

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
Department of History
Spring 1976

HISTORY 657: History of Revolution in Modern China, 1850-1949 Meisner

The course is offered to provide a general survey of revolutionary movements in China from the mid-19th century Taiping Rebellion to the victory of the Chinese Communist Revolution in 1949 -- and to examine and interpret the social nature and historical significance of such movements. The first half of the semester will deal with the revolutionary consequences of the disintegration of the traditional Chinese socio-political order under the impact of foreign imperialism in the late 19th century and the early decades of the 20th century -- and the forces that went into the making of a modern revolutionary situation. The latter half of the course will be devoted to an examination of the history of the Chinese Communist Revolution from 1921 to 1949.

Although no prior knowledge of Chinese history is presupposed, students wholly unfamiliar with the history of China might find it helpful to begin by reading pp. 1-194 of John K. Fairbank, The U.S. and China (Harvard paperback, 3rd revised and enlarged edition, 1971) for a general overview of traditional Chinese history and society and the impact of 19th century imperialism.

There will be a final take-home examination based upon the readings and lectures listed below. The exam questions will be distributed on May 20 and your response is due on May 25. In addition, you are asked to write two short essays (about 8-10 double spaced typewritten pages each), one dealing with the revolutionary movement of the 1920s and based on a critical analysis of two books selected from those in Section IV of "Readings" listed below, the second on the Kiangsi and/or Yen-an periods of the Communist revolution based on two books selected from Section V. The mid-semester examination is optional; you may or may not wish to take it, and you may or may not choose to have it counted in determining your course grade. Assuming you do not, final grades will be determined on the following basis:

- 50% for the final take-home exam
- 50% for the two essays

History 657: Lecture Schedule (Spring, 1976)

- Jan. 27: Introduction: Revolution in China
- Jan. 29: Traditional Chinese Peasant Rebellions and Rebel Ideologies
- Feb. 3: The Taiping Rebellion, 1850-65
- Feb. 5: The Revolutionary Character of the Taipings
- Feb. 10: Counter-revolution: The T'ung-chih Restoration
- Feb. 12: The Revolutionary Consequences of the Failure of "Conservative Modernization"
- Feb. 17: The Desertion of the Intellectuals from the Old Order
- Feb. 19: The "Hundred Days" of Reform
- Feb. 24: The Boxer Rebellion and the Anti-Revolutionary Implications of Anti-Foreignism
- Feb. 26: Imperialism and the Disintegration of the Confucian Order
- Mar. 2: Capitalism in China and the Nature of the Modern Chinese Bourgeoisie
- Mar. 4: The Revolutionary Potentialities of Modern Chinese Nationalism
- Mar. 9: Sun Yat-sen and the Origins of the Kuomintang
- Mar. 11: Socialism and Anarchism in the Early Revolutionary Movement
- Mar. 16: The Revolution of 1911 and the Failure of Bourgeois Revolution
- Mar. 18: The Emergence of a Modern Intelligentsia: The New Culture Movement of 1915-1919

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- Mar. 30: The May Fourth Movement and the Politicization of the Intellectuals
- Apr. 1: The Introduction of Marxism and the Birth of the Chinese Communist Party
- Apr. 6: Optional Mid-semester Exam
- Apr. 8: Early History of the CCP and the Kuomintang-Communist Alliance
- Apr. 13: The Revolution of 1925-27

History 657: Lecture Schedule (Cont'd)

- Apr. 15: Social Classes and Political Power in China: historical consequences of the failure of bourgeois and proletarian revolution
- Apr. 20: Social and Ideological Nature of the Nationalist Regime, 1928-37
- Apr. 22: Marxism-Leninism and the Peasantry
- Apr. 27: The Kiangsi Era of Chinese Communism, 1928-34
- Apr. 29: The History of the Yen-an Period of the Revolution, 1935-45
- May 4: Maoist Theory and Revolutionary Strategy
- May 11: The Theory of "Peasant Nationalism"
- May 13: The Third Revolutionary Civil War (1946-49) and the Birth of the People's Republic
- May 18: Maoism and the Marxist-Leninist Tradition
- May 20: The Chinese Revolutionary Heritage and the Chinese People's Republic

The "take-home" final will be distributed on May 20; it is due on Tuesday, May 25.

I. Jan. 27 - Feb. 5

Franz Michael, The Taiping Rebellion (Vol. I)

II. Feb. 12 - March 16

Mary Wright (ed.), China in Revolution: The First Phase, 1900-1913

Barrington Moore, Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy, pp. 159-187

III. March 16 - May 20

Lucien Bianco, Origins of the Chinese Revolution, 1915-1949

Moore, Social Origins, pp. 187-227, 453-508.

IV. March 18 - April 15

Two of the following:

Harold Isaacs, The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution

Maurice Meisner, Li Ta-chao and the Origins of Chinese Marxism

Jean Chesneaux, The Chinese Labor Movement, 1919-1927

Leon Trotsky, Problems of the Chinese Revolution

Benjamin Schwartz, Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao

Conrad Brandt, Stalin's Failure in China, 1924-27

V. April 20 - May 20 (The Kiangsi and Yen-an Eras)

Two of the following:

Mark Selden, The Yen-an Way in Revolutionary China

Chalmers Johnson, Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power

Edgar Snow, Red Star Over China

John Rue, Mao Tse-tung in Opposition

Stuart Schram, Mao Tse-tung

Jerome Ch'en, Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese Revolution