



Boston University  
Fall 2014

Undergraduate Seminar  
CAS HI 487

## The Making of Modern China (1600 to the present)

Professor Eugenio Menegon

Time: Thursday, 3:30-6:30 pm  
Location: History 304

Professor's Office: Department of History,  
226 Bay State Road, room #409.  
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Office Hours: Tuesday, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM & 2:00-3:00 PM;  
Thursday, 11:00 AM -12:00 PM;  
and by appointment

Website for this course is available at:

<http://learn.bu.edu>

### Course Overview:

This seminar will provide an overview of crucial themes in late imperial and modern Chinese history, tracing continuities as well as change in political, institutional, religious, cultural and social processes between 1600 and the present. To comprehend the special nature of the political and social context of modern China, students will be encouraged to critically examine how long-standing imperial institutions, ethnic policies sanctioned by the Manchu dynasty starting in the 17th century, and social-religious habits that were rooted in traditional culture, have influenced modern China in the Republican and Communist periods. Conversely, students will also consider the elements of change and rupture that emerged as a reaction to traditional modes of social and political organization (political and economic reforms; rebellions; revolution).

While prior specialized knowledge of China is not expected (although desirable), students will be required to read selected chapters from two textbooks as a preparation for in-depth discussion of the specific weekly topics: Keith Schoppa, *Revolution and Its Past*; and Timothy Cheek, *Living with Reform. China since 1989*. Readings will be available as PDF files in the Course Website.

Completion of ALL readings and writing of a précis **prior** to each class meeting is crucial for a smooth working of the seminar. **Schedules, topics, readings and films may be revised at times, in which case announcements will be made in class as appropriate.**

### **Grading and Requirements:**

**Participation (15%):** This portion of the grade will be based on the general level of engagement and participation in class.

**Précis (30%):** Each week, students will prepare a **one-page** long précis (1.5 spacing; 12 point; 1-inch margin) of that week’s readings, and formulate two questions for discussion, to be **e-mailed** to the instructor and the student discussion leader a day in advance of class (**by Wednesday, noon**). The précis should not simply summarize the readings; rather it should make a comprehensive, yet concise critical analysis of their arguments, and offer a comparison of them. Instructions will be handed out as appropriate.

**Oral Presentations (15%):** Seminar members will alternate for leading discussion. The leader will offer a brief **oral presentation of the main points of the readings**, and then **use select questions** sent by all colloquium’s members (including her/his own questions) to structure the discussion.

**Paper proposal and annotated bibliography (10%):** due by **Saturday October 18, by midnight**. **Instructions to follow.**

**Paper (30%):** Students are required to write one final paper during the semester. Paper is due on **Wednesday December 10, by 5 pm** (both as paper copy and e-mail).

The **final paper** is to be 10-12 pages long (double spacing; 12 points; 1-inch margin; excluding bibliography). The topic will be chosen by students after a first quick email consultation with the instructor **early on in the semester**. A preliminary one-page written paper proposal, plus an annotated bibliography, has to be turned in by **Saturday October 18**. Two meetings with the instructor will follow to refine the topic and bibliography. For grading percentage, see above.

Additional research other than course readings may be required for the writing of the paper.

**Penalties for late work:** all written assignments must be turned in on the dates specified below. ½ grade will be deducted for each day of delay.

**Attendance** in all classes (including film screenings and educational visits) is expected and will be recorded. If you cannot attend a specific class you must make all efforts to notify the professor beforehand or to explain your absence later.

**Plagiarism** in any form is never acceptable. You are advised to review the college's definitions of and policies regarding plagiarism and cheating which are available online and in print. See for example: <http://www.bu.edu/cas/undergraduate/conductcode.html>

**TEXTBOOKS (will be read by chapters)**

Cheek, Timothy. *Living with Reform. China since 1989*. Nova Scotia, London and New York: Fernwood Publishing and Zed Books, 2006.

Schoppa, R. Keith. *Revolution and Its Past: Identities and Change in Modern Chinese History*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2011 (3<sup>rd</sup> edition).

**RECOMMENDED:**

Rampolla, Mary Lynn. *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Boston: Bedford - St. Martin's, 2007.

