Introduction to Chinese Music, Languages, and Culture
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Where/What is Hong Kong/China?

* Hong Kong:
  - International City
  - Located in the Guangdong Province of China
  - British Colonial background more than 100 years
  - Returned to China in 1997
  - Cantonese-speaking area
  - Different currency/passport/administrative system/culture/eating habit from China

* China:
  - Capital city: Beijing
  - Mandarin as official language
  - One of the oldest countries in the world

What is the sanxian?

* sanxian 三弦 = “three” + “string”
* a Chinese three-stringed long neck fretless plucked lute
* its root can be traced back to 2000 years ago
* generally believed it was invented during the construction of the Great Wall
* from a paddle drum to a string instrument
* famous for its accompanying role in traditional narrative singing performances
Types of the sanxian:
* xiao sanxian (small sanxian) and da sanxian (large sanxian)
* the small sanxian is common in the southern China, whereas the large model in prevalent in the north

Listening examples:
* Shibaban 十八板 (Eighteen Beats)—sanxian solo
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f-kSc4ivsvY
* Heitu ge 黑土歌 (Song of the Black Earth)—sanxian, narrative singing and Chinese orchestra
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rRYdsxRJoHw
* Traditional Northern Narrative Singing in 1939
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o2b2TYgVXyw&t=1s