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## HONG KONG CULTURE

### I. AIMS

- (1) To examine the symbolic and cultural meanings embedded in Hong Kong society;
- (2) To decipher the cultural and social processes underlying the identity formation of the Hong Kong people - locally, nationally and globally;
- (3) To sensitize students to the interplay among culture, power and politics in various domains of social life from a critical perspective.

### II. INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to

- Explain the various facets of Hong Kong culture including its structure, history, spatiality, generational differences, power dynamics, and local/ national/ global connections;
- Analyze culture in terms of the values, meanings, discourses and ideologies underpinning public policies, politics, the media and everyday life;
- Formulate their own informed interpretations of Hong Kong culture.

### III. CONTENT

The course, consisting of a series of lectures and seminars, is organized around 3 thematic clusters:

- i) Identity Issues
  - ii) Space, Community and Cityscape
  - iii) Politics and Civil Society
- “Identity Issues” consists of two sub-themes, namely (i) *Hong Kong Identity* and (ii) *Chinese National Identity*. *Hong Kong Identity* focuses on the historical emergence and formation of local identity through the local/ national/ global nexus; it looks at the roles of popular culture (market), the state and civil society in shaping our local culture since the 1960s. *Chinese National Identity* focuses on a different facet of identity formation among the Hong Kong people, regarding the construction of “Chineseness” in different domains of social life including education, politics and the mass media from colonial times to the post-colonial era.
  - “Space, Community and Cityscape” extends the discussion of culture and identity into the arena of urban space and development, exploring the issues of memory and heritage, public versus private space, globalism and localism, community and development, urban versus rural, as well as home and housing inequalities.
  - “Politics and Civil Society” takes issue with the political apathy thesis from different perspectives, deciphers our political culture (or the cultural fabric of our political society) and examines the dynamics in civil society as well as the public sphere, with a view to exploring the possibility of democratic change. The discussion brings us back to the identity theme.

### IV. MODES OF LEARNING/ASSESSMENT

Short Assignment	10%
Seminar Presentation	15%
Seminar Participation	10% (including attendance & participation on 22/9 & in the seminars)
Essay	25%
Final Exam	40%

- ※ Students are required to attend the seminars; each student will do one group presentation and participate in discussion in the seminars.
- ※ A short assignment, *on an individual basis*, is due via Canvass on **October 11 (Sun), 11:59pm**. (See section VI for the details)
- ※ An essay, *on an individual basis*, is due via Canvass on **December 20 (Sun), 11:59pm**. Please choose from among the 8 seminar questions (**Q1-Q8 only**) and write an essay of 2,000-2,500 words in English or in Chinese. References should be included.
- ※ Final exam will be in the form of essays.

## V. SCHEDULE FOR LECTURES AND SEMINARS

Wk	Tuesday	Thursday
1	[08/09] Introduction	[10/09] Identity Issues I
2	[15/09] Identity Issues I	[17/09] The Concept of "Culture"
3	[22/09] <b>Discussion &amp; Seminar Arrangement</b>	[24/09] Identity Issues I
4	[29/09] Identity Issues II	[01/10] {~holiday~}
5	[06/10] Identity Issues II	[08/10] Identity Issues II/ Space & Community
6	[13/10] Space & Community	[15/10] <b>Seminar (1)</b>
7	[20/10] <b>Seminar (2)</b>	[22/10] Space & Community
8	[27/10] Space & Community	[29/10] Space & Community
9	[03/11] <b>Seminar (3)</b>	[05/11] <b>Seminar (4)</b>
10	[10/11] Politic & Civil Society	[12/11] Politics & Civil Society
11	[17/11] Politics & Civil Society	[19/11] Politics & Civil Society
12	[24/11] <b>Seminar (5)</b>	[26/11] <b>Seminar (6)</b>
13	[01/12] <b>Seminar (7)</b>	[03/12] <b>Seminar (8)</b>

