CONTEMPORARY CHINESE CULTURE AND SOCIETY

Washington University | Fall 2016
Mondays & Wednesdays 10:10–11:30 am
Course Location: McDonnell 362
Course Website: https://bb.wustl.edu/

Teaching Staff:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Faculty Instructor: Priscilla Song, PhD</th>
<th>Graduate Teaching Assistant (Anthropology): Chaoxiong Zhang, MA, MS</th>
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<td><a href="mailto:priscillasong@wustl.edu">priscillasong@wustl.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>☑ Office Hours: Mondays 8:45–9:45 am (McMillan 336)</td>
<td>☑ Office Hours: Wednesdays 11:45–12:45 (McMillan 301)</td>
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We are also available by appointment if you are unable to meet during listed office hours.

Zhang Xiaogang, 1995, Bloodline: A Big Family No. 2
Oil on canvas, 180 x 230 cm
Photo credit: The John C. and Susan L. Huntington Archive

This course provides an introduction to emerging trends in Chinese culture and society. We will explore processes of change and continuity in the People's Republic, examining the complexity of social issues and the dynamics of cultural unity and diversity. While we will focus on the post-Mao reform era (1978 to the present), we will consider how contemporary developments draw upon the legacies of the Maoist revolutions as well as the pre-socialist past. The course provides an overview of anthropological approaches to the study of contemporary China, introducing students to key concepts, theories, and frameworks integral to the analysis of Chinese culture and society. Readings, lectures, and discussions will highlight not only macro-level processes of social change and continuity but also the everyday experiences of individuals involved in these processes. We will pay particular attention to issues of family life, institutional culture, migration, religion, ethnicity, gender, consumption, and globalization.

**READING MATERIALS**

*Articles are available online through Ares. Books are available on reserve at Olin Library.*

**Required Books:**


**The following films will be screened in class:**


**Key to Symbols:**

- Reading from required course book.
- Electronic article available through Ares ([http://ares.wustl.edu/ares/](http://ares.wustl.edu/ares/)).
- In-class film screening.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS & POLICIES

❖ Attendance and Participation (10% of overall grade)

Regular class attendance is required. The class participation grade will be based on your preparation for and contribution to class discussion and activities. To that end, all students are required to complete the assigned readings (50-100 pages per week) before the scheduled sessions. Students cannot contribute to class discussion if they are absent; consequently, repeated unexcused absences from lectures will be reflected in the class participation grade.

As part of the participation grade, each student will serve as the class rapporteur for one class session. This will involve taking careful notes during the lecture, revising them in narrative form, synthesizing key themes with assigned course readings, and then posting the final synthesis in the "Discussion Board" section of the course website (https://bb.wustl.edu) within one week. These rapporteurs' notes will serve as a cumulative record of the course to help all students prepare for exams and writing assignments. Please sign up for a rapporteur session online: http://doodle.com/poll/65r5s6hr8yphtwr

❖ Online Response Posts (worth 30% of overall grade)

Each class participant is required to write online response posts in no fewer than ten (10) different weeks of the semester. Your comments should address the week's readings and must be posted in the "Discussion Board" section of the course website (https://bb.wustl.edu) no later than 9 pm on the day before class to receive credit. Half of the class will post on Sundays and the other half on Tuesdays; your day will be assigned at the start of the semester. Each post should be a short paragraph (150–200 words) that follows one of these formats:

Close Reading (title your post "Close reading: [name of author(s)]"): Identify a passage from one of the readings that excites or puzzles you; briefly explain how or why it does so; and pose an open-ended discussion question that might help your fellow classmates follow your inspiration or address your concern.

Crosstalk (title your post "Crosstalk: [topic or theme]"): Situate the week's readings within the context of the course as a whole. What new elements do they bring to our exploration of Chinese culture and society? Which previous readings do they build upon, which do they omit? How do they speak to course themes?

Response posts will be graded as check (2 points for a satisfactory response), check-minus (1 point for unsatisfactory or late responses), or zero for non-submission. You are encouraged to respond to your classmates' postings as well as post links to relevant news articles, images, websites, etc. Additional posts making substantive contributions will be awarded 0.25 bonus points each.
Kinship Assignment (worth 10% of overall grade)

This two-part assignment will ask you first to draw your personal kinship chart over four generations using anthropological kinship symbols and terminology you will learn in class. You will then write a one-page analysis of your kinship chart that identifies its key characteristics and situates these in the context of course themes. Your kinship assignment is due at the beginning of class on **Wednesday September 21**.