**SYLLABUS OF READINGS**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Week I (September 4): Introduction to Chinese Late Imperial and Modern History</b></li> </ul>
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Schoppa, *Revolution and Its Past*, Chapter 1, “Personal Identities,” pp. 1-26. (**Blackboard**)

Self-introduction; expectations and requirements; instructor’s introductory comments on historiography and reading; screening of documentary *All Under Heaven*, by Carma Hinton and Richard Gordon (a portrait of daily life in a north China village, 1980s); discussion of documentary; assignment of discussion tasks.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Week II (September 11): From Ming to Qing. The Late Ming “Confusions of Pleasure” and the Establishment of the Qing Dynasty</b></li> </ul>
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**Documentary (selections): “Blending with Nature: Classical Chinese Gardens in the Suzhou Style”**

Re-read section on macroregions in Schoppa, *Revolution and Its Past*, Chapter 1, “Personal Identities.”

Brook, Timothy. *The Confusions of Pleasure. Commerce and Culture in Ming China*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998: pp. 1-13 and 238-262 (“Fall: The Lord of Silver, 1642-44”); if you have time skim also “Summer: The Last Century, 1550-1644”, trying to focus on the major themes as outlined by the sections’ titles. (**Blackboard**)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Week III (September 18): The Apogee of the Qing Empire: the Reign of Qianlong</b></li> </ul>
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**Documentary (selections): “Forbidden City: The Great Within” or**  
**Documentary (selections): “The Emperor’s Eye: Art and Power in Imperial China”**

Schoppa, *Revolution and Its Past*, Chapter 2, “Chinese and Manchus,” pp. 27-46.

Elliott, Mark. *Emperor Qianlong, Son of Heaven, Man of the World*. New York: Longman, 2009, selections pp. 1-33; 50-67; 107-124).

Website: “Recording the Grandeur of the Qing”;

<http://www.learn.columbia.edu/nanxuntu/start.html>

• **Week IV (September 25): China as Global Empire and World Economic Power in the Late Imperial Period**

Marks Robert B. *The Origins of the Modern World: A Global and Ecological Narrative*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Introduction, 1-19; Chapt. 2 “Starting with China” 43-66; Ch. 3 “Empires” 67-71; Ch. 4 Industrial revolutions, 102-107 and 117-18; Conclusion 199-207.

Peter Perdue, *China Marches West. The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia*. Belknap Press - Harvard University Press, 2005, pp. 497-565.

Website: “China and Europe, 1500–2000 and Beyond. What is Modern?” by Bin Wong and Kenneth Pomeranz; <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/chinawh/index.html>

• **Week V (October 2): Family and Gender Relations**

**[Visit to the Yin Yu Tang, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem](#)**

Mann, Susan. *Precious Records: Women in China's Long Eighteenth Century*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997, pp. 1-75.

Furth, Charlotte. “The Patriarch's Legacy. Household Instructions and the Transmission of Orthodox Values.” In *Orthodoxy in Late Imperial China*, edited by Kwang-Ching Liu, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990, pp. 187-211.

Late Qing merchant family life; Website: <http://www.pem.org/yinyutang/>

**EXTRA CREDIT EVENT:**

**Screening of movie by Zhang Kejia, “A Touch of Sin”, October 6, details TBA**

- **Week VI (October 9): State Orthodoxy vs. Popular Culture and Religion**

**Documentary: “Mazu, Patron Saint of Taiwan”**

Watson, James. “Standardizing the Gods: The Promotion of T’ien Hou (“Empress of the Heaven”) Along the South China Coast, 960-1960.” In *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China*, edited by David Johnson, Andrew Nathan and Evelyn Rawski, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985, pp. 292-324.

Ownby, David. *Falun Gong and the Future of China*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008; Introduction, pp. 3-22; Chapt. 2 “A History of Falun Gong,” pp. 23-44; “The Epoch Times,” pp. 220-27; Conclusion, pp. 228-35.

Website: “Living in the Chinese cosmos. Religion in Late Imperial China”; <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/cosmos/>

- **Week VII (October 16): Rebellion or Revolution?**

**Meeting with BU China anthropologist and weekly reading’s author Prof. Robert Weller.**

Schoppa, *Revolution and Its Past*, Chapter 4, “An Age of Rebellion,” pp. 66-84.

Weller, Robert. *Resistance, Chaos and Control in China. Taiping Rebels, Taimanese Ghosts and Tiananmen*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1989: Introduction and Part 1, “Taiping Rebels,” pp. 3-110.

