Anthropology of China

01-070-248

Spring Semester 2013

Instructor: Dr. Virginia Cornue
Teaching Assistant: Chigusa Yamaura
Classroom: Hickman Hall Rm 201
Period: T/Th 5 3:55---5:15PM
Office hours: T/Th 1:15-3:30 Hickman Hall Rm 201; Ruth Adams Building Rm 310
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Course Description:

This course investigates China as a narrative object of anthropological study and from multiple perspectives. Anthropology, history, gender analysis, cultural studies, and political economy will be employed to bring texture and specificity to the study of China. For the purposes of this course China is construed to mean the political entity, the People's Republic of China or mainland China.

While the course focuses primarily on the 20th and 21st centuries, we draw upon historical periods and themes to give depth and perspective to ethnographic material that describes the contemporary era. This approach is employed to better situate China in its own context and in a global context. The course is designed to dispute the notion that China was ever or is composed of static or unchanging people or social forms. Rather the hope is that our investigations will challenge western stereotypes of China and enable students to appreciate China in its own specificities and dynamisms.

The course is arranged by themes rather than periods. We begin by critiquing anthropology's "traditional"colonialist analysis of China. Next we look at the issues of power and politics from the perspectives of gender, leadership, interpersonal relations, fieldwork, mass media, and ideology. Another theme addresses concepts of rurality, urbanity, suburban development and the otherness of ethnicity and gender. Here we pay especial attention to the affects of the market economy in the present time.

Another theme investigates identity in and of the nation/state and personhood. Morality, family, trans-nation linkages and “bodiliness” are central to this section. A further theme investigates the transition from socialist modernity to global modernity. Here we explore post-socialist art, films, literature, the market and new social and organizational forms central in producing the new consumer citizen. Finally we return to the theme of research and fieldwork and discuss new methods made possible by global telecommunications and increasing mobility.

The course will be an active one in which students will go into the “field” for research, and participate in class discussions, in addition to attending lectures, writing papers and
doing library research. Cultural anthropology is the practice of studying people and this course will have at its heart that practice.

**Course Requirements:**

ALL students are expected to attend ALL classes. If you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me. If you must miss class for periods longer than one week, please contact the Dean of Students for assistance to help verify these circumstances. Daily attendance will be taken and figured into your final grade.

You are required to have carefully prepared the assigned readings before coming to class. Grades will be determined in part on class participation. And it is very evident if you have not read the assigned material.

**Assignments:**

1. **Symbol Search:** Field Research in which students locate 10 Chinese symbols and then list each symbol and explain its meaning in a short paragraph. Complete instructions will be posted on Sakai. 3-4 pps. (10pts) Due: 2/16

2. **Movie Review:** Students will independently view any two (2) of four (4) movies on reserve at Douglass and write an analysis comparing and contrasting their selections. Complete instructions will be posted on Sakai. 4pp. (15pts) Due 3/20

3. **Short Story Essay:** Choose any two (2) of four (4) short stories. Compare and contrast the stories. Complete instructions will be posted on Sakai. 4pps. (15pts) Due 4/19

4. **Mid-term Exam:** Short answer in-class test. (20pts) Due 3/1

5. **Final Exam:** Take home with three essay questions. (30 pts) Due Final Exam date

6. **Class participation in discussions.** (5pts)

7. **Class attendance.** (5pts)

8. From time to time there will be a topical assignment relating to current events and counted in class participation grade. Extra Credit

**Grades are calculated** in the following manner: 100 points over all figured on the above points.

**Grade scale:** A (90% or above); B+ (86% or above); B (80% to 85); C+ (76% or above), C (70-75%); D (65% or above).

**Learning goals:**

- To provide students with the knowledge they need to identify, explain, and historically contextualize the fundamental concepts, modes of analysis, and central questions of cultural anthropology and to help students demonstrate proficiency in their use of this knowledge.
• To provide students with concrete knowledge of the construction of peoples’ practices, beliefs, and life-ways, paying particular attention to the relationship of this knowledge to how groups organize for power and politics.
• To help students gain proficiency in the use of critical thinking skills in their assessment of articles, ethnographic writing, and film.
• To help students increase their ability to express themselves knowledgably and proficiently in writing about central issues in cultural anthropology.
• To help students improve their expression and proficiency in speaking about central issues in cultural anthropology.
• To help students prepare for life in a diverse and global world by providing them with perspectives and skills for thinking critically about difference and their place within an increasingly integrated world.

