Leung. 2014. *Understanding South Asian Minorities in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong Press.

Evans, Grant and Maria Tam Siu-mi, eds. 1997. *Hong Kong: The Anthropology of a Chinese Metropolis*. Surrey: Curzon.

Goodstadt, Leo F. 2013. *Poverty in the Midst of Affluence: How Hong Kong Mismanaged its Prosperity*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Goodstadt, Leo F. 2018. *A City Mismanaged: Hong Kong's Struggle for Survival*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Ibrahim, Zuraidah and Jeffie Lam, eds. 2020. *Rebel City: Hong Kong's Year of Water and Fire*. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing.

Ku, Agnes S. and Ngai Pun, eds. 2006. *Remaking Citizenship in Hong Kong: Community, Nation, and the Global City*. London: Routledge.

Johnson, Elizabeth Lominska and Graham E. Johnson. 2019. *A Chinese Melting Pot: Original People and Immigrants in Hong Kong's First 'New Town.'* Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Lang, Graeme, and Lars Ragvald. 1993. *The Rise of a Refugee God: Hong Kong's Wong Tai Sin*. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press.

Lau, C. K. 1997. *Hong Kong's Colonial Legacy: A Hong Kong Chinese's View of the British Heritage*. Hong Kong: Chinese University Press.

Ma, Eric Kit-wai. 2012. *Desiring Hong Kong, Consuming South China: Transborder Cultural Politics 1970-2010*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Mathews, Gordon. 2011. *Ghetto at the Center of the World: Chungking Mansions, Hong Kong*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Mathews, Gordon, Eric Kit-wai Ma, and Tai-lok Lui. 2008. *Hong Kong, China: Learning to Belong to a Nation*. London: Routledge.

Mathews, Gordon and Tai-lok Lui, eds. 2001. *Consuming Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

McDonogh, Gary and Cindy Wong. 2005. *Global Hong Kong*. New York: Routledge.

Newendorp, Nicole Dejong. 2008. *Uneasy Reunions: Immigration, Citizenship and Family Life in Post-1997 Hong Kong*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Ng, Jason Y. 2010. *Hong Kong State of Mind: 37 Views of a City That Doesn't Blink*. Hong Kong: Blacksmith Books.

Ng, Jason Y. 2014. *No City for Slow Men: Hong Kong's Quirks and Quandaries Laid Bare*. Hong Kong: Blacksmith Books.

Ng, Jason Y. 2016. *Umbrellas in Bloom: Hong Kong's Occupy Movement Uncovered*. Hong Kong: Blacksmith Books.

O'Conner, Paul. 2012. *Islam in Hong Kong: Muslims and Everyday Life in China's World City*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Polley, Jason S., Vinton W.K. Poon, and Lian-Hee Wee, eds. 2018. *Cultural Conflict in Hong Kong: Angles on a Coherent Imaginary*. Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan.

Sinn, Elizabeth, and Christopher Munn, eds. 2017. *Meeting Place: Encounters across Cultures in Hong Kong, 1841-1984*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Siu, Helen F. and Agnes S.. Ku, eds. 2008. *Hong Kong Mobile: Making a Global Population*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Tsang, Steve. 2004. *A Modern History of Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Vecchio, Francesco. 2015. *Asylum Seeking and the Global City*. London: Routledge.

Ward, Barbara E. 1989. *Through Other Eyes: An Anthropologist's View of Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Chinese University Press.

Watson, James L. and Rubie S. Watson. 2004. *Village Life in Hong Kong: Politics, Gender and Ritual in the New Territories*. Hong Kong: Chinese University Press.

Waters, Dan. 2005. *One Couple, Two Cultures: 81 Western-Chinese Couples Talk About Love and Marriage*. Hong Kong: MCCM Creations.

White, Barbara-Sue. 1994. *Turbans and Traders: Hong Kong's Indian Communities*. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press.

Yu, Fu-lai Tony and Diana S. Kwan. 2020. *Social Construction of National Reality: Taiwan, Tibet, and Hong Kong*. Lanham MD: Lexington Books.