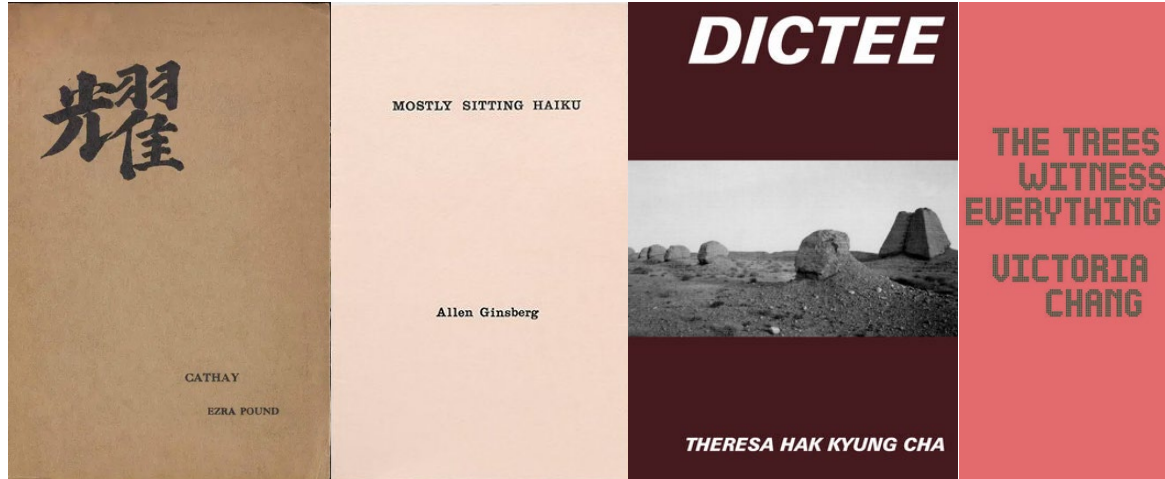


Junior Tutorial
Spring 2025
Instructor: Eunice Lee (she/her)

Asian Forms & Asian American Poetry



Course Description & Learning Objectives

“To make an American poem Chinese,” poet Timothy Yu argues, “we must silence its creepy edges.” (“Chinese Silence No. 36”) This course explores Asian poetic forms in the context of modern and contemporary American poetry, and asks: How have American poets not only “silence[d],” but also amplified and co-opted, Asian poetic traditions? How have these traditions been reimagined and remixed in Asian American poetry? What kinds of formal inspirations have Asian American poets drawn from other methods and mediums, such as literary translation and performance?

Students will become acquainted with poetic forms of Asian origin (e.g., haiku, haibun, ghazal, pantoum, zuihitsu) in the work of major 20th and 21st-century American poets (e.g., Adrienne Rich, Allen Ginsberg, Cathy Park Hong, Etheridge Knight, Ezra Pound, H.D., James Merrill, John Ashbery, John Yau, Ocean Vuong, Sonia Sanchez), while also engaging with key critical texts on race and literary form. This course will offer snapshots of the history of Asian American poetry from Angel Island to #StopAsianHate, as well as an opportunity to examine how works of literature interrogate concepts such as “the Orient,” “Asia,” “Asian America” and other geopolitical constructs.

The course consists of three parts designed towards key learning objectives. Students will:

- Gain familiarity with theoretical and critical approaches in literary studies, as well as key debates in the field of Asian American literature (“Theories & Contexts”).
- Develop the ability to identify poetic forms, and apply this knowledge to close readings of poetry (“Asian Forms & Asian American Poetry”).
- Learn about the history of Asian American poetry, and contextualize literary works in relation to broader literary histories (“Asian Forms & Asian American Poetry”).
- Explore interdisciplinary methods in literary research, e.g., integrating texts in translation and performances (“Beyond Poetry”).

Throughout the semester, students will be able to hone critical, analytical, and writing skills necessary for literary research, working towards a capstone project in the form of a 20-25 page research paper.