**Spring Semester Begins** Tue Jan 17  
**Spring Recess Begins** Mar 10- Sun Mar 18  
**Spring classes end** Mon April 30

**Block I Wks 1,2,3,4: In Perspective**

**Week 1 Tuesday Jan. 17**
- Introduction and ice breakers.
- Class Exercise: What I **Know** about China.

**Week 2 Jan. 24/26 T/TH**

**China through Western Eyes**
- 2010 NA *Stereotypes of East Asians in the Western World*
- Bring a clipping, a picture, a cartoon, a saying or some material that reflects current stereotypes about Asians/Chinese (a.k.a All Asians are Chinese). We will discuss in class.
- The death of Daniel Chin—search clippings and articles about this recent murder. Bring to class for discussion in the context of readings.

**Week 3 Jan. 31/Feb.2 T/TH**

**China in Historical Perspective**
- Imperial/Dynastic 2,000ish BCE-1911CE
- Post- Imperial Interim: 1911-1949
- PRC-1949 ➔  
  Socialist Revolutionary 1919s ➔
- Transition 1989-1999ish  
  Socialist Market Era 1996 ➔

**Week 4 Feb. 7/9 T/TH**

**Key Philosophies—Brief Overview**
- Confucius- Kongzi
Brief Overview

- Laozi—Taoism

- Chinese Marxism
  - http://chinajapan.org/articles/14/14.24-34ishikawa.pdf
  - Marxism in Asia - China</a>

- Qi, Silk and Skin
  - Barlow and Zito TBD

Key Religions: Brief Overview

- Buddhism Taoism and Confucianism in China
  - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-gZY4i4Kg3s

http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/buddhistworld/china-txt.htm


- Christianity
  - re Matteo Ricci

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j8QVzkVVRwk&feature=fvsr

- Islam

We will view selected videos in class.

Block II: wks: 5,6,7,8 Social Relations

Week 5 Feb. 14/16 T/TH

Chastity, Love, Marriage, and Divorce


**DUE: Feb 16: Symbol Search Paper**

**Week 6 Feb. 21/23 T/TH**

**Revolution**
- The Path to Imperial Power
- Socialist
- Chinese Feminism
- Market

**Week 7 Feb. 28/March 1 T/TH**

**Mid-term Exam in Class March 1**

**Spatial Organization**
- Town and Countryside
- Urban
- Suburban

**Week 8 March 6/8 T/TH**

**Minority**
- Min Jian Organizations

**Week 9 March 13/15 SPRING BREAK**
Block III wks 10,11,12,13 From the Inside Out

Week 10 March 20/22 T/TH
Making Social Beings
- Cultivating Ren/Humanity-personhood viz women and men
  Middle School. NYC: St Martin’s Press.
- Struggle Sessions of Cultural Revolution
  http://www.prol-position.net/nl/2008/10/maoist%20patriarchy/sendto_form
- Identity Reform/ Gaige post Mao: Talking to the State
- Feet, Hair and Dress
  2007 Zito, Angela, Secularizing the Pain of Footbinding in China: Missionary
  and Medical Stagings of the Universal Body. Journal of the American Academy
  Lu Xun 1957. Anxious Thoughts on ‘Natural Breasts’ Collected Works Vol II.

