



Boston University
Fall 2018

Seminar
CAS HI 487

The Making of Modern China
(1600 to the present)

Professor Eugenio Menegon

Time: Tuesday, 3:30-6:15 pm
Location: History 304

Professor's Office: Department of History,
226 Bay State Road, room #409.
Phone: 617 - 353-8308
Email: emenegon@bu.edu

Office Hours:
Tuesday, 2:00-3:00 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 textbooks as a preparation for in-depth discussion of the

specific weekly topics: Jonathan Porter, *Imperial China, 1350-1900*; 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 response **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.

Response (30%): Each week, students will prepare a **one-to-two pages** long response (1.5 spacing; 12 point; 1-inch margin) of that week’s readings. Each student will also formulate **two questions** for discussion, to be **e-mailed** to the **instructor** and the **student discussion leader(s)** a day in advance of class (**by Monday, noon**). The response 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, **in response to the instructor’s suggestions**. Instructions will be handed out as appropriate.

Oral Presentations (15%): Seminar members will alternate in 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 seminar’s members (including her/his own questions) to structure the discussion.

Paper proposal and annotated bibliography (10%): due on **Saturday October 27, by midnight**. **Instructions to follow.**

Paper (30%): Students are required to write one final paper during the semester. Paper is due on **Friday December 14, 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 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 27**. 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 instructor 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 (selected chapters posted on Blackboard)

- 1) Cheek, Timothy. *Living with Reform. China since 1989*. Nova Scotia, London and New York: Fernwood Publishing and Zed Books, 2006. **(Blackboard)**
- 2) Schoppa, R. Keith. *Revolution and Its Past: Identities and Change in Modern Chinese History*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2011 (3rd edition). **(Blackboard)**
- 3) Porter, Jonathan. *Imperial China, 1350-1900*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2016. **(Blackboard)**

YOU MUST PURCHASE THIS WRITING GUIDE**[NB: ANY EDITION WILL BE FINE]:**

- 4) Rampolla, Mary Lynn. *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*. 9th edition. Boston: Bedford - St. Martin's, 2017.

EXTRA CREDIT EVENTS:

During the semester the Instructor will inform students about selected on-campus events organized by the BU Center for the Study of Asia, the Pardee School, and other BU units. Students who attend such events and send a short analytical paragraph on them can earn extra credit.

SYLLABUS OF READINGS

- **Week I (September 4): Introduction to Chinese Late Imperial and Modern History**

“Introduction” to Standen, Naomi. *Demystifying China: New Understandings of Chinese History*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2013, pp. 1-12. **(Blackboard)**

Self-introduction; expectations and requirements; instructor's introductory comments on historiography and group discussion of 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.

- **Week II (September 11): From Ming to Qing. The Late Ming “Confusions of Pleasure”**

Documentary (selections): “Blending with Nature: Classical Chinese Gardens in the Suzhou Style”

Schoppa, *Revolution and Its Past*, Chapter 1, “Personal Identities,” **only pp. 14-24**, on Macroregions **(Blackboard)**

“Merchant and Markets” in Porter, Jonathan. *Imperial China, 1350-1900*, Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2016, pp. 191-209. **(Blackboard)**

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)**

• **Week III (September 18): The Apogee of the Qing Empire: the Reign of Qianlong**

**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. **(Blackboard)**

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

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 (2nd 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. **(Blackboard)**

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

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): 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. **(Blackboard)**

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. (**Blackboard**)

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

Tuesday October 9, 2018: MONDAY SCHEDULE – NO CLASS

• Week VI (October 16): Family and Gender Relations

Visit of the “Empresses of China” Exhibition & the Yin Yu Tang House, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem.

- Departure from BU at 12:30 pm
- MBTA train from North Station at 1:20 pm
- Arrival back in Boston by 6:00 pm
- Guided tour with exhibition’s curator Dr. Daisy Wang : <https://www.pem.org/exhibitions/empresses-of-chinas-forbidden-city>
- Self-guided tour to Yin Yu Tang : <http://yinyutang.pem.org/>
- Group discussion in PEM café
- Dinner in Boston’s Chinatown

Readings

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

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. (**Blackboard**)

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

• Week VII (October 23): Rebellion or Revolution?

