

# HIST 434

## Modern China 1800-present

This class will deal with China's modern transformation, from the Late Qing to the present. In some respects this is one of the most radical periods of transformation in human history. China went from an imperial system that had existed in one form or another for two thousand years to some of the most radical experiments in organizing society both under Mao and today. While politics will be in command (as Mao would say) we will look closely at what high-level political changes mean for ordinary Chinese.

**Professor** Alan Baumler Office 304M HSS. Phone 7-4066. E-mail baumler@iup.edu. Office Hours MWF 8:30-9:00, 10-11 and 12:15-1:15. and by appointment  
The syllabus and pretty much everything you will need for the class are on D2L

### Books

**Main books.** To buy, rent, or otherwise get hold of

-Platt, Stephen R. *Autumn in the Heavenly Kingdom: China, the West, and the Epic Story of the Taiping Civil War*. New York: Knopf, 2012.

This is a popular history written by an academic historian. In addition to being a fine yarn, it touches on many of the issues about China's relations with the outside world that we will be dealing with throughout the class.

-Zhu Qihua, and John T. Ma. *China 1927: Memoir of a Debacle*. Portland, Maine: MerwinAsia, 2013.

This is the memoir of