Midterm Exam (worth 15% of overall grade)

The midterm exam will take place in class on **Wednesday October 26** and will be based on all lectures, discussions, films, and required readings through October 24.

Ethnographic Profile Paper (worth 20% of overall grade)

This assignment is an opportunity for you to synthesize lectures and readings in a creative format by writing an "ethnographic profile" of a person or place in contemporary China. For this project, you will begin with what you have learned about Chinese society and use your anthropological sensibility to mold characteristics into a profile. If a person, you should place him/her in a nexus of relationships and in terms of family background, geographic location, institutional context, ethnic and/or religious affiliations, and any other significant dimensions of personal identity. If a place, you should try to depict both its structural features and the characteristics and relationships of the people who customarily inhabit it. The point of this exercise is to use the device of a character profile to develop a realistic and revealing perspective on the lifeways and institutions of contemporary China. Guidelines, writing hints, examples, and an evaluation rubric will be available on the course website. There are two deadlines:

**Character Sketch** (worth 30% of project grade): By the beginning of class on **Monday November 14**, you must submit an initial character (or place) sketch plus an annotated list of key course themes and readings you plan to explore through your ethnographic profile. I expect it to show a good faith effort to be engaged in the project, but I also understand that it may be tentative, partial, and preliminary.

**Final Paper** (worth 70% of project grade): The final version of the ethnographic profile (8-10 pages) is due at the beginning of class on **Wednesday, December 7**. You are required to submit a cover letter (1-2 pages) with your paper explaining the revisions you have made and describing the key course themes and readings you chose to explore in your final paper.

Final Exam (worth 15% of overall grade)

The Final Exam is a cumulative, take-home, essay-based exam. You will receive the essay questions on the final day of class and have one week to work on the exam. Your completed exam must be submitted online through Blackboard no later than 10:00 a.m. on **Thursday, December 15**. Because this is a take-home examination, no make-up final examination will be given.
COURSE POLICIES

- **Penalties for Late Work and Requests for Extensions**: All assignments are due on the scheduled day and time. **One full letter grade will be deducted** for each day an assignment is submitted late. I will grant a **single 2-day extension**, no excuses necessary, which you can choose to utilize for any one written assignment (i.e., response post, kinship chart, character sketch or final version of the ethnographic profile paper, or final exam). No other extensions will be given except under extraordinary circumstances.

- **Policy on Missed Exams and Make-Up Exams**: There will be one make-up midterm exam scheduled on **Friday, December 9 from 8:00-9:20 a.m.** for students who missed the regularly-scheduled midterm exam. This exam will follow a similar format as the regular midterm exam but the content will be based on all course materials over the entire semester. This will be the one and only make-up exam opportunity offered.

- **Academic Integrity**: Each student in this course is expected to abide by the Undergraduate Student Academic Integrity Policy. The university's policy is available online at [http://www.wustl.edu/policies/undergraduate-academic-integrity.html](http://www.wustl.edu/policies/undergraduate-academic-integrity.html). This includes explicit guidelines on avoiding plagiarism. Plagiarism is the use of someone else's work, words, or ideas without attribution. In all of your assignments, including your response posts and paper drafts, you must always make clear where you have borrowed from others by identifying the original source and extent of your use of another's work. This obligation holds whether the sources are published or unpublished and whether they are in print or on the internet. Plagiarism or other breaches of academic integrity will be reported to the University and can result in failure of the course, suspension, or expulsion from the University.

- **Disability Resources**: If you have a disability that requires an accommodation, please speak with the instructor and consult the Disability Resource Center at Cornerstone ([http://cornerstone.wustl.edu/](http://cornerstone.wustl.edu/)). Cornerstone staff will determine appropriate accommodations and will work with your instructor to make sure these are available to you.

- **Writing Assistance**: For additional help on your writing, consult the expert staff of The Writing Center ([http://writingcenter.wustl.edu](http://writingcenter.wustl.edu)) in Olin Library (first floor). It can be enormously helpful to ask someone outside a course to read your essays and to provide feedback on strength of argument, clarity, organization, etc. They can get quite busy during peak times, so make sure to request an appointment well in advance of any deadlines.

