

# Modern Chinese History

Course No. HIST483

Term: Spring 2010

Friday 13: 30-16: 30

## **Instructor Contact Information**

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## **Course Description**

The course is specifically designed for foreign students studying in Beijing with the objective of enabling them to understand the ongoing social, economic and political trends which have roots in the past. Through films, articles, exhibitions, museums, and personal accounts we will try to attain a better understanding of modern Chinese history and China today.

The lectures follow chronological and thematic considerations so that it will be easier for the students to follow. We will start with the Opium Wars of 1840 as it is a crucial time of change. Within 12 weeks we will put emphasis on studying the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The advantage of concentrating on this period of time is that the instructor himself went through many key events and movements we are going to study in class, so we will rely on the accounts of his rich personal experiences.

Students are encouraged to get actively involved in class discussions and to present their own thoughts on issues we study in class and to share their own experiences of dealing with China and Chinese on daily base. In order to have a lively history class, we are going to organize excursions for example to Tian'an men square to discover all of what happened in this square, not only in 1989 but before that in 1911 and in 1976. Watch carefully where the buildings like the Mao Mausoleum have been set up and then try to understand what the leaders at that time wanted to express. By doing that, the students will be looking at today's China with different perspectives. The one who is interested in the cinema could do research looking at the links between History and the cinema. Students could explore also historical sites and museums. To pay a visit to the Marco Polo bridge could help you to have a better idea about the start of the eight year long Anti-Japanese War and the current Anti-Japanese resentment of Chinese people. To listen to songs of Cui Jian, the first Chinese rock star, you will be able to sense the excitement and resentment of Chinese youth during the 80s at the same time.

## **Course Outcomes**

Lectures, readings, paper assignments, and discussions are designed to help you develop the skills to:

- Think historically, read critically, and write and speak persuasively.
- Connect and integrate historical understandings of Modern China. Have a better understanding of present day China.
- Seek and appreciate the complex, multi-causal origins of the events and outcomes of this period.
- Critically evaluate the validity of historical evidence from a variety of sources and come up with your own interpretations of source materials.
- Use primary and secondary sources to construct original, complex, and logical interpretations of the events and processes of this decade.

### **Course Requirements and Form of Assessment**

1. Attendance and participation in class 50%.
2. Mid-term Paper 20 %
3. Final Paper 30% (3,000 words or more). The topic will be chosen by the student and approved by the instructor. The instructor will be available for advising through E-mail and in person before class.

### **Academic Honesty Statement**

This course adheres to Loyola University Chicago/Beijing Center policies on Academic Honesty.

The student is advised to review the policies on this website: [http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg\\_academicintegrity.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml)

### **Required Texts**

We have chosen Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, 1990 or 2<sup>nd</sup> ed 1999 as the textbook. Some other reading materials will be provided for each lecture unit or at request of students. One other highly recommended book is John Pomfret's *Chinese Lessons: Story of Five Classmates and the New China* (Holt Paperbacks, 2007). This fascinating book recounts the personal stories of the instructor's numerous classmates during the period of past 50 years. Through these interesting and often dramatic stories we are able to understand all great changes of people's life within these years. In class we will use documentaries, films, and other material suitable. The three-piece documentary "China: A century of Revolution" will be partly shown in the classroom. Two movies, namely *The Kite* and *To live*, are highly recommended as additional materials to be viewed and reviewed.