Assignments

- Short essay (10%, Week 5)
- Research paper prospectus & annotated bibliography (15%, Week 7)
- First draft of research paper (20%, Week 10)
- Final draft of research paper (30%, Reading Period)
- Participation, including weekly discussion posts (25%)

Required Texts

- Ezra Pound, *Cathay* (1915)
- Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, *Dictee* (1982)
- Solmaz Sharif, *Look* (2016)
- Victoria Chang, *The Trees Witness Everything* (2021)

W	Readings
Part I: Theories & Contexts	
1	Form and race in modern and contemporary American poetry
	<p>Primary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ezra Pound: “In the Station of the Metro” (1913) ▪ Timothy Yu: “Chinese Silence No. 36” (2016) ▪ Terrance Hayes: “American Sonnet for My Past and Future Assassin [I lock you in an American sonnet that is part prison]” (2017) ▪ Monica Youn: “Study of Two Figures (Pasiphaë/Sado)” (2019) <p>Secondary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jahan Ramazani: “Poetry, Modernity, and Globalization” in <i>A Transnational Poetics</i> (2009)
2	Orientalism in American poetry
	<p>Primary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ezra Pound: <i>Cathay</i> (1915) ▪ Yone Noguchi: “What About My Songs” (1897); “A Proposal to American Poets” (1904) <p>Secondary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Edward Said: “Introduction” in <i>Orientalism</i> (1978) ▪ R. F. Kuang: “Asian American Literary Identity and Representation: A Personal Tour of the Field” in <i>Yellowface</i> (2023)
3	Asian American literature: historical contexts and debates
	<p>Primary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Marilyn Chin: “We Are Americans Now, We Live in the Tundra” (1987); “How I Got That Name” (1994); “Blues on Yellow” (2003) <p>Secondary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lisa Lowe: “Heterogeneity, Hybridity, Multiplicity: Marking Asian American Differences” (1991) ▪ Anne Cheng: “Introduction” in <i>Ornamentalism</i> (2018) ▪ Kimiko Hahn: “Angel Island: The Roots and Branches of Asian American Poetry” (2018)

Part II: Asian Forms & Asian American Poetry

4	The Beginnings of Asian American Poetry Primary <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ José García Villa: “[It is what I never said]”; “[am so very am and]” (1942)▪ Cathy Song: “Picture Bride”; “The Youngest Daughter”; “The Violin Teacher” (1983)▪ Li-Young Lee: “Persimmons”; “Eating Alone”; “Eating Together”; “Mnemonic” (1986)▪ Lawson Fusao Inada: “Legends from Camp” (1993) Secondary <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Frank Chin et al.: “Preface” in <i>Aiiieeeee!: An Anthology of Asian-American Writers</i> (1974)▪ Dorothy Wang: “Aesthetics Contra ‘Identity’ in Contemporary Poetry Studies” in <i>Thinking Its Presence: Form, Race, and Subjectivity in Contemporary Asian American Poetry</i> (2013)
5	Imagism: the visual culture of Orientalist poetics Short essay due Primary <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Amy Lowell: “Chinoiserie” (1916); “The Thatched House Unroofed by an Autumn Gale”; “The River Village” (1921) by Du Fu, tr. Amy Lowell and Florence Ayscough▪ H. D.: “Oread” (1914); “The Pool” (1915); “Sea Rose” (1916)▪ Jenny Xie: “Phnom Penh Diptych: Wet Season”; “Phnom Penh Diptych: Dry Season”; “Lunar New Year, 1988”; “Zuihitsu”; “Visual Orders”; “Letters to Du Fu” (2018) Secondary <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Josephine Nock-Hee Park: “Introduction” in <i>Apparitions of Asia: Modernist Form and Asian American Politics</i> (2008)
6	Haibun, haiku, and the Beat Orient Primary <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Allen Ginsberg: “[Mountain wind slow as breath]”; “[Meditation hall silent]”; “Graffiti in Teton Village”; “Cabin in the Rockies” (1978)▪ James Merrill: “Prose of Departure” (1988)▪ John Yau: “Sam Spade Haiku” (1988)▪ Ocean Vuong: “Immigrant Haibun” (2016) Secondary <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Josephine Nock-Hee Park: “Beatific Orientalism” in <i>Apparitions of Asia: Modernist Form and Asian American Politics</i> (2008)
7	Asian American avant-garde poetry Prospectus & annotated bibliography due Primary <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Theresa Hak Kyung Cha: <i>Dictee</i> (1982)▪ John Yau: “Corpse and Mirror” (I, II, III) (1983)▪ Mei-mei Berssenbrugge: “Tan Tien” (1989) Secondary <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Joseph Jonghyun Jeon: “Introduction” in <i>Racial Things, Racial Forms: Objecthood in Avant-Garde Asian American Poetry</i> (2010)▪ Anne A. Cheng: “History in/against the Fragment: Theresa Hak Kyung Cha” from <i>The Melancholy of Race: Psychoanalysis, Assimilation, and Hidden Grief</i> (2000)

