

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
Department of History
Fall, 1994

History 341

History of Modern China, 1800-1949

Mr. Meisner

M W 5-6:15

Office: 5117 Humanities

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 4-5, or by appt.
263-1848

The course is a survey of the major social, political and intellectual developments in China from the time of the 19th Century Opium War until the establishment of the People's Republic in 1949. Its main (but not sole) aim is to understand the historical conditions that resulted in the Chinese Communist Revolution and to understand the nature of that revolution. The course is divided into three parts. Part I examines the decay of the old Chinese imperial order in the 19th century and the impact of Western imperialism on traditional Chinese society. Part II, dealing with the period 1895-1927, is concerned with the emergence of modern revolutionary movements, especially the Guomintang (Kuomintang) of Sun Yat-sen and the Chinese Communist Party, which culminate in the great revolutionary upsurge of 1925-27. Part III examines Republican China in the Chiang Kai-shek era and especially the origins and history of the Maoist phase of the Chinese Communist revolution, 1927-49. You are required to read five books over the course of the semester. Two books will serve as texts to be read in conjunction with the lectures and discussions. These are:

Frederic Wakeman, The Fall of Imperial China (Free Press)

Lucien Bianco, The Origins of the Chinese Revolution (Stanford)

Assignments in the Wakeman and Bianco books are listed below. Both volumes are available for purchase in local bookstores.

You are required to read one additional book for each of the three parts of the course. At the conclusion of Parts I, II, and III, you will be asked to write a short essay (about 5 double-spaced typewritten pages) based upon your reading of the books listed on the following pages. The three essays, the form and nature of which will be discussed in class, are due (respectively) on October 17, November 21, and December 12.

There will be a final take-home examination based on lectures and required readings. Exam questions will be distributed on December 14 and your exam is due on or before December 21.

No prior knowledge of Chinese history is presupposed.

Grading:

The three short essays -- 40%

The final exam -- 40%

Work in discussion sections -- 20%

LECTURE AND DISCUSSION TOPICS

Part I: The Decay of the old Regime, 1800-1895 (Sept. 7 -- Oct. 12)

Feudalism and Capitalism in Chinese History

State and Society in Traditional China: The Gentry as a Ruling Class

Confucianism as a Conservative Ideology

Early Sino-Western Relations and the Opium Wars

Traditional Peasant Rebellions and the Taiping Rebellion

The Revolutionary Character of Taiping Christianity

"Self-Strengthening": The Failure of Conservative Modernization

The Sino-Japanese War, 1894-95

Imperialism in Modern Chinese History

The Origins and Nature of Modern Chinese Capitalism

Required Readings for Part IA) Frederic Wakeman, The Fall of Imperial China, chapters 1-10.B) Mary C. Wright, The Last Stand of Chinese Conservatism

Essay #1 due Oct. 17 or Franz Michael, The Taiping Rebellion
or Barrington Moore, Social Origins of Dictatorship and
Democracy, Chapters 4 and 5

Part II: The Rise of the Modern Revolutionary Movement, 1895-1927 (Oct. 7 - Nov. 9)

The Defection of the Intellectuals

The Hundred Days Reform

The Transition from Culturalism to Nationalism: Yen Fu and Liang Qichao

Nationalism versus Anti-Foreignism: The Case of the Boxer Rebellion

Sun Yat-sen and the Origins of the Guomindang

The Revolution of 1911 and the Failure of Bourgeois Democracy

Socialism and Anarchism in the Early Revolutionary Movement, 1900-1919

The Modern Chinese Intelligentsia and the New Culture Movement, 1915-1919

The Modern Women's Liberation Movement

The May Fourth Movement and the Politicization of the Intelligentsia

Nationalism and Cultural Iconoclasm

The Introduction of Marxism

The Chinese Labor Movement

The Birth and Early Years of the Chinese Communist Party

The Soviet Union and the Guomindang-Communist Alliance

Nationalism and Social Revolution, 1925-1927

Required Readings for Part II

A) Wakeman, chapter 11

Lucien Bianco, Origins of the Chinese Revolution, 1915-1949, chapters 1-3B) Andre Malraux, Man's Fate

Essay #2 due Nov. 21

Part III: The Chinese Communist Revolution, 1927-1949 (Nov. 11 - Dec. 14)

The Significance of 1927

Maoism as a Variant of Marxism

The Kiangsi Soviet and the Long March

Guomindang China, 1927-37

Yenan Communism, 1935-45

On Interpreting the Chinese Communist Revolution: the theory of "peasant nationalism"

The Civil War, 1945-49

Capitalist and Socialist Features of the Chinese Revolution

Required Readings for Part III

- A) Bianco, Origins of the Chinese Revolution, chs. 4-7 and Conclusion
- B) Emily Honig, Sisters and Strangers: Women in the Shanghai Cotton Mills, 1919-49

Essay #3 due Dec. 12

Final Exam: Questions will be distributed on December 14. Essays are due on or before December 21.

