



# The Beijing Center

北京中国学中心

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## TBC 1121 Modern Chinese History

*Please Note: This is a sample syllabus, and the course schedule is subject to change. Students will receive the updated syllabus prior to the start of first class.*

### Course Description

We will start the “Modern History” of China with period of Late Ming as this is a crucial period of change and trace the historical development up to the present day. The lectures will address both chronological and thematic considerations so that it will be easier for students to follow. We will study the China situation in the developing world from 17th century to 19th century. We also will talk about the political reformation, democracy movement, economic development and social problems in the 20th century. The course is specifically designed for foreign students studying in TBC with the objective of enabling them to understand ongoing social, economic and political trends which have their roots in history.

We will basically meet six times in the classroom. Each time we will have three hours of lectures, discussion and documentary movies. The other time we can meet online. Materials will send to the students so the students can study themselves before we meet online. During online meeting we will have more discussion about the related topics which the materials include. The students can put forward the topics which they are interested. Students are encouraged to become actively involved in class and online discussions and to present your own understandings on historical issues.

### Learning Outcome

Lectures, readings, written 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.
- Investigate 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

## Required Texts

Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, 3rd. New York, 2012.

## Recommended Books/Movies

- John Pomfret, *Chinese Lessons: Story of Five Classmates and the New China*. Holt Paperbacks, 2007.
- Roderick MacFarquhar and Michael Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006.
- Pamela Kyle Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.
- Teng Ssu-yii and John K. Fairbank, *China's Response to the West: A Documentary Survey, 1839-1923*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954.
- Vera Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment: Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.
- Dan Jacobs, Borodin: Stalin's Man in China. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981.
- John Gittings, *The Role of the Chinese Army*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1967.
- Harry Harding, *China's Second Revolution: Reform after Mao*. Washington, D.C., 1987.
- Roderick MacFarquhar and Michael Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution*. Cambridge, Massachusetts. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006.
- John Pomfret, *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 the great changes of people's life within these years. (alternative)]
- Two movies, namely *Farewell my concubine* and *To live*, are highly recommended as additional material to be viewed.

## Course Requirements

1. Students will be assigned about 100 pages of readings per week. Reading assignments are carefully chosen to match lectures, discussions, films, and field trips. Students are expected to have completed the assigned weekly readings before attending class, as lectures will require the background knowledge provided by the readings, and discussions will be based, in part, on the readings. Please email me your mid-term and final paper before the deadline.
2. Makeup exams will be given only in cases of documentable emergencies. In case of such an emergency, please notify her by email as soon as possible.
3. Class attendance and participation discussion in class 40%.
4. Mid-term paper 30 % (Due to the midterm week. The paper should be 4-5 pages, justified and double spaced. The font size should be 12-point, and all citations should be footnoted.). You should choose parts of at least two books or two papers from the further readings of the textbooks and read them. Your mid-term reports should be based on what you choose to read from the further readings and other books or papers you can find to defend your argument or comparison. The kind of topics I would expect

might be, for example, “What are the reasons for the Cultural Revolution?” rather than “The history of Cultural Revolution”.

5. Final Paper 30% (Due to the final week. The topic will be chosen in consultation with the instructor. The paper should be 10-12 pages, justified and one and double spaced. The font size should be 12-point, and all citations should be footnoted.) The reference books or essays should be no less than five. You may be failed if you make citations just from the internet. The paper should be an argument or a comparison, not just narrating the process of a historical event. The kind of topics I would expect might be, for example, “What are the reasons for the Cultural Revolution?” rather than “The history of Cultural Revolution”.
6. Grading Scale:
  - a) <59.4 F
  - b) 59.5-66.4 D
  - c) 66.5-69.4 D+
  - d) 69.5-73.4 C-
  - e) 73.5-76.4 C
  - f) 76.5-79.4 C+
  - g) 79.5-83.4 B-
  - h) 83.5-86.4 B
  - i) 86.5-89.4 B+
  - j) 89.5-93.4 A-
  - k) 93.5 and up A

#### Attendance Policy

Only valid medical or family emergencies qualify as an absence, and documentation of the same must be presented to the professor no later than the next class meeting. An excused absence requires a written medical explanation or a written, official form from a doctor or clinic. All other absences are considered to be unexcused. Unexcused absences will affect your grade (see below). Arriving more than 10 minutes late for any three classes will cumulatively count as one unexcused absence, while arriving 30 minutes late for any class will count as an unexcused absence.

#### Penalties for unexcused absences:

1. 1 absence – class participation grade drops one full letter grade (example: A- to B-)
2. 2 absences – class participation grade drops two full letter grades
3. 3 absences – class participation grade drops three full letter grades
4. 4 or more absences – class participation grade is a failing grade
5. Any absence, whether excused or not, will require catch-up reading

## Course schedule

### Week One: Introduction and late Ming

#### Questions:

- a) What is the Tribute System?
- b) What role did it play in Pre-modern Chinese history?

c) How should we evaluate Confucius' influences on China?

