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

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

Fall, 2004
Peter C. Perdue

U(Fall)
Tuesday, 2:30-4:30 PM

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 alongside a textbook 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 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.

SYLLABUS

REQUIREMENTS:

- Regular attendance at all classes
- Active participation in discussions
- Eight response papers to readings, due Monday of the week of class [printed or by email]
- Final term paper on a topic of your choice, 10-15 pages [Bibliography and topics to be supplied later]
- There is one midterm exam, but no final exam.

Grade determination: Response papers = 15%; Midterm = 20%; Discussion = 30%; Final Paper = 35%.

A Note on Plagiarism: Using someone else's work without acknowledgment is plagiarism. If you commit this crime, you will at the least get a failing grade on the paper, and at worst fail the course and be taken to the Committee on Discipline. Later, I will give you more detailed instructions how to cite sources and how to avoid unintentional plagiarism.

The course website: TBA.

1. Sep. 14 [Introduction: Personal and Collective Experiences in Modern China](#)
King of Masks [Video]
2. Sep. 21 [Qing China, 1644 - 1911](#)
Reading: Spence, 1-137

3. Sep. 28 [Decline of the Qing; Rise of Nationalism](#)
Reading: Spence, 141-263; Jung Chang, 21-94
4. Oct. 5 [The Republic of China, 1911 - 1949](#)
Reading: Spence, 267-375; Cochran and Hsieh, 3-68, 201-264 [Xeroxes at Reserve Room]
5. Oct. 12 [Origins and Development of the Chinese Communist Party](#)
Reading: Spence, 375-409; Jung Chang, 95-140;
Mao writings: "Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan", *Selected Works* 23-56; "External and Internal Contradictions", "Appeal to the Ke Lao Hui", in Schram, ed., *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung*, 202-249[Xeroxes at Reserve Room]
Lu Xun, "Medicine" and "New Year's Sacrifice", in Lu Hsun, *Selected Stories*
6. Oct. 19 [The People's Republic: From Great Leap Forward to Cultural Revolution](#)
Reading: Spence, 489 – 586; Jung Chang, 140-255
Friedman, Selden, Pickowicz, Introduction and pp. 214-245 in *Village China, Socialist State*
8. Oct. 26 **Midterm Exam**
9. Nov. 2 [From the Cultural Revolution to the Reform Period](#)
Reading: Spence, 589-646; Jung Chang, 256-505
10. Nov. 9 [Tiananmen and After](#)
Reading: Spence, 647-728; Nathan and Link, 121-74, 365-98
Viewing : "Tiananmen: The Gate and the Square" web site.
Viewing of film: "The Gate of Heavenly Peace" in class.
11. Nov. 16 [Family Problems in Village Taiwan](#)
Reading: Wolf, 3-148
12. Nov. 23. [Women's issues in the PRC in the 1980s](#)
Reading: Honig & Hershatter, *Personal Voices*, 1-136, 308-33
Xinran, *The Good Women of China*
13. Nov. 30. [Communist cadres in the reform period](#)
Reading: Zhu Xiaodi, *Thirty Years in a Red House*, 154-247;
Huang Shu-min, *The Spiral Road*, 105-227.
FINAL PAPER DUE
14. Dec. 7 [Current Issues: Environment, the Development of the West, and Foreigners](#)
Reading: Shapiro, *Mao's War on Nature*
Hessler, *River Town*

READING LIST

Available at the MIT Bookstore and on Library Reserve
& In Reader on Library Reserve
%ELECTRONIC RESERVE: TBA

#Jung Chang, *Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China* [MIT Bookstore]
& Sherman Cochran, Andrew Hsieh, eds., *One Day in China: May 21, 1936*

[Xeroxes]

#Friedman, Selden, Pickowicz, *Village China, Socialist State* [MIT Bookstore]
#Peter Hessler, *River Town* [MIT Bookstore]
#Emily Honig & Gail Hershatter, *Personal Voices: Chinese Women in the 1980s*

[MIT Bookstore]

#Lu Hsun, *Selected Stories* [MIT Bookstore]
& Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Writings* [Xeroxes]
#Huang, Shu-min, *The Spiral Road* [MIT Bookstore]
& Andrew Nathan, Perry Link, eds. *The Tiananmen Papers* [Xeroxes]
#Judith Shapiro, *Mao's War on Nature* [MIT Bookstore]
#Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China* [MIT Bookstore]
#Margery Wolf, *The House of Lim* [MIT Bookstore]
#Xinran, *The Good Women of China: Hidden Voices* [MIT Bookstore]
#Zhu Xiaodi, *Thirty Years in a Red House* [MIT Bookstore]