- **PLEASE NOTE**: The instructor reserves the right to make modifications to this information throughout the semester. Topics, readings, and assignments may be adjusted depending on class interest. It is your responsibility to check the course website on Blackboard regularly for announcements, guidelines, and updates.
LECTURE AND READING SCHEDULE

Session 1 (Aug 29): Introduction to the Course


Session 2 (Aug 31): Vocalizing Revolution: A Tour of Modern Chinese History

http://www.morningsun.org/east/00.html

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bv_cEeDlo0

Cui Jian [崔健]. 1986. "Nothing to My Name 一无所有".
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=45YpCLsxYVA

Carsick Cars [晕车的车乐队]. "Zhong Nan Hai 中南海".
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pz6M20GN8Nw

September 5: Labor Day – No Classes

Session 3 (Sep 7): Kinship and the Politics of Patriliny (11+ pp)


http://www.umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/anthropology/tutor/kinmenu.html
[Please go through the "Kinship Fundamentals" unit as well as the "Unilineal Forms" section in the "Systems of Descent" unit. Make sure you understand the following concepts: bilateral kindred, patrilateral versus matrilateral kin, patrilineal/agnatic versus matrilineal/uterine descent.]


September 8: Last Day to Drop/D

Session 4 (Sep 12): Gender, Self, and Social Life (17 pp)


Session 5 (Sep 14): Marriage, Love & Changing Gender Dynamics (27 pp)

September 15 (15th day of the 8th lunar month): Happy Mid-Autumn Festival! 中秋节快乐！

Session 6 (Sep 19): Birth Control and Changing Fertility Culture (32 pp)

◆ Kinship Assignment due by the beginning of class on September 21.

Session 7 (Sep 21): Desire, Sexuality, and LGBT Identities (27 pp)

Session 8 (Sep 26): Food as a Lens for Social Change (46 pp)

Session 9 (Sep 28): Little Emperors: Coming of Age in the Era of Modernization (56 pp)
Session 10 (Oct 3): SECTION DISCUSSION: Transforming the Educational System (75 pp)


Session 11 (Oct 5): Intergenerational Relations and the Crisis of Filial Piety (32 pp)


Session 12 (Oct 10): Household Registration [hukou] and the Rural-Urban Divide (50 pp)


Session 13 (Oct 12): Urban Work Units and the Shattering of the Iron Rice Bowl (38 pp)


October 17: Fall Break – No Classes
Session 14 (Oct 19): Revolutions in Chinese Health Care (20 pp)

Session 15 (Oct 24): Midterm Review Session (29 pp)

Session 16 (Oct 26): MIDTERM EXAM #1

Session 17 (Oct 31): Rural-to-Urban Migration and the "Floating" Population (25 pp)

Session 18 (Nov 2): Gender and Migration (45 pp)

Session 19 (Nov 7): Ethnic Identity and the Politics of Nation Building (42 pp)

Session 20 (Nov 9): Representing Difference (29 pp)
- **Guest Presenter: Chaoxiong Zhang, M.A.**

**Ethnographic Profile Character Sketch due by the beginning of class on November 14.**
Session 21 (Nov 14): Varieties of Being Muslim in China (63 pp)


Session 22 (Nov 16): SECTION DISCUSSION: Food, Consumption, and Identity (~50 pp)

- Gillette, Maris. 2002. Between Mecca and Beijing. Choose any 2 chapters to read:
  - Chapter 4: "Traditional Food & Race" (pp. 114-144)
  - Chapter 5: "Factory Food, Modernization & Race" (pp. 145-166)
  - Chapter 6: "Alcohol and 'Building a Civilized Society" (pp. 167-191)

Part III: Modernity and Globalization

Session 23 (Nov 21): Consuming Modernity: Fast Food Nation (51 pp)

  http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424127887324784404578142931427720970
- Recommended: Jin, Ha. 2000. "After Cowboy Chicken Came to Town."

November 23-27: Thanksgiving Break – No Classes

Session 24 (Nov 28): Internet Culture, E-Sweatshops, and the Great Firewall

Session 25 (Nov 30): SECTION DISCUSSION: Censorship and Culture


CLASS SCREENING: Selections from 柴鸡蛋的耽美小说原著《你丫上瘾了》改编的《上瘾网络剧》. Addicted (web series adaptation of Chai Jidan's slash fiction novel Are You Addicted?). 2015. Directed by Ding Wei (丁偉).

Session 26 (Dec 5): Pollution and China's Environmental Crisis (62 pp)


Ethnographic Profile Final Paper due by the beginning of class on December 7.

Session 27 (Dec 7): Course Review and Wrap-Up

MAKE-UP MIDTERM EXAM: Friday, December 9 from 8:00-9:20 a.m.

TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAM must be submitted online through Blackboard no later than 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, December 15.