HIST097 History of Modern China

Summer Session I (May 22 to June 28, 2017)
Instructor: Sheng Mao
Time: Tuesday 5:30pm-9:20pm; Thursday 5:30pm-9:20

Lecture

Course Description
This course deals with China’s long journey from the mid-nineteenth century to the Xi Jinping regime. It surveys the complex history of Chinese tradition and modernity. In addition to the major political changes and the shifts in China’s intellectual universe, we will also closely examine ordinary people’s life experiences, the negotiation of the meanings of modernity, and the changing identities of the Chinese people. Assigned readings include personal memoirs, short stories, writings of major historical figures, and government documents. The ultimate goal of this course is to interrogate both the spatial and chronological aspects of “Chinese tradition/modernity” and question its meanings.

Examinations and Grading
Students are expected to come to class having done the readings. There will be one two short papers (3–4 pages, double-spaced) and one final examination. The grading standards for the exam and essays will differ somewhat, but as a general rule better grades come from an ability to make use of materials presented in lectures and the textbooks along with the readings from primary sources. You are strongly encouraged to think about essays as early as possible. Grading as follows: attendance 20%, first paper 25%, second paper 25%, final exam 30%. Absences and late papers will result in a grade reduction. Students cannot pass the course if: 1) they fail to attend the lectures on a regular basis, or 2) they fail to submit required papers and the final examination.

Texts
- Jonathan Spence, The Search for Modern China (Norton, 1999) (This book serves well as a general introduction to modern Chinese history. However, it does NOT substitute for your personal approach to the primary sources. The prospective offered in class will often diverge radically from his.)
- Pei-kai Cheng and Michaels Lestz with J. Spence eds., The Search for Modern China. A Documentary Collection (Norton 1999)
- Two movies are also part of the assigned material. Copies of the movies will be placed on reserve in the library for individual viewing.
- Additional readings will be made available on the class website.
LECTURES AND READINGS

05/22 Lecture 1: Introduction of Modern China
Focus: How China was viewed historically? What are key words of modern China?

READINGS:

05/24 Lecture 2: Clash of the Qing Empire
Focus: How does the Macartney Embassy in 1793 reflect the different worldviews of the Qing dynasty and Great Britain? What was the symbolic and practical role of opium in the decline of Qing?

READINGS:
- “The First Clash with the West,” The Search for Modern China, pp. 110–127.
- “Lin Zexu’s letter to Queen Victoria, two translations,” in Lydia Liu, The Clash of Empires. The Invention of China in Modern World Making (Harvard University Press, 2004), pp. 229–241. (The original letter was written in 1840 and the second more than a century later. How do they differ?)

05/26 Lecture 3: From Empire to Republic
Focus: Compare Zou Rong and Sun Yat-sen’s views of revolution. How do they view nation, ethnicity, and modernity in making their respective cases for revolution?

READINGS:

05/29 Lecture 4: Modernity and Modernization: The New Culture Movement
Focus: How do the leaders of the New Cultural Movement view the way of strengthening the nation? How did “new women” differ from their predecessors in the traditional China?

READINGS:
05/31 Lecture 5: The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party
Focus: Examine the revolutionary process described in Fanshen. What are the characteristics of Chinese communism? How did Mao Zedong define “class” in 1926?

READINGS:

06/02 Lecture 6: Revolution in the Countryside
Focus: Describe effects of communist organization and activism in the countryside during the 1930s and 1940s. What mistakes were made and what kind of solutions were implemented? What was the main goal of the Chinese Communist Party?

READINGS:
- “A Road is Made,” The Search for Modern China, pp. 233–251
- “Communist Survival,” The Search for Modern China, pp. 290–313.

FIRST PAPER DUE IN LECTURE 6

06/05 Lecture 7: The Urban Space
Focus: Compare Beijing and Shanghai in the 1920s and 1930s. What featured Chinese cities then?

READINGS:
- Madeleine Yue Dong, Republican Beijing (Univ. of California Press, 2003), Chap. 5.
- Leo Lee, Shanghai Modern (Harvard Univ. Press, 1999), Chap. 1.

06/07 Lecture 8: The Sino-Japanese War and Its Aftermath
Focus: Describe the turning points of the Sino-Japanese War. How has the Nanjing Massacre been remembered in China and Japan?

READINGS:
- Film: Devils at the Doorstep by Jiang Wen (2001) (What image of Chinese peasants’ revolutionary character does the movie convey?)

06/09 Lecture 9: The New China
Focus: According to Mao Zedong, what issues were still unresolved even after China reached “the socialist stage”? Why did Mao change his mind about following the Soviet model?
READINGS:
- *The Search for Modern China*, pp. 385–396.

06/12 Lecture 10: Radical “Democracy”—The Great Leap Forward
Focus: Why did Mao launch The One Hundred Flowers Movement? What was the motive and result of The Great Leap Forward?

READINGS:

06/14 Lecture 11: The Cultural Revolution
Focus: What were the motives and reasons behind the Cultural Revolution? Looking at the case of Chen Village, what were the major issues in the practical implementation of the radical program of the Cultural Revolution?

READINGS:
- “Bombard the Headquarters” and “The 16-point decision” in *The Search for Modern China*, pp. 426–429.
- *Chen Village*, Chaps. 2–3.

06/16 Lecture 12: China under Deng Xiaoping
Focus: How would you describe the changes in the 1980s? What were the 1989 students demanding?

READINGS:
- Videoclips: *Heshang*

SECOND PAPER DUE IN LECTURE ONE

06/19 Lecture 13: The Market Strikes Back in the 1990s
Focus: How did Chinese political and economic leaders manage to revive state-owned companies? What were the effects of various economic reforms?

READINGS:
• Henry Paulson, *Dealing with China* (Twelve, 2016), Chap. 1.

**06/21 Lecture 14: The Road to the Beijing Olympics**
Focus: How did China become the world's second-largest economy? What does China under Xi Jinping look like?

**READINGS:**

**06/23 Lecture 15: Disagreements and Conflicts**
Focus: What are the most important social issues in contemporary China? How are they handled by the Xi Jinping regime?

**READINGS:**

**06/26 Lecture 16: China and the World**
Focus: What kind of view of the connection between the local and the global does the movie convey? How would you evaluate the historical legacies of Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping?

**READINGS:**
• Film: *The World* by Jia Zhangke (2004)

**06/28 Lecture 17: Conclusion and Review Session**
FINAL EXAMINATION: One-hour in-class essay questions.