8	<p>The Black Arts Movement and Afro-Asian solidarities</p> <p>Primary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Richard Wright: “[I am nobody]”; “[I give permission]”; “[Make up your mind, Snail!]”; “[Shut up, you crickets!]”; “[Below hot wires]”; “[If pumpkins could talk]” (1960) ▪ Etheridge Knight: “Haiku” (1968) ▪ Sonia Sanchez: “[we be. gonna be]”; “[his voice used to sing]”; “[let me be your flute]” (1978); “Haiku and Tanka for Harriett Tubman” (2018) ▪ Lawson Fusao Inada: “Plucking Out a Rhythm”; “Filling the Gap” (1971) <p>Secondary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vijay Prashad: “Kung Fusion: Organize the 'Hood under I-Ching Banners” in <i>Everybody Was Kung Fu Fighting: Afro-Asian Connections and the Myth of Cultural Purity</i> (2002)
9	<p>Transnational pantoums and ghazals</p> <p>Primary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ John Ashbery: “Pantoum” (1956) ▪ Adrienne Rich: “Ghazals (Homage to Ghalib)” (1968) ▪ Agha Shahid Ali: “The Country Without a Post Office”; “The Correspondent”; “A Villanelle”; “Ghazal [The only language of loss left in the world is Arabic]”; “After an August Wedding in Lahore, Pakistan”; “The Floating Post Office”(1997) ▪ Natasha Trethewey: “Incident” (2006) ▪ Patricia Smith: “Hip-Hop Ghazal” (2007) <p>Secondary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sarah Hakeem Grewal: “The Ghazal as ‘World Poetry’: Between Worlding and Vernacularization” (2022)
10	<p>Formal inventions: contemporary Asian American poetry and beyond</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>First draft of research paper due</u> <p>Primary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Solmaz Sharif: <i>Look</i> (2016) ▪ Diana Khoi Nguyen: “Triptych” (2018) ▪ Victoria Chang: “My Father’s Frontal Lobe”; “My Mother”; “<i>Each time I write hope</i>” (2020) ▪ She Who Has No Master(s): “Would That” (2021) ▪ Jericho Brown: “Hustle” (2014); “Duplex [A poem is a gesture toward home]”; “Duplex [I begin with love, hoping to end there.]”; “Duplex: Cento” (2019) ▪ Terrance Hayes: “The Golden Shovel” (2010) <p>Secondary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cathy Park Hong: “Delusions of Whiteness in the Avant-Garde” (2014) ▪ Candace Williams: “Gutting the Sonnet: A Conversation with Jericho Brown” (2019)
11	<p>Poetry during COVID-19 and #StopAsianHate</p> <p>Primary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Victoria Chang: <i>The Trees Witness Everything</i> (2021) ▪ Monica Youn: “In the Passive Voice” (2023) ▪ Cathy Park Hong: “Stand Up” in <i>Minor Feelings</i> (2020) <p>Secondary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lok Siu, Claire Chun: “Yellow Peril and Techno-orientalism in the Time of Covid-19: Racialized Contagion, Scientific Espionage, and Techno-Economic Warfare” (2021)

Part IV: Beyond Poetry

12	Translation and Asian / American Poetry Primary <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ HỒ Xuân Hương, tr. Marilyn Chin: “Floating Sweet Dumpling”; “Lamenting Widow” (2008)▪ Yi Sang, tr. Jack Jung: “Flowering Tree” (2020)▪ Yi Sang, tr. Sawako Nakayasu: “Au Magasin de Nouveautes” (2020)▪ Du Fu, tr. by Wong May: “Thinking of Li Bai from One End of the Sky” (2022)▪ Jia Dao, tr. by Wong May: “Not Finding the Recluse” (2022)▪ Paisley Rekdal: website for <i>West: A Translation</i> (2023)▪ Issue 13 of the translation e-zine <i>chogwa</i> (2023) Secondary <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Don Mee Choi: <i>Translation is a Mode=Translation is an Anti-neocolonial Mode</i> (2020)
13	Asian American poetry and performance Primary <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Jessica Hagedorn and the West Coast Gangster Choir: October 30, 1975 (via Poetry Center Digital Archives)▪ Cathy Park Hong: June 3, 2013 (via UC Berkeley Events YouTube)▪ Ocean Vuong: January 14, 2017 (via T. S. Eliot Prize YouTube) Secondary <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Summer Kim Lee: “Staying In: Mitski, Ocean Vuong, and Asian American A-sociality” (2019)

Final draft of research paper due during Reading Period