DUE: Movie Review Essay March 20

Week 11 March 27/29 T/TH
Commercial Life
- Petty Bourgeois Activities in the Imperium
  Cornell University Press.
- 20th Century Daguans
  Gates, Hill 1987The Commoditization of Chinese Women. Signs: Journal of
- 21st Century International Reach

Week 12 April 3/5 T/TH
Food and Health
Charlotte Furth TBD

Week 13 April 10/12 T/TH
Women
- Goddesses
  2011. Dashu, Max, Xi Wangmu, the Shamanic Great Goddess of China
  http://www.suppressedhistories.net/goddess/xiwangmu.html
- Language and Identity: Call me tai tai; funu; xiaojie; airen; nuxing
  Woman. In Christina K. Gilmartin, Gail Hershatter, Lisa Rofel and Tyrene
  White, eds., Engendering China: Women, Culture and the State. Cambridge,
Spaces: From Inner to Outer to Everywhere
Making Revolution: military; social; organizational
http://books.google.com/books?id=2XGufmHGm-cC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false

Block IV wks 14,15 Ready for the Global

Week 14 April 17/19 T/TH
Social Change
- The Place of Bodies
- Gender Reorganization
- Li, Ritual, Righting Social Order
  Yu, Chenfang, P’u- t’o Shan: Pilgramages and the Creation of the Chinese Potalaka in Susan Naquin and Chenfang Yu Pilgrims and Sacred Sites: 190-245
  Elvin, Mark 1984 Female Virtue and the State in China. Past and Present. 104:111-152.

Week 15 April 24/26 T/TH LAST DAY CLASS Take Home Exam—Three Essays DUE DAY OF FINAL EXAM

China in the Global
- Post-Mao
- 21st Century ‘Soft Power’
- Time Magazine Special Section on China. Nov. 2011.

Films to View Independently
The blue kite 1994, 1993

Mao Xiao, Zhuangzhuang Tian, Liping Lü, Dian Yi, and Wenyao Zhang

Told from the perspective of a young boy, Tietou, the film traces the fate of a Beijing family and their neighbors as they experience the political and social upheavals in 1950's and 1960's China. 1 videocassette (138 min.)

MEDIA 2-2594

Fu-jung-chen A small town called Hibiscus 198-?

Hua Ku, Chin Hsieh, Hsiao-ching Liu, Wen Chiang, and Tsai-shih Cheng

Story of a couple who sells rice beancurd for a living. During the "four clean-ups" movement of 1964, they are classified as new rich peasants: their house is confiscated and the husband is driven to suicide. After the Cultural Revolution, the wife falls in love with a rightist and almost dies when giving birth to their baby. 1 videocassette (126 min.)

MEDIA. MEDIA 2-5069 2-5069

Platform Zhan tai c2002

Jieming Li, Shozo Ichiyama, Zhangke Jia, Hongwei Wang, Tao Zhao, Jingdong Liang, Tianyi Yang, Hu Tong Communication, T-Mark Inc, Artcam International, and Artificial Eye (Firm)

Follows the lives of four friends over a turbulent 10 year period of Chinese history, from 1979 to 1989. In the small town of Fenyang, in the remote western province of Shanxi, the teenage members of a state theatre troupe stage propaganda plays in praise of Mao. But as the country opens up to the free market and implements wide-ranging reform, their lives are irrevocably changed as the world around them is transformed by the music, fashions and other cultural influences of the West. 1 videodisc (150 min.)

MEDIA 10-397

Shower 2000

Mistakenly believing his father has passed away, a bathhouse master's son returns home and soon discovers the magic of the family business and its importance to the community. 1 videocassette (ca. 94 min.)

DANA 1559
*Tu shen nü jen* 1997?

Shan Jiang, Hong Pan, and Chih-yü Ch`in

Woman with failed marriage struggles to be equal to her male business partner. Deals with issues which concern single women. 1 videocassette (106 min.): 

MEDIA 2-5278

**Short Stories TBD**
Considering authors: Bing Ling, Zhang Jie, Lu Xun and others