**Readings:**

1. Spence, chapter 1
2. G. William Skinner, éd., *The City in Late Imperial China* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1977)
3. Gérard Chalind, "The Ming and Chinese Politico-Military Traditions" , *A Global History of War*, University of California Press (pp. 176-184)

**Lecture outlines:**

1. China: Geography, Topography and Ethnicity
2. Dynastic cycles and the Pre-modern history of China
3. China's perception of the World in the pre-modern era
4. The late Ming: economy and society
5. The late Ming: glory and hardship

**Week 2: Consolidation of Qing Dynasty**

**Questions:**

- a) How did Kangxi and Qianlong consolidate their reign?
- b) What was the influence of foreigners in Ming and Qing Dynasty?

**Readings:**

1. Spence, chapter 2-6
2. Madeleine Zelin, *The Magistrate's Tael: Rationalizing Fiscal Reform in Eighteenth-Century*
3. *Ch'ing China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984)
4. Antonio Sisto Rosso, *Apostolic Legations to China of the Eighteenth Century* (South Pasadena, 1948)

**Lecture outlines:**

1. The Manchu conquest
2. Kangxi's Consolidation
3. Chinese society in Yongzheng
4. The reign of Qianlong
5. East and westerners

**Week 3: Opium Wars and the Failure of the Qing**

**Questions:**

1. Why did Japan go over to capitalism in the early modern period, while China didn't?
2. Why was the Qing Dynasty unable to resist the invasion of the West?
3. What is the influence of rebellions in late Qing dynasty?

**Readings:**

1. Spence, chapter 7-9
2. Pamela Kyle Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.
3. J. L. Cranmer-Byng, éd., *An Embassy to China: Lord Macartney's Journal, 1793-1794*, (London, 1962).

4. Teng Ssu-yii and John K. Fairbank, *China's Response to the West: A Documentary Survey, 1839-1923* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954)
5. Frederick Wells Williams, *Anson Burlingame and the First Chinese Mission to Foreign Powers* (New York, 1912)

**Lecture outlines:**

1. The Two Opium Wars: The First Anglo-British War, The Second Anglo-Chinese War
2. The response of China's scholars and politicians
3. Britain's military response
4. Internal Adversaries: The Taiping Rebellion (1851-64)
5. The collapse of central power

**Week 4: The Collapse of the Qing Dynasty**

**Questions:**

1. Why did all the reforms in late Qing dynasty fail?
2. Why did the dynastic cycle of imperial society collapse in the Qing dynasty?
3. How do you evaluate the Qing Constitution?

**Readings:**

1. Spence, chapter 10-11
2. Joseph W. Esherick, *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987.
3. Paul A. Cohen, *History in Three Keys: The Boxers as Event, Experience, and Myth*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1997.
4. Mary Wright, *The Last Stand of Chinese Conservatism: The T'ung-chih Restoration, 1862-1874* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1957)
5. Katherine F. Bruner, John K. Fairbank, and Richard Smith, eds., *Entering China's Service: Robert Hart's Journals, 1854-1863* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986)

**Lecture outlines:**

1. The Self-Strengthening Movement
2. New railways and new army
3. The Boxer Movement
4. The Hundred Days' Reform and the Aftermath
5. Defeat by the Japanese
6. The End of Qing Dynasty

**Week 5: China in the Early Twentieth Century**

**Questions:**

1. What were the effects of the May Fourth Movement on China?
2. How do you evaluate Sun Zhongshan?

**Readings:**

1. Spence, chapter 12-13
2. Marie-Claire Bergère, *Sun Yat-Sen*, Chapter XI.
3. Benjamin Schwartz, *In Search of Wealth and Power* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964)

4. Vera Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment: Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986)

**Lecture outlines:**

1. Sun Zhongshan (1866-1925) (Sun Yatsen)
2. The beginning of the Republic of China
3. The New Culture Movement and May Fourth Movement
4. The warlords

**Week 6: The Clash and the Experiments in Government**

**Questions:**

1. Why did Marxism-Leninism become the main ideology in China?
2. How do you evaluate the regime of Chiang Kai-Shek and Mao Zedong?
3. When did the WWII begin in Asia?

**Readings:**

1. Spence, chapter 14-16
2. Donald Jordan, *The Northern Expedition: China's National Revolution of 1926-1928* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1976)
3. Dan Jacobs, *Borodin: Stalin's Man in China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981)
- 4.16. James Crowley, *Japan's Quest for Autonomy: National Security and Foreign Policy, 1930-1938* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966)

**Lecture outlines:**

1. The Northern Expedition
2. Expansion of Marxism and Leninism in China
3. Foreign policy
4. Building A Party-State
5. Crisis at Xi'an

