

Course Outline

HH3044: Heritage Medicine in Singapore: Chinese and Malay Traditions

Instructors:

Faizah Zakaria, with guest lectures by Michael Stanley-Baker.

Synopsis

This seminar covers two major traditions of ethno-medicine important to Singapore: Chinese and Malay. We examine their intellectual history, evolving practices, their practitioners and patients and its impact on modern society, drawing on history, anthropology, and health research. While the two traditions have generally been studied in silos, this course places them in juxtaposition, enabling us to interrogate connections, interactions, and contestations across traditions.

The course moves forward through thematic seminars, taught in turn by the instructors. Designed to encourage comparisons, we will interrogate how each tradition is defined, the characteristics and influences shaping practice of medicine, the connections between traditional medicine and the natural world, the emergence of hybrid practices such as Peranakan, and how traditional medicine supports, complements, and contests biomedicine in the modern state.

We aim to draw an interdisciplinary audience of students interested in medical humanities from different majors, especially those who are keen to explore medicine beyond the scientific tradition. Such an approach deprivileges biomedicine and institutions such as hospitals to delve into a past where healthcare was less institutionalized and regulated. As such, this class complements the present course offerings in the history department that have focused on colonial medicine and East Asian medical tradition by presenting content on Southeast Asia – in particular, the Malay World. Further, it consolidates the content taught in MSB's classes on science, medicine and biopolitics in East Asia and offers students interested in examining the topic further a chance to adopt a comparative lens. The multiple perspectives and cross-cultural views represented in this class will likely attract a diverse group of students.

Learning Objectives

In this course, students will learn to:

- Conceptualize what constitutes traditional Chinese and Malay medicine, with attention to each medical tradition's connection to religion and political ecology.
- Relate the evolution of medical traditions with the phenomena of migration and contact with different political traditions.
- Compare the ways in which societies, past and present, interpret health and disease.
- Analyse the diverse practice of each medical tradition through primary sources such as manuscripts.
- Conduct an ethnography of a traditional medicine business/practice in Singapore.

Schedule and Readings

Week 1 – Introduction

Week 2 – Traditional Chinese Medicine: A Brief History (Guest Lecture by MSB)

Stanley-Baker, M. and Lo, V. (2021) 'Introduction', in M. Stanley-Baker and V. Lo (eds.) *Routledge Handbook of Chinese Medicine*, Abingdon: Routledge.

Kaptchuk, T.J. (1983) *The Web That Has No Weaver: understanding Chinese medicine*, New York: Congdon and Weed. Chapters 2,3,5,6

Supplemental: *Routledge Handbook*

Week 3 – Traditional Malay Medicine: A Brief History

Noruddin, Nadirah. "Magic or Medicine? Malay Healing Practices." *BiblioAsia: Features* 14.3

(2018). <http://www.nlb.gov.sg/biblioasia/2018/10/16/magic-or-medicine-malay-healing-practices/#easy-footnote-2-11789>.

John D. Gimlette, "The work of the bomor in relation to clinical medicine," in *Malay Poison, Charms and Cures*, (J. & A. Churchill, 1923).

Liesbeth Hesselink, "The Medical Market around 1850," in *Healers on the Colonial Market: Native Doctors and Midwives in the Dutch East Indies*, (Leiden: Brill, 2011), pp. 9-51.

Affendi Mohd Shafri and Intan Azura Shahdan, *Malay Medical Manuscripts: Heritage from the Garden of Healing*, (Pahang: Akademi Jawi Malaysia , 2015)

Week 4 – Religion and Ritual in Chinese Medicine (Guest Lecture by MSB)

Stanley-Baker, M. (2021) 'Daoism and Medicine', in M. Stanley-Baker and V. Lo (eds.) *Routledge Handbook of Chinese Medicine*, Abingdon: Routledge.

Kleinman, A. (1980) *Patients and Healers in the Context of Culture: An Exploration of the Borderland between Anthropology, Medicine and Psychiatry*, Berkeley: University of California. 203-258

Lee, B.O. and Kirmayer, L. (2019) 'Dang-Ki healing: An embodied relational healing practice in Singapore', *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 57: 136346151985844.

Week 5 – Religion and Ritual in Malay Medicine

Norhasnira Ibrahim and Faisal Ahmad Shah, "Prophetic Medicine in Malay Manuscripts: A Brief Study on 19th Century Kitab Tib Manuscript," *E-Proceeding of the 4th International Muzakarah and Mu'tamar on Hadith*, (2019). <http://conference.kuis.edu.my/imam/images/eprosiding/2019/2001-imam-2019.pdf>

Farouk Yahya, *Magic and Divination in Malay Illustrated Manuscripts*, (Leiden: Brill, 2014)

- section on medical manuscripts.

W.E. Maxwell, "Mantra Gajah" *Journal of The Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 45:1, (1906), pp. 1-53

Activity: NAISSE database on Prophetic medicine.

Week 6 – Using Botanicals in Chinese Medicine (Guest lecture by MSB)

Goldschmidt, A.M. (2021) 'Pre-standardised Pharmacology: Han to Song', in M. Stanley-Baker and V. Lo (eds.) *Routledge Handbook of Chinese Medicine*, London: Routledge.

