Asian Diasporas
Historical, Contemporary, and Comparative Perspectives

This class examines the experiences of diverse Asians living in diaspora throughout the world for socioeconomic, cultural and/or political reasons. Throughout the quarter, we will discuss the relationships of diasporic populations with their homelands such as China, Korea, Philippines, and Vietnam. We will also study their interactions and lives in their new homelands—including but not limited to the Americas, Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Europe. We will do so by posing the following questions: What are some of the factors that have pushed Asian populations to find a new home? How have labor needs combined with colonialism and neo-colonialism to contribute to this outward migration? How has the combination of technology and modernity hindered or accelerated such movements? What are the life experiences of diasporic Asians in their new homes? What are some of their longings and dreams about their homelands? How does the concept of homeland evolve in the diaspora? How do second and third generation Asians interact with their elders both at home and in the diaspora? How do we define diasporic consciousness and internal dispora? How do cultural expressions and media such as films, the Internet, television, music, and the arts further complicate the concept of homeland and diaspora?

We will start the class by examining the historical and contemporary meanings associated with the concept of diaspora. Later, we will use the broader themes of labor, colonization, war, political domination and culture to understand the dispersal and acculturation of diasporic populations and their longings for their homelands (real or imaginary).

Required Text Book


Additional Readings/Resources: Additional required class readings are listed on the syllabus and will be made available electronically.

Helpful websites and Resources (Please use these and other resources for your midterm presentation).

Literatures of the Asian diaspora: http://complit.la.psu.edu/asiandiaspora/index.htm