**Week 7: Mid-term**

**Week 8: Defending Against the Japanese Invasion and the Victory of PRC.**

**Questions:**

1. What was the influence of Japanese invasion?
2. What were the reasons that the Communists won and Nationalists lost?

**Readings:**

1. Spence, chapter 17 -18
2. James Crowley, *Japan's Quest for Autonomy: National Security and Foreign Policy, 1930-1938* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966)
3. F. F. Liu, *A Military History of Modern China: 1924-1949* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956)
4. Lloyd Eastman, "Nationalist China during the Sino-Japanese War, 1937-1945," *Cambridge History of China*, vol. 13, pt. 2 (Cambridge, 1986)
5. Chang Kia-ngau (Chia-ao), *The Inflationary Spiral: The Experience in China, 1939- 1950* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1958)

**Lecture outlines:**

Nanjing Massacre  
Chongqing and Yan'an  
Defending Against the Japanese Invasion  
The Japanese Surrender  
Inflation in regions under Guomindang control  
Defeat of the Guomindang armies

**Week 9: The Early PRC****Questions:**

1. Why did Chairman Mao try to subordinate intellectuals?
2. What were the achievements of the early PRC?
3. What do you think about the Korea War?
4. What were the policy and ideological origins of the Great Leap Forward?

**Readings:**

1. Spence, chapter 19-20
2. Mark Selden, *The People's Republic of China: A Documentary History of Revolutionary Change* (New York, 1979)
3. Allen Whiting, *China Crosses the Yalu: The Decision to Enter the Korean War*. (New York, 1960)
4. Frederick Teiwes, *Politics and Purges in China: Rectification and the Decline of Party Norms, 1950-1965* (White Plains, N.Y., 1979)

**Lecture outlines:**

1. The Communist Victory
2. The People's Republic of China 1949-1966
3. Imposing Control
4. The Korean War
5. Collectivizing Agriculture
6. New China
7. Subordinating Intellectuals
8. The Great Leap Forward

**Week 10: The Cultural Revolution****Questions:**

1. Why did Mao start the CR by mobilizing the Chinese students into Red Guards, and then end it by using the workers to control the students?
2. Why did the call for rebellion against the existing political order come from Mao who had built it?
3. Why were all Chinese so madly swept up by the Cultural Revolution?

**Readings:**

1. Spence, chapter 20-21
2. June Dreyer, "Traditional Minorities, Elites and the CPR Elite Engaged in Minority Nationalities Work," in *Elites in the People's Republic of China*, ed. Robert Scalapino (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1972).

3. John Gittings, *The Role of the Chinese Army* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967).
4. Ellis Joffe, *Party and Army: Professionalism and Political Control in the Chinese Officer Corps, 1949-1964* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965).
5. James McGough, *Fei Hsiao-t'ung: The Dilemma of a Chinese Intellectual* (White Plains, N.Y., 1979)

**Lecture outlines:**

1. The prelude to the CR
2. The Red Guards
3. Revolutionary Committees
4. Severe confusion
5. The Rise and Fall of the Shanghai Commune
6. The end of the chaos

**Documentary:**

The Mao's Year (33 min. 1:17:00-end)

**Week 11: Deng's Reform and Democracy Movements**

**Questions:**

1. How do you evaluate China's Open-door policy?
2. How do you evaluate the one-child policy?
3. What were the reasons for Democracy Movements?
4. Why students' Democracy Movements failed?
5. Will there be a democratic government in China in the 21st century? Why or why not?

**Readings:**

1. Spence, chapter 22-23
2. Shannon Brown, "China's Program of Technology Acquisition," in *China's Four Modernizations*, ed. Richard Baum (Boulder, Col., 1980)
3. Henry Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston, 1979)
4. David Goodman, *Beijing Street Voices: The Poetry and Politics of China's Democracy Movement* (London, 1981)
6. Liu Binyan, "People or Monsters?" and Other Stories and Reportage from China after Mao, trans. Perry Link et al. (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1983)

**Lecture Outlines:**

1. The Economic Reform and Open-door Policy of China
2. One child policy and the control of the population
3. Fifth Modernization 1978
4. Democracy movement in 1986
5. Democracy Movement in 1989
6. Economic Development and social problems
7. Heshang (River Elegy)
8. Democracy movement

**Week 12: China after 1989**

**Questions:**

1. Is China still a socialist country? Do socialism and democracy go hand in hand?

2. What is the expectation for relations between mainland and Taiwan?
3. What are the main social problems in China in the 21st century?

**Readings:**

1. Spence, chapter 24-26
2. Y. Y. Kueh, "The Economics of the 'Second Land Reform' in China," *China Quarterly* (1985).
3. Harry Harding, *China's Second Revolution: Reform after Mao* (Washington, D.C., 1987).
4. Orville Schell, *Discos and Democracy: China in the Throes of Reform* (New York, 1988).

**Lecture Outlines:**

1. Economic development - continued
2. The "Southern Tour"
3. Jiang Zeming and the Privatization of State enterprises
4. Laid-off workers and social division
5. The recovery of Hong Kong
6. Relations with Taiwan
7. Market economy and autocratic politics (Compare with India)
8. Social Problems in China now

**Week 13: Final paper submission**

1. Sum up what we have learned through the whole semester
2. Discussion on what China can learn from its modern history to ensure a better future.
3. Discussion on what China can contribute to the world culturally and economically.