### **Class schedule**

#### **Week 1 (Jan. 15): Course introduction and China before the 19<sup>th</sup> Century**

*An Introduction to China's past is provided for students who have not yet studied*

*Chinese history and are experiencing the rapid changes of China today.*

- China: Geography, Cosmology, Ethnicity and Cultural traditions
- Dynastic cycle and Pre-modern history of China
- Manchu-Qing dynasty
- Interaction between China and the West

**Reading** Spence chapter 7 and 8 pp. 137-193

### **Week 2 (Jan. 22): Opium Wars and the Destruction of the Manchu Qing Empire**

*The opium wars mark the dawn of China's opening to Western power and the start of Modern China. It was the end of the emperor's power and the beginning of instability and severe destruction. The Social order and political system were jeopardized by foreigners' influence.*

- Foreign Trade, Western Imperialism and Opium Wars
- Taiping Rebellion and Boxer Uprising
- Overview of Chinese society before 1911
- Learning from the West through Japan
- China's Struggle for Survival in the new world order
- 1911 Revolution and the Collapse of Qing Empire

**Reading** Lu Xun, *Ah Q – The Real Story* (in full)

*Spence chapter 10 pp. 216 – 243*

Excursion to the Summer Palace and Yuanming yuan

### **Week 3 (Jan. 29): Dr Sun Yat-Sen and the Republic of China**

*Sun Yat-sen is a unique figure and a national symbol of modern China. Mainland China and Taiwan are both claiming that he is the Father of the Nation. He founded the KMT, which ruled China for over 20 years and is still ruling Taiwan now.*

- A man of his time and his Three Principles
- The creation of a national symbol as Father of the Republic of China
- The KMT party and its attempt of modernizing New China
- Chiang Kai-shek and his struggle against Japanese and Communists

**Reading** Marie-Claire Bergère *Sun Yat-Sen* Chapter XI.

*Spence chapter 12 pp. 269-300*

### **Week 4 (Feb. 5): Nationalists versus Communists: From the Republic of China to the People's Republic of China**

*The transition from the Republic of China to the People's Republic of China was one of the most terrible periods in Chinese modern history. Millions of lives were lost during the Civil wars and more tragedies were awaiting to Chinese people both in Mainland and in Taiwan.*

- May Fourth Movement and Chinese Enlightenment
- Origin and Rise of communism as revolutionary alternative
- Fights between nationalists and communists
- Cases of Tragic life of Chinese people: Qu Qiubai, Lu Xun and many others

- Anti-Japanese War and Nanjing Massacre
- KMT debacle and retreat to Taiwan

**Reading** Schwarcz, V, *Chinese Enlightenment: Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement*

Spence chapter 18 pp. 484-514

Iris Chang, *Nanjing Rape*.

### **Week 5 (Feb. 26): The Establishment of the PRC and Mao Years**

*The establishment of the PRC marks the end of a century long turbulence and the beginning of new misery of Chinese people. After taking the power out of the Nationalist hands everything has to be built on. With the help of the Comintern in an atmosphere of cold war the new regime has to take its marks.*

- Mao Zedong's rise to power
- China and the construction of a Nation state
- Tibet Issue and Dalai Lama
- Uigur and the Independent Movement

**Reading** Spence chapter 20 pp. 541-573

*China Remembers (Zhang Lijia and Calum Macelod ed, Oxford University Press), "Return to the Motherland", pp. 1-7.*

### **Week 6 (March 5): Mass movements**

*One of the specificities of the Maoist regime is mass movement. USSR before had used techniques to indoctrinate its population, but it never reached the same control as in China. In this class we will go through three main campaigns.*

- Land reform
- People's Commune and Collectivization
- Great Leap Forward and Great Famine
- Anti-Right Movement and the destruction of Chinese cultural traditions

**Reading** Liu Binyan *People and Monsters? And other stories and Reportage from China After Mao*

### **Week 7 (March 12): The Cultural Revolution (Mid-term paper due)**

*Although there is a class only devoted to the Cultural Revolution it seemed to be impossible to skip the subject as it is so vivid in today's society. The so-called scare literature is based on it, hundreds of films take place during that period and many oral history books focus on that period.*

- The "Catastrophic Decade"
- Red Guards and Cultural Revolution
- The Madness the Cultural Revolution
- School and Lives of Chinese students
- Sent-down youth and their tragedy

**Reading** Feng Jicai *Ten years of Madness – Oral Histories of China's Cultural Revolution* "I've Become a Different Person" pp. 61-81. "I Refuse to Admit I Was a Sacrificial Object" pp. 143-169.