**Saturday October 18****PRELIMINARY TOPIC, ABSTRACT AND ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY  
FOR FINAL PAPER DUE****Week VIII (October 23)****APPOINTMENTS WITH PROFESSOR  
TO DISCUSS YOUR PROPOSED TOPIC AND BIBLIOGRAPHY**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Week IX (October 30): Public Opinion and Mass Media in the Republican Era</b></li> </ul>
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***Film (selection): TBA***

Lean, Eugenia. *Public Passions. The Trial of Shi Jianqiao and the Rise of Popular Sympathy in Republican China*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007. Introduction; Chapter 1; Chapter 6; Conclusion (available online through **Mugar Library** portal, ACLS E-books)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Week X (November 6): The Cultural Revolution</b></li> </ul>
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**Movie Screening: selections from “Morning Sun”**

Schoppa, *Revolution and Its Past*, Chapter 18, “Death Dance: the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution,” pp. 346-365.

Thurston, Anne F. *Enemies of the People. The Ordeal of the Intellectuals in China's Great Cultural Revolution*. Cambridge (MA): Harvard U.P., 1988; pp. 28-54; 206-238; 276-303 (specific selections will be announced as appropriate).

Chen Xiaomei, “Growing up with Posters in the Maoist Era,” in *Picturing Power in the People's Republic: Posters of the Cultural Revolution*, eds., Harriet Evans and Stephanie Donald. Boulder, CO: Rowman & Littlefield Publisher, 101-122, 1999.

***Please visit these websites:***

“Picturing Power: Posters of the Cultural Revolution” (<http://kaladarshan.arts.ohio-state.edu/exhib/poster/exhibintro.html>)]

“Chinese Propaganda Poster Pages”: <http://www.iisg.nl/~landsberger/>

“Morning Sun: A Cultural Revolution Site” (<http://www.morningsun.org/>)

**PLEASE TURN IN BY NOVEMBER 8, 5 PM, THE REVISED TOPIC/ABSTRACT AND ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR THE FINAL PAPER – SET UP APPOINTMENT WITH PROFESSOR TO DISCUSS FINAL DRAFTING.**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Week XI (November 13): Consumption and Social Life in China since the 1980s</b></li> </ul>
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**Documentary (selections): “Beauty in China” or “Inside the Campus: Life at a Chinese University”**

Cheek, *Living with Reform*, Chapter 4, “Brave new world: reform and openness,” pp.74-102.

Barmé, Geremie, “Consuming T-shirts in Beijing,” in *In the Red. On Contemporary Chinese Culture*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1999, pp. 145-178.

Rosen, Stanley. “The state of youth/youth and the state in early 21st-century China,” in *State and Society in 21st-century China*, edited by Peter Gries and Stanley Rosen, New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004, pp. 159-179.

- **Week XII (November 20): Intellectuals, Nationalism, and the Communist Party (1980s-2000s)**

**Documentary (selections): “The River Elegy” (*He Shang* 河殇); 1988 TV series**

**Re-read** \*Cheek, *Living with Reform*, Chapter 2, pp. 49-53; and Chapter 6, pp. 94-99.

Su, Xiaokang, Luxiang Wang, (Richard W. Bodman, and Wan Pin P. transl). *Deathsong of the River = Ho Shang: A Reader's Guide to the Chinese TV Series Hesbang*. Ithaca, N.Y.: East Asia Program Cornell University, 1991; Part 6, “Blueness,” 203-22. PLS. PAY ATTENTION TO THE FOOTNOTES TOO FOR HISTORICAL CONTEXT.

Barmé, Geremie, “To Screw Foreigners is Patriotic,” in *In the Red. On Contemporary Chinese Culture*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1999, pp. 255-280

Erickson, Andrew S. and Lyle Goldstein, “China Studies the Rise of Great Powers,” in Erickson, Andrew S., Lyle Goldstein, and Carnes Lord eds. *China Goes to Sea: Maritime Transformation in Comparative Historical Perspective*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2009, pp. 401-419 + notes.

**Thanksgiving Recess: November 26-30**

- **Week XIII (December 4): China’s Global Power and Ecological Emergency**

**Documentary (selections): “Manufactured Landscapes” or “Pollution in China: The People Protest”**

Cheek, *Living with Reform*, Chapter 5, pp. 103-121.

Weller, Robert P. *Discovering Nature: Globalization and Environmental Culture in China and Taiwan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, pp. 1-63 and 137-182.

**FINAL PAPER DUE ON WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 10, BY 5 PM,  
IN INSTRUCTOR'S MAILBOX AT HISTORY DEPARTMENT AND BY E-MAIL.**