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

“The Heavenly Kingdom,” in Porter, Jonathan. *Imperial China, 1350-1900*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2016, pp. 319-333. (**Blackboard**)

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

Saturday October 27

**PRELIMINARY TOPIC, ABSTRACT AND
ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR FINAL PAPER DUE**

- Week VIII (October 30) **APPOINTMENTS WITH PROFESSOR TO DISCUSS
YOUR PROPOSED TOPIC AND BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Week IX (November 6): **Public Opinion and Mass Media in the Republican Era and Today**

Discussion on the relationship between mass & social media with public opinion in China in historical perspective, with Prof. Lei GUO, Division of Emerging Media Studies, College of Communication, Boston University <http://www.leiguo.net/>

Readings:

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: <https://www.fulcrum.org/concern/monographs/c821gk32g>

Guo, Lei. “WeChat as a Semipublic Alternative Sphere: Exploring the Use of WeChat Among Chinese Older Adults,” *International Journal of Communication* 11(2017): 408–428. <http://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/5537/1909>

- **Week X (November 13): The Cultural Revolution**

Movie Screening: selections from “Morning Sun”

<http://bu.kanopystreaming.com.ezproxy.bu.edu/video/morning-sun-0>

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

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). **(Blackboard)**

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. **(Blackboard)**

Please visit these websites:

“Picturing Power: Posters of the Cultural Revolution”:

<http://huntingtonarchive.org/Exhibitions/picturingPower.php>

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

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

The documentary **“Morning Sun”** itself is available in streaming through Mugar Library:

<http://bu.kanopystreaming.com.ezproxy.bu.edu/video/morning-sun-0>

PLEASE TURN IN BY MONDAY NOVEMBER 12, 5 PM, THE REVISED TOPIC/ABSTRACT AND ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR THE FINAL PAPER – SET UP APPOINTMENT WITH PROFESSOR TO DISCUSS FINAL DRAFTING.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week XI (November 20): Intellectuals, Nationalism, and the Communist Party (1980s-2000s) |
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Documentary (selections): “The River Elegy” (*He Shang* 河殇); 1988 TV series

Cheek, *Living with Reform*, Chapter 2, pp. 49-53; and Chapter 6, pp. 94-99. (**Blackboard**)

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 Heshang*. Ithaca, N.Y.: East Asia Program Cornell University, 1991; Part 6, “Blueness,” 203-22. PLS. PAY ATTENTION TO THE FOOTNOTES TOO FOR HISTORICAL CONTEXT. (**Blackboard**)

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

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. (**Blackboard**)

Thanksgiving Recess: November 21-25

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week XII (November 27): Art, Consumption and Social Life in China since the 1980s |
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Meeting with documentary maker and China scholar Dr. Lydia Chen

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

Documentaries:

Inner Visions: Avant-Garde Art in China (1993) <https://vimeo.com/102336178>

Lydia Chen produced this documentary in 1991 in Beijing, to tell a story about China’s social changes since opening its doors to the West, through the lives and works of individual artists. This video is for personal viewing only. *Inner Visions: Avant-Garde Art in China* (1993), is published by Filmmakers Library and distributed to educational markets by Alexander Street Press.

Art in Smog (2016) <http://www.artinsmog.com/>

In 2015-16, Lydia produced a 25-year follow up, with some of the same artists, to tell a story about how China has changed since 1991 and what that has meant for their lives, ideals, and creative expression.

Underground Chinese Hip-Hop: The Rap Pioneers of China (2014)

<https://bu.kanopy.com/video/underground-chinese-hip-hop>

A fascinating documentary portrait of this nascent musical revolution, UNDERGROUND CHINESE HIP-HOP follows pioneering rapper MC Weber as he spearheads the creation of rap music in China. Through rap, these post-Mao millennials have found a voice and vehicle for expressing the frustration, anger, hopes and dreams of a generation grappling with their place in the new China, yet the movement is a threat in the eyes of the state censors; and state-backed pop stars also seek to co-opt the genre for their own gain. Will this musical movement survive?

• **Week XIII (December 4): China Going Global and the Environment**

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

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

Ling Zhang, “Traditional Chinese and the Environment,” in Standen, Naomi ed., *Demystifying China: New Understandings of Chinese History*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2013, pp. 79-88. **(Blackboard)**

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

• **Week XIV (December 11): Final Presentations**

**FINAL PAPER DUE ON FRIDAY DECEMBER 14, BY 5 PM,
IN INSTRUCTOR'S MAILBOX AT HISTORY DEPARTMENT AND BY E-MAIL.**