## VI. SHORT ASSIGNMENT

Write an essay of 500-800 words, in English or in Chinese, on ONE of the following two questions with CLOSE reference to the required reading. (You are advised to focus your discussion primarily on the reading.) The purpose is to give you some preliminary training regarding the method, approach as well as language used in cultural/discourse analysis. [Due date: October 11, 11:59pm]

### Question (A)

*"The formation of Hong Kong identity is a process of hegemonic construction." Discuss this statement with reference to the right of abode example.*

Reading {also reading for seminar 1}:

[#31] Ku, Agnes S. (2001b). "Hegemonic Construction, Negotiation and Displacement – Struggle over Right of Abode in Hong Kong." *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 4 (3): 259-27.

### Question (B)

*"The nation is a cultural and political construction." Discuss this statement with reference to the following reading.*

Reading {also reading for seminar 2}:

[#20] 盧思騁 (1997), "民族主義與殖民統治---國粹派的民族觀念系統" 載羅永生 (編) (1997): **【誰的城市?】**。香港: 牛津大學, 頁 39-67。

## VII. CLASS DISCUSSION, SEMINAR QUESTIONS AND READINGS

### [22/09] Discussion

*Identify specific idioms or icons that you think most represent the Hong Kong ethos at the present time and analyze their symbolic meanings. How far do these meanings reflect some larger ideological discourses? (\*Please prepare two different examples in writing, in just a couple of lines, and submit them by Sep 21, 10pm.)*

#### Readings

吳俊雄 (2002): 「尋找香港本土意識」  
Chan (2019), “Tea cafes”

### [15/10] Seminar Q1 [Identity II] – Narrating Hong Kong

*Analyze the cultural frameworks and discourses used to narrate Hong Kong and discuss how these constructions shed light on the representation of Hong Kong identity from past to present.*

#### Basic Readings

Turner & Ngan (1995), *Hong Kong Sixties*  
Ku (2018), “Identity as Politics”  
Wang (2020), “Local Identity in a Global City”  
Ku (2001b), “Hegemonic Construction”

#### Recommended

許寶強 (2012 續篇), 頁 1-8

#### [Advice]

- Consider the cultural frameworks, metaphors and discourses used to describe Hong Kong.
- Analyze developments and changes over time and pay attention to possible differences among different domains (e.g. popular culture, government promotion, and politics).
- Reflect on how identity boundaries were drawn with what implications.

### [20/10] Seminar Q2 [Identity II] – Constructing “China”

*Examine the divergent discourses of Chinese nationalism whereby Hong Kong has been variously positioned (e.g. incorporated or differentiated) vis-à-vis mainland China over the years.*

#### Basic Readings

盧思騁 (1997): 「民族主義與殖民統治」, 載羅永生(編)  
羅永生(2014): 「香港本土意識的前世今生」 {節錄}  
黎國威 (2017): 「香港性與中國性之間：廣東話」  
Tse (2014), “Constructing Chinese Identity”

#### Recommended

李祖喬 (2011): 「香港文化的邊緣」, 載彭麗君(編)

#### [Advice]

- Pay attention to the differences and dynamics in the discourses between different camps and in different fields; explain the development as well as the outcome.

**[03/11] Seminar Q3 [Space] – Cityscape**

*How have the city images of Hong Kong been formed, mobilized and contested? Analyze how cultural factors interact with other factors in shaping the cityscape as well as spatial development of Hong Kong since the 1980s.*

Basic Reading

Healey (2002), "On Creating the 'City' as a Collective Resource."

Ku and Tsui (2008), "The 'Global City' as a Cultural Project"

Jessop and Sum (2000), "An Entrepreneurial City in Action"

Chin (2014) "Diasporic Memories and Conceptual Geography" (Extracts only)

Recommended

梁啟智 (2013): 「高鐵爭議中的邊緣化和融合想像」

## [Advice]

- Healey's article provides a clear exposition of the idea of city images.
- Give some thought to the divergent ideologies and discourses at work at different times.
- Other factors include political economy, geography and social factors etc.
- Consider not only the government but also other actors who have played a role.

