

MIT OpenCourseWare
<http://ocw.mit.edu>

21H.560 / 21F.191 / 21F.991 Smashing the Iron Rice Bowl: Chinese East Asia
Fall 2004

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: <http://ocw.mit.edu/terms>.

Spring 2009
Wed 1-3

21F.191/21F.991/21H.560
Smashing the Iron Rice Bowl: Chinese East Asia

Instructor: Ian Chapman

This subject examines the experiences of ordinary Chinese people as they lived through the tumultuous changes of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. We look at personal narratives, primary sources, films and scholarship to think about how individual and family lives connect with the broader processes of change in modern China. In the readings and discussions, you should focus on how major political events have an impact on the characters' daily lives, and how the decisions they make cause large-scale social transformation. No knowledge of Chinese language or of Chinese history is necessary to take this subject. Students who signed up under 21F.191 will be expected to complete **one** assignment based on Chinese language sources.

Requirements

Class participation (30%)

Do the readings, come to class, join the debate. In addition to general participation, two students each week will be asked to lead discussion of the focus topic and readings.

Forum postings (15%)

I will ask you each to contribute to a weekly online discussion on the readings and related issues (not required in weeks of assignments or tests). This will be in the Forum section of the the course website. Each person should make at least one substantial and formally composed contribution (of, say, around three paragraphs), *before the day on which a reading is discussed*. Your posting may be an independent response to readings, or engage with questions raised in other students' posts. In addition to this more formal response, I strongly encourage you to append comments and discussion to other people's contributions.

Short paper (20%)

Paper of around 5 pages on a topic of your own choice, in consultation with instructor.

Final paper project (35%)

Research paper of around 10 pages on a topic of your own choice, in consultation with instructor.

All assignments are to be submitted electronically to the course website, and in hard copy to my mailbox.

There are no examinations.

Assignment due dates

Short paper proposal: Fri 3/13

Short paper (5p): Fri 3/20

Final paper proposal: Fri 4/10

Final paper (10p): Fri 5/8

Student work is expected to uphold standards of academic integrity. Using someone else's work without acknowledgment is plagiarism. Cases of plagiarism will be referred to the Committee on Discipline, and may seriously impact your career. The course website contains instructions on how to cite sources correctly and avoid unintentional plagiarism.

Books for Purchase (and on reserve)

Spence, Jonathan. *The Search for Modern China, 2nd edition* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999)

Chang, Jung. *Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China* (New York : Simon & Schuster, 1991)

Harrison, Henrietta. *The Man Awakened From Dreams* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005)

Wolf, Margery. *House of Lim* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1968)

Honig, Emily; Hershatter, Gail. *Personal Voices: Chinese Women in the 1980's* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988)

Huang, Shumin. *The Spiral Road: Change in a Chinese Village through the Eyes of a Communist Party Leader* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989)

Johnson, Ian. *Wild grass: Three Stories of Change in Modern China* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2004)

Shapiro, Judith. *Mao's War against Nature: Politics and the Environment in Revolutionary China* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001)

All other readings will be available on the course website, or on reserve in the Humanities library.

Schedule

1. Introduction: Personal and Collective Experiences of Modern China

2/4

1.1 intro

2/11

1.2 video

2. The Final Decades of the Qing (1644-1911)

2/18

2.1 Qing

Spence, *The Search for Modern China*: 215-265

Harrison, *The Man Awakened from Dreams*: 9-82

3. The Republic of China, 1912-1949

2/25

3.1 From Empire to Republic

Spence, *The Search for Modern China*: 267-341

Harrison, *The Man Awakened from Dreams*: 83-158

3/4

3.2 Scattered lives: warlord and Nationalist rule

Spence, *The Search for Modern China*: 326-375

Jung Chang, *Wild Swans*: 21-61

3/11

3.3 War and revolution

Spence, *The Search for Modern China*: 413-488

Xie, Bingying. *A Woman Soldier's Own Story* (selection)

Feng Zikai, "Autumn Bombs in Yishan Village School" (in David Pollard, *The Chinese Essay*)

4. The People's Republic: From the Great Leap Forward to the Cultural Revolution

3/18

4.1: Socialist construction and the Great Leap Forward

Spence, *The Search for Modern China*: 489-564

Jung Chang, *Wild Swans*: 150-190; 204-239

Huang, *The Spiral Road: Change in a Chinese Village through the Eyes of a Communist Party Leader*: 41-68

3/25: spring break

4/1

4.2: The Cultural Revolution

Spence, *The Search for Modern China*: 565-586

Jung Chang, *Wild Swans*: 256-296; 308-322; 379-443

Huang, *The Spiral Road*: 87-98

Short selection from "There and Back Again" (*Renditions* no. 50, 1998)

5. Village Life in Taiwan and the PRC

4/8

5.1: Village Life in Taiwan, ca 1970

Margery Wolf, *House of Lim*

6. PRC Transformations, 1980s-1990s

4/15

6.1: Rural transformations in mainland China, 1980s-1990s

Huang, *The Spiral Road*: 105-209;

Schell, *The China Reader*: "The 'Floating Population'": 362-375

4/22

6.2: PRC Women in the 1980s

Honig and Hershatter, *Personal Voices: Chinese Women in the 1980's*: 80-205; 243-272

4/29

6.3: Liberalization and Protest (1980s)

Spence, *The Search for Modern China*: 618-704

Zhang Liang; ed. by Andrew Nathan and Perry Link, *The Tiananmen Papers* (New York: Public Affairs, 2001): 121-174, 365-398

"Petitions and Protest" (from Barmé and Jaivin, eds, *New Ghosts, Old Dreams*: 23-73)

"Tiananmen: The Gate and the Square" Website

Documentary: *The Gate of Heavenly Peace*

7. The environment, citizen's movements

5/6

7.1 The Environment

Shapiro, *Mao's War on Nature*: 67-137

5/13

7.2 Quiet resistance: the citizen in contemporary China

Johnson, *Wild Grass*

"The Peasant Champion": 11-86; "Dream of a Vanished Capital": 87-182

film: *Qiu Ju Goes to Court* (*Qiu Ju daguansi*) [Gong Li's least glamorous role!]