Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Arts

of

HAIRONG HUANG

BA (Lingnan University, 2017)

“Popular Culture and the Political Mobilization of Guangdong Elites in Modern China and the Chinese Diaspora, 1839-1911”

Department of History

Wednesday, July 17, 2019
1:30 P.M.
Clearihue Building
Room B315

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Zhongping Chen, Department of History, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Guoguang Wu, Department of History, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Angie Chau, Department of Pacific and Asian Studies, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Sanghoon Nam, School of Business, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Abstract

From 1839 to 1911, Guangdong elites, including Qing officials in the province, local gentry, native intellectuals, and so on, made full use of popular culture for political mobilization of the populace. This study examines the relationships of these Guangdong elites with both the Qing state and the common folks in China and the Chinese diaspora from the new perspective of popular culture. To be specific, Guangdong elites of different backgrounds mobilized the populace in the province to resist the British invasion of Qing China during the Opium War, to revolt against the Qing court during the Taiping Rebellion across southern China, and to push for the pro-Qing reforms or anti-Qing revolutionary movements among domestic and overseas Chinese. In this process, popular culture materials like ballads, operas, and comics provided a critical propaganda tool for Guangdong elites to cooperate with, compete with, or confront the Qing government while influencing the common folks. Meanwhile, the populace also expressed their assent, dissent, and adaptation to the elite political mobilization, by creating eulogistic or satiric ballads and tales, or by selecting, adapting, and transmitting certain popular culture materials politicized by Guangdong elites.