Chase, C. (2021) 'Developments in Chinese Medicine from the Song through the Qing', in M. Stanley-Baker and V. Lo (eds.) *Routledge Handbook of Chinese Medicine*, London: Routledge.

Scheid, V., Bensky, D., and Barolet, R. (2009) *Chinese Herbal Medicine: Formulas & Strategies*: Eastland Press. xi-xlvi

Week 7 – Botanicals in Malay Medicine

Rohani Longuet, "Malay Ethnobotany," in Helaine Selin ed., *Encyclopaedia of the History of Science, Technology and Medicine in Non-Western Cultures*, (Springer, 2008), pp. 852-861

Rashidi Othman, "Landscape Ethnobotanical Study of Malay Midwifery Plant Species: Case Study of Kelantan," *Journal of Architecture, Planning and Construction Management*, 8:1, (2018)

Ismail Munshi and I.H. Burkill, *The Medical Book of Malayan Medicine*, (Singapore: Botanic Gardens, 1930) – section on midwifery.

Week 8 – Field Trip to Herb Garden

Samy, J., Sugumaran, M., and Lee, K.L.W. (2014) *100 Useful Herbs of Malaysia and Singapore: An Introduction to Their Medicinal, Culinary, Aromatic and Cosmetic Uses*, Ed. K.M. Wong: Marshall Cavendish Editions.

Adnan, N. and Othman, N. (2012) 'The Relationship between Plants and the Malay Culture', *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 42: 231-41.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042812010683>

Week 9 – Peranakan Medicine (guest speaker)

Tan Boon Huat (2021), "Yok Tua" Peranakan Magazine.

Week 10 – Traditional Medicine during Epidemics

Craig, S.R., Gerke, B., and van der Valk, J.M.A., (eds.) *Responding to an Unfolding Pandemic: Asian Medicines and Covid-19*. <https://culanth.org/fieldsights/series/responding-to-an-unfolding-pandemic-asian-medicines-and-covid-19>

Entries by Editors, Stanley-Baker, Lynteris, Peng & Hsu, Sun & Hsu, Hofer,

Ochs, S. and Garran, T.A. (2021) 'The Role of Chinese Medicine in Treating and Preventing COVID-19 in China', *Asian Medicine*.

Primary Source:

Ochs, S. and Garran, T.A. (2020) *Chinese Medicine and COVID-19: Results and Reflections from China*. Passiflora Press. <http://passiflora-press.com/product/chinese-medicine-and-covid-19/>

Week 11 - Traditional Medicine in the Singapore State

Faizah Zakaria and Humairah Zainal. "Traditional Malay Medicine in Singapore: A Gramscian Perspective." *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 45:131 (2017), pp. 127-44.

Yang Yan 杨妍, (2021) 'A Brief History of Chinese Medicine in Singapore', in M. Stanley-Baker and V. Lo (eds.) *Routledge Handbook of Chinese Medicine*, London: Routledge.

Rittersmith, A. (2009) 'Contextualising Chinese Medicine in Singapore: Microcosm and Macrocosm', *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford Online*, 1.1: 1-24.

Primary Source: "Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners Act," in *Singapore Statutes Online*. <https://sso.agc.gov.sg/Act/TCMPA2000>

Week 12 – Ethnographic research

Week 13 – Presentations

Course Requirements

This module blends writing assignment with field trips and independent research that places emphasis on collection, synthesis, and interpretation of sources on Chinese and Malay medicine. Students will be assessed on the following metrics:

1. Active Participation – inclusive of in-class and field trip activities (20%)

Deadline: Ongoing

Students are expected to regularly attend class and participation in class will be assessed based on the depth, frequency, quality of your contributions to tutorial discussion as well as their contributions during group activities during field trips and in-class presentations (Week 8 and 13).

2. Reading Response (20%)

Deadline: Choose one week up to Week 12

Each student is to pick one week's readings and write a short response. A reading response is an essay that identifies, contextualizes, and analyses an argument made in the assigned reading(s). It also takes a

position on the reading through its own original argument – applauds what is good, connects the two sets of readings and points out a silence/overlooked perspective/limitation to the author(s)' approach in a respectful and critical way.

3. Mid-term Research Essay (30%)

Deadline: Week 9

In this assignment, students are to research on the history of a **source** (eg. manuscripts) or **practice** (eg. acupuncture or cupping) in traditional Chinese or Malay medicine, in consultation with the instructors. They are to draw on both primary and secondary sources.

4. Ethnographic Documentation (Group Work) (30%)

Deadline: Week 13

This project builds on the research essay and requires students to augment the research done in the essay by working as a group to conduct ethnographic documentation on a traditional medicine practice or business in Singapore. They may use the topic of their research essay as a case study for the practice that they would like to document.

To do well on the team assessment, it is necessary for you to demonstrate positive interdependence and teamwork. In principle, you will receive the same marks as your team. However, your individual score may vary based on feedback about your contributions to the group project.