Spence chapter 21, pp. 574-617

*Chinese Lessons*(the stories of Little Guan and Book Idiot Zhou)

### **Week 8 (March 19): Mao's legacy in historical perspective**

*In this class we will focus on the supervision of the society, the mass displacement of population, and the design of a new natural world. We will analyze the consequences still visible today.*

- Life of Mao and Mao's Wife
- Social Structure of China during the Mao Years
- Personal and social life of Chinese
- One child policy and the control on the population
- Nostalgia of Mao and Mao Years

**Reading** Judith Shapiro, *Mao's War Against Nature – Politics and the Environment in Revolutionary China*, chapter 3, pp. 95-137

*China Remembers*, “*The Three Bitter Years*”, pp. 80-87.

Vera Schwarcz “Memory and Commemoration: The Chinese Search for a Livable Past” in Wasserstrom J.N and Perry E.J ed *Popular Protest and Political Culture in Modern China*, pp.170-183

### **Week 9 (April. 2): The Reform and Deng Xiaoping era**

*Deng Xiaoping was the crucial who made the U-turn in China's economy, and had the responsibility to evaluate Mao's heritage but in certain limits. The reform policy he designed changed China dramatically in years to come and led China to its present situation.*

- Land reform in Rural areas and the introduction of market economy
- Assessing Mao's heritage
- Rehabilitation of the victims of the Cultural Revolution
- The trial of the gang of four
- Re-opening of Universities and the reform of educational system
- Special economic zone and the socialism with Chinese characteristics

**Reading** Spence chapter 23, pp. 653-682

Huang Shu-Min and S. Odend'hal “Fengjia: A village in transition” in A.G Walder, *Zouping in Transition – The Process of Reform in Rural North China*, pp.86-114.

*China Remembers*, “*To Get Rich is Glorious*” pp. 233-240

“*The End of the Iron Rice-Bowl*” pp. 271-278

### **Week 10 (April 9): The Golden Age of 1980s and the Chinese Democratic Movement**

*The 1980s were a decade full of hope and severe disappointment. Chinese people were encouraged by the great perspective of four modernizations and very enthusiastic about any kinds of reform and change. The bloody massacre in Tian'an men Square marked the end of a romantic and short-lived golden age in Modern Chinese History*

- The Spring of Science
- We have nothing: Cui Jian's Rock Music
- The Open door policy and The River Eulogy
- 1989 Student Movement and Tiananmen massacre
- Oversea Chinese students and Chinese

**Reading** Wei Jingsheng "The fifth modernization",  
*Chinese Lessons (the story of Daybreak Song)*  
 Excursion to Tiananmen Square and Mao Mausoleum

**Week 11 (April 16): China after 1989: the Economic Wonder and a divided society**

*As we hardly recovered from the aftermath of the Tian'an men massacre, the world starts to wonder at the rapid development of Chinese economy. Chinese society underwent dramatic changes in various ways. The economic success brought about many positive changes and new problems at the same time.*

- Rapid economic development
- "Made in China" and its impact on the world
- Laid-off workers and social division
- Falungong and Religious Revival
- Three Dam Project and Environmental Issues
- "Chinese can say no" and Nationalism

**Reading** Spence chapter 24-25, pp. 683-740  
*China Remembers, "Yangtze! Yangtze!" pp. 216-222*

**Week 12 (April 23): The Glory of New China**

- The 2008 Beijing Olympics and 2010 Shanghai Expo
- China as a world power of economy
- The Continuation of Cultural Traditions
- Globalization and Chinese Nationalism

**Week 13 (April 30): Term paper due and final class**

- Sum up what we have learned through the whole semester
- Discussion on what China can learn from its modern history to ensure a better future
- Discussion on what Chinese can contribute to the world culturally