Suggested Supplementary Readings

1. The Nature of the Gentry Class

Fei Hsiao-t'ung, China's Gentry
 F. Wakeman, Fall of Imperial China, ch. 2
 Chang Chung-li, The Chinese Gentry
 Max Weber, The Religion of China
2. The Taiping Revolution

Franz Michael, The Taiping Rebellion
 Vincent Shih, The Taiping Ideology
 Philip Kuhn, Rebellion and Its Enemies in Late Imperial China
3. Traditional Society and the Failure of Modernization

Mary C. Wright, The Last Stand of Chinese Conservatism
 Barrington Moore, Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy, ch. 4
4. The Decay of Confucianism and the Rise of Nationalism

Joseph Levenson, Confucian China and Its Modern Fate (3 vols)
 Benjamin Schwartz, In Search of Wealth and Power: Yen Fu and the West
 Joseph Levenson, Lian Ch'i-ch'ao and the Mind of Modern China
5. The Early Revolutionary Movement

Edward Friedman, Backward Toward Revolution
 Mary Rankin, Early Chinese Revolutionaries
 Michael Gasster, Chinese Intellectuals and the Revolution of 1911
 Harold Schiffrin, Sun Yat-sen and the Origins of the Chinese Revolution
 Arif Dirlik, Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution
6. The May Fourth Movement

Lin Yu-sheng, The Crisis of Chinese Consciousness: Radical Anti-Traditionalism in the May Fourth Movement
 Chow Tse-tsung, The May Fourth Movement
 Jerome Grieder, Hu Shih and the Chinese Renaissance
 Vera Scharcz, The Chinese Enlightenment

7. The Origins of Marxism and Communism in China

Lee Feigon, Chen Duxiu: Founder of the Chinese Communist Party
 Maurice Meisner, Li Ta-chao and the Origins of Chinese Marxism
 Benjamin Schwartz, Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao
 Arif Dirlik, The Origins of Chinese Communism

8. The Urban Working Class

Jean Chesneaux, The Chinese Labor Movement, 1919-27
 Lynda Shaffer, Mao and the Workers

9. The Revolution of the 1920s as Reflected in Western Literature

Harold Isaacs, The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution
 Andre Malraux, Man's Fate
 Andre Malraux, The Conquerers
 Richard McKenna, The Sand Pebbles

10. The Kuomintang in Power

Lyoyd Eastman, The Abortive Revolution
 Sterling Seagrave, The Soong Dynasty
 James Sheridan, China in Disintegration

11. Marxism in China: Theories of History and Literature

Arif Dirlik, Revolution and History: Origins of Marxist Historiography in China
 Paul Pickowicz, Ch'u Chiu-pai and the Origins of Chinese Marxist Literary Criticism

12. Chinese Women in an Era of Revolutionary Change

Marilyn Young (ed.), Women in China
 Helen F. Snow, Women in Modern China
 Elisabeth Croll (ed.), The Women's Movement in China
 Agnes Smedley, Portraits of Chinese Women in Revolution
 Ida Pruitt, A Daughter of Han: The Autobiography of a Chinese Working Woman

13. Mao Tse-tung

Mao's autobiography in Edgar Snow, Red Star Over China
 Stuart Schram, Mao Tse-tung
 Jerome Chen, Mao and the Chinese Revolution

14. Maoism as a Variant of Marxism-Leninism

Benjamin Schwartz, Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao
 Stuart Schram, Mao Tse-tung
 Maurice Meisner, Marxism, Maoism and Utopianism
 Raymond Wylie, The Emergence of Maoism

15. Social and Economic Origins of Rural Revolution

R.H. Tawney, Land and Labour in China
 Fei Hsiao-tung, Peasant Life in China
 Robert Marks, Rural Revolution in South China: Peasants and the Making of History in Haifeng County, 1570-1930

16. The Nature of the Chinese Communist Revolution: Nationalism and Social Revolution

Chalmers Johnson, Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power
 Mark Selden, The Yen-an Way in Revolutionary China

17. The Kuomintang-Communist Struggle; the Last Phase

Suzanne Pepper, Civil War in China: The Political Struggle, 1945-49
 Jack Belden, China Shakes the World

18. Other Aspects of the History of Chinese Communism

Angus McDonald, Urban Origins of Rural Revolution
 Dick Wilson, The Long March
 Agnes Smedley, The Great Road: The Life and Times of Chu Teh
 William Hinton, Fanshen: A Documentary of Revolution in a Chinese Village

Periodization of the History of China

Ancient China

Hsia (?) 2200-1750 BC
 Shang 1750-1100
 Chou 1100-221 BC
 Western Chou, 1100-770
 Eastern Chou, 770-221
 (Spring and Autumn period, 722-481)
 (Warring States period, 403-221)

Imperial (traditional) China

Ch'in 221-207 BC
 Former Han 206 BC-8 AD
 Later Han 25-220
 Period of Disunity 221-589
 (Three Kingdoms 221-264)
 Sui 589-617
 T'ang 618-906
 Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms 907-959
 Northern Sung 960-1126
 Southern Sung 1127-1275
 Yuan (Mongol) 1276-1367
 Ming 1368-1644
 Ch'ing (Manchu) 1645-1911

Republican China, 1912-1949
 Kuomintang era, 1928-49

People's Republic of China, 1949 --
 Maoist era, 1949-76
 Post-Mao period, 1976 --

Conventional Chinese Marxist Characterizations:

Shang and early Chou -- slave society
 Late Chou -- transition from slavery to feudalism
 221 BC - 1842 AD -- feudalism (or "feudal-bureaucratic")
 1842 - 1949 -- semi-colonial and semi-feudal (i.e., partly capitalist)
 1949 - 1955 -- "new democratic"
 1956 -- -- "socialist"