

## Cultures and Contexts: Asian/Pacific/American Cultures

M/W 9:30-10:45, 194 Mercer Street, Room 306

Professor: Thuy Linh Tu ([thuylinhtu@nyu.edu](mailto:thuylinhtu@nyu.edu))  
Square, Room 406)

Office Hours: Mon/Wed 1:45-2:45 (20 Cooper

TA: Sara Kozameh ([kozameh@nyu.edu](mailto:kozameh@nyu.edu))

Office Hours: tk (location tk)

TA: Eva Hageman ([evahageman@gmail.com](mailto:evahageman@gmail.com))

Office Hours: tk (location tk)

**Course Description:** This course surveys significant moments and ideas in the study of Asian/Pacific/American cultures. It explores how cultural, political, social, and economic forces, including migration, modernization, racial formation, and political mobilization, have shaped Asian Pacific American histories and communities. How have Asian/Pacific/Americans been understood (and understood themselves) as a “race”? How have the movements of goods and peoples between and beyond “Asia” and “America” shaped these ideas? How do the histories of war and colonization in Asia and the recent economic developments in this region inform the ways we understand and talk about Asian/Pacific/Americans?

### Course Requirements:

1. Attendance: Attendance and participation is mandatory. Please come to class on time and please remember to sign the attendance sheet during each meeting. Repeated absences will lower your grade. **Please note that attendance in recitation is also mandatory.** (15%)
2. Short papers: In order to facilitate comprehension of key ideas and to prepare you for discussion, you are required to submit four (4) three to four page (3-4 page) précis of the readings for 1 week. The précis should cover: 1. the central arguments being made in the readings 2. how the author supports these arguments (through what sources and/or methodologies), and 3. the significance of these ideas to the week’s theme and to our ongoing discussions. You are free to write on the materials for any week, but **two (2) of the papers must be handed in before the midterm.** Please submit the papers at the beginning of the class period in which we are discussing the readings. You may be asked to share your précis in class. (30%)
3. Mid-term exam (25%)
4. Final exam (30%): The final exam will be cumulative.

**Course Materials:** Shelly Sang-Hee Lee, *New History of Asian America* (available online through Bobst Library). All other articles will be available through NYU Classes.

### Course Schedule:

**Please note that we will be visiting the Museum of Chinese in the Americas for a tour of its core collection on October 13 and 14. MoCA is located at 215 Center Street (below Grand), about a 15-minute walk from our classroom. The tour begins promptly at 10am. There is a \$10 fee for the tour, which will be collected during class.**

9/2      **Introduction**

Week 2 **When does history begin?**

9/7 No Class, Labor Day

9/9 Lee, Chapter 1: Gary Okhiro, "When and Where Do I Enter"

Week **Race, Labor, and Empire**

9/14: Nerissa S. Balce, "Filipino Bodies: Lynching and the Language of Empire"

9/16: Moon Ho Jung, "Outlawing 'Coolies': Race, Nation, and Empire in the Age of Emancipation," *American Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (September 2005): 677-701.

Week 4 **Migrants and Cosmopolitans**

9/21 Lee, Chapter 2; Nayan Shah, "Passions, Violence, and Asserting Honor" in *Stranger Intimacy*

9/23 Vivek Bald, "Out of the East and Into the South" in *Bengali Harlem*

Week 5 **Excluded and Interned**

9/28 Lee, Chapter 5; Sui Sin Far, "The Story of One White Woman.."

9/30 Lee, Chapter 8, and "Executive Order 9066"

Week 6 **Integrated**

10/5 Lee, Chapter 9

10/7 Lee, Chapter 12

Week 7 **Representing History**

10/13 (No class on Monday, Tuesday meeting): Tour of Museum of Chinese in the Americas (Group 1). Tour begins promptly at 10am. Please arrive no later than 9:50. Group 2 will come to class for midterm review.

10/14 Tour Museum of Chinese in the Americas (Group 2). Tour begins promptly at 10am. Please arrive no later than 9:50. Group 1 will come to class for midterm review.

Week 8: **A Model Minority?**

10/19 Lee, Chapter 10

10/21 Keith Osajima, "Asian Americans as the Model Minority: An Analysis of the Popular Press Image in the 1960s and 1980s;" "The Success Story of One Minority Group in the U.S."

Week 9 **War and Protest**

10/26 In-class midterm

10/28 Lee, Chapter 11

Week 10

11/2 Simeon Man, "Radicalizing Currents: The GI Movement in the Third World."

11/4 Judy Wu, "Hypervisibility and Invisibility: Asian/American Women, Radical Orientalism, and the Revisioning of Global Feminism"

Week 11 **Beauty Queens and Militant Muslims**

11/9 Martin Manalansan, "Gay World Makeover;" Rebecca King-O'Riain, "Percentages, Parts, and Power"

11/11 Iftikhar Dadi, "Shirin Neshat's Photographs as Postcolonial Allegories," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* (Autumn 2008).

Week 12 **Tiger Moms, Sex Workers, and other figures of Transnational Capital**

11/16 Grace Wang, "On Tiger Moms and Music Moms," *Amerasia Journal* (<http://www.amerasiajournal.org/blog/?p=1546>) ; Erin Kue Ninh, "Advice on How not to Misread Tiger Mom," *Amerasia Journal* (<http://www.amerasiajournal.org/blog/?p=1540>)

11/18 Kimberly K Hoang, "Flirting with Capital: Negotiating Perceptions of Pan-Asian Ascendancy and Western Decline in Global Sex Work," *Social Problems* 61 (4): 507-529.

Week 13

11/23 Miliann Kang, "What Does a Manicure Have to Do With Sex?: Racialised Sexualisation of Body Labor in Routine Beauty Services," in *Body/Sex/Work: Intimate, Embodied and Sexualised Labour*

11/25 No class, Thanksgiving

Week 14 **Asian Chic**

11/30 Emma Tarlo, "Ghandi and the Recreation of Indian Dress;" Juanjuan Wu, "Importing Dreams of Luxury: Western Brand Names"

12/2 Viewing: *Vice* Fashion Week International: Cambodia (<http://www.vice.com/fashion-week-internationale/cambodia-full-length>); Review of "China Through the Looking Glass," (<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/08/arts/design/review-in-china-through-the-looking-glass-eastern-culture-meets-western-fashion.html>); Lisa Park, "Consumption Fantasies of Upward Mobility"

Week 15: **Fear of an Asian Planet**

12/7 Julie Sze and Yi Zhou, "Imagining a Chinese Eco-City"

12/9 Hiroko Tabuchi, "Chinese Textile Mill Now Hiring in Places Where Cotton Was King" NYTimes, August 2, 2015

(<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/03/business/chinese-textile-mills-are-now-hiring-in-places-where-cotton-was-king.html?smid=tw-share>)

12/14 Review and Wrap-up