UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - MADISON
Department of History
Sem. 2, 1982-83

COURSE NO. 492

COURSE TITLE
Intellectual History of China, 1911-1949
(Topic: Literature, Intellectual Change, and Socio-political Revolution in Twentieth Century China)

INSTRUCTOR
Yu-sheng Lin

COURSE DESCRIPTION

History 492 is concerned with major topics in the history of twentieth century Chinese intellectual and cultural developments: the origins and nature of Chinese nationalism and its relationship to radical anti-traditionalism and conservatism; the failure of Chinese liberalism; the major trends in modern Chinese literature and humanities; and the origins and development of Chinese Marxism. The course offers a thematic approach to the causes, processes, and consequences of twentieth century Chinese political and cultural revolutions; hence its chief emphases will be on political thought and literary ideas. One of the best ways to provide a channel through which a sense of empathy with the agonies, aspirations, and complex tensions in the Chinese political and cultural revolutions can be achieved is to read creative literary writings in their historical context. But foreign literature for this purpose needs to be introduced -- especially the great works whose qualities lie in their particular contents and modes of expression. Therefore, in addition to major historical works, students are required to read some of the most important and influential novels, short stories, and prose poems in English translation with necessary background explanations and content analyses provided by lectures. Those who have no background in modern Chinese history should read the relevant chapters of J.K. Fairbank, E.O. Reischauer, A.M. Craig, East Asia: The Modern Transformation or J.D. Spence, The Gate of Heavenly Peace in the first three weeks.

LECTURES

Two lectures per week, supplemented by discussion sections. An excellent 90-minute documentary will be shown, and filmstrips will also be shown from time to time to illustrate contents of lectures.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMINATIONS

(1) A 8-15 page typewritten, double-spaced term paper (topic of which may be selected from a list of suggestions) or a 10-15 page book report to be due Thursday, April 7, 1983.

(2) A final in-class examination on questions (50% identifications; 50% essays) that are distributed 24 hours in advance.

(3) An "Incomplete" is rarely permitted in this course. In other words, it is granted only under extremely unusual circumstances, such as a prolonged illness substantiated by a letter from the student's physician.
GRADING SYSTEM

Term paper -- 45%; Final exam -- 45%; performance in questions and answers in lectures and discussion sections -- 10%.

REQUIRED READINGS

Sheridan, James, China in Disintegration
Schwartz, B.I., In Search of Wealth and Power: Yen Fu and the West.
Meisner, M., Li Ta-chao and the Origins of Chinese Marxism.
Lu Xun (Lu Hsun), Selected Stories of Lu Xun (Lu Hsun).

GENERAL COURSE OUTLINE

   Readings: B.I. Schwartz, In Search of Wealth and Power
   JA83 S37

2. The Problem of Chinese Liberalism
   Readings: Ibid.

3. The Climate of Opinion in the May Fourth Era

4. The Literary Revolution
   PL 2442 H8

5. The Totalistic Revolt against Chinese Tradition

6. The Ambivalence and Agony in Lu Hsun's Iconoclastic Consciousness
   Readings: Lu Hsun, Selected Stories of Lu Hsun, Dawn Blossoms Plucked at Dusk, and Wild Grass
   Lin Yu-sheng, The Crisis of Chinese Consciousness, chap. 6

7. The Revolt against the Chinese Family
   Readings: Pa Chin, Family

8. The Rise of Chinese Marxism
   Readings: Maurice Meisner, Li Ta-chao and the Origins of Chinese Marxism
9. Varieties of Modern Chinese Literature

Readings: Lao She, *Rickshaw*, tr., Jean M. James

10. Literature and Revolution


SUGGESTED TOPICS (SELECT ONE) FOR THE TERM PAPER (8-15 typewritten pages):

1. "On balance, Yen Fu's basic concern throughout these years (1895-98) is with education in the broadest sense... The gospel of education itself does not derive from Spencer. Spencer has not assigned to education or to ideas any particular role as a dynamic principle pushing forward the evolutionary process. It is, rather, "evolution" as a total process which pushes forward all the separate aspects of human culture." (Schwartz's *In Search of Wealth and Power*, pp. 89-90.)

On the basis of your reading of Schwartz's book and Lin Yü-sheng's *Crisis of Chinese Consciousness*, discuss analytically the origins and implications of this statement.

2. "If the word 'socialism' involves a concern with human equality and not simply a 'planned' and centrally organized society, it has been amply demonstrated that the machinery of wealth and power is inherently hierarchic and authoritarian. ... One can hardly stand in judgment on Yen Fu or the modern Chinese intelligentsia for concerning themselves with the question of state power. China has indeed been deeply humiliated, and no society can survive in the modern world without state power. However, the fact remains that where values are judged as means toward the attainment of power these values are likely to be rendered precarious, weak, and deformed." (Schwartz, pp. 246-7).

On the basis of your reading of and reflection on Schwartz's book, discuss the significance of this statement.

3. Discuss the theme (or themes) of one or two stories (e.g. "Diary of a Madman," "The True Story of Ah Q") by Lu Hsün.

4. Discuss the theme of Pa Chin's *Family*.

5. Discuss the major ideas of Marxism that were reinterpreted by Li Ta-chao for making the Chinese Communist revolution.

6. On the basis of Stuart Schram's *Mao Tse-tung*, discuss the basic features of Maoism.

7. On the basis of Lin Yü-sheng's *Crisis of Chinese Consciousness*, discuss the meaning, origins, and implications of the cultural-intellectualistic approach of the May Fourth intelligentsia. In what precise sense can we argue that it was traditionally derived rather than influenced by Western sources and that the May Fourth iconoclasts were so influenced by the Confucian tradition that they became totalistic anti-Confucianists?
Supplementary Readings on Lu Hsun

The Ambivalence and Agony in Lu Hsun's Iconoclastic Consciousness

Readings:  
Lu Hsun, Selected Works of Lu Hsun, Vols. 1-4, Pl 2754 S5 A6
Lu Hsun, Dawn Blossoms Plucked at Dusk
Lin Yu-sheng, The Crisis of Chinese Consciousness, chap. 6
"The Complex Consciousness of Lu Hsun" DS721 L567
Merle Goldman, ed., Modern Chinese Literature in the May Fourth Era, chaps. 4, 8, 9, 10.
T. A. Hsia, The Gate of Darkness, chaps. on Lu Hsun. PL 2303 H72 (3/2)
C. T. Hsia, History of Modern Chinese Fiction, chap. on Lu Hsun
Lawrence, W. Chisolm, "Lu Hsun and Revolution in Modern China,"
J. D. Chinnery, "The Influence of Western Literature on Lu Xun (Lu Hsun)'s 'Diary of a Madman'" Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, Vol. 23 (1960), pp. 309-322. AP L847 ES878