**[05/11] Seminar Q4 [Space] – Local Places**

*What is a place in socio-cultural terms? Analyze the dynamics in the processes of place-making with reference to some specific examples in Hong Kong.*

Basic Readings

Gieryn (2000), "A Space for Place in Sociology"

Abbas (1997), *Culture and Politics of Disappearance*.

Ku (2015), "Making Cultures and Spaces" [a Chinese version in 谷淑美 2018]

谷淑美、徐匡慈 (2009): 「一場新社區運動帶來的啓迪」

Recommended

許寶強 (2009), 頁 224-237

## [Advice]

- Gieryn's article provides a good overview on the notion of place.
- Think about the role of culture in place-making. (Consider how cultural resources are used and how discourse and space shape each other in generating cultural resources etc.)
- Consider the dynamics contributing to the making/ un-making/ re-making of places (as well as communities.)

**[24/11] Seminar Q5 [Space] – Home & Housing**

*"Home is a cultural construction that reinforces social inequalities." Discuss this statement with reference to the class structure, housing policies and public discourses in Hong Kong. (See advice on p.5)*

Readings

陳錦華等 (1997): 【香港城市與房屋】，頁 141-156，169-178。

黎婉薇 (1996): 「大都會計劃的背後」。

Choi et al. (2019). "Luxury Housing"

Wilson & Muller (2004), "Growth Coalitions"

Recommended

許寶強 (2012 續篇)，頁 16-22

## [Advice]

- Analyze how “home” has been culturally constructed in society.
- Delineate the social/ housing inequalities and explain in what ways the cultural construction of “home” reinforces (or simply reflects) such inequalities.

**[26/11] Seminar Q6 [Politics]: Collective Action (Umbrella Movement)**

“The Umbrella Movement was as much about questions of identity as about political democracy.” Discuss.

Basic Readings

Wan (2017), “Artwork” (a Chinese version in 溫文灝 2020)

Ku (2019), “In Search of a New Political Subjectivity”

羅永生 (2018), 載鄭煒、袁瑋熙 (編)

駱穎佳 (2020), 「空間政治的情感轉向」

[Advice]

- Consider how identity boundaries were formulated in the Hong Kong context, e.g. local vs. national, young vs. old generation, and how identity was expressed in political, cultural (e.g. through art) and emotional terms during protests.

**[01/12] Seminar Q7 [Politics]: Solidarity & Conflict in Civil Society**

The pro-democracy movement has shown varying degrees of unity/disunity over time. Explain the cultural and political dynamics contributing to such development during 2014-2019.

Basic Readings

Lin (2017), “Contextualized Transmedia Mobilization”

Law (2019), “The Spectrum of Frames”

Yuen (2018), “Contesting Middle-Class Civility”

Lee (2020), “Solidarity in the Anti-Extradition Bill Movement”

[Advice]

- Pay attention not only to political differences but also to how specific frames, discourses and mechanisms were used to mobilize, unite, and/ or fragment the movement from within.

**[03/12] Seminar Q8 [Politics] – State Power and Hegemony**

*The post-handover years have seen increasing political conflicts. Analyze the political and cultural (e.g. hegemonic) strategies used by the government to maintain power and contain opposition, and comment on their effectiveness.*

Basic Readings

Ku (2007), “Constructing the “Order” Imagery”

Ku (2004c), “Negotiating” (Note: Focus on the parts relating more to the question.)

Ku (2001a), “The ‘Public’ up against the State”

Cheng (2019), “Hong Kong’s Hybrid Regime”

Recommended

Ku (2009a), “Civil Society ...” (on the July 1 march in 2003)

[Advice]

- Try to first delineate a general picture of political power and cultural hegemony based on the readings, and then illustrate with examples how they were at work in some cases.
- Beware of the difference between political and cultural strategies.
- Regarding the latter, consider how discourses might serve to rationalize certain action, and how hegemonic framework might or might not work in certain situations.

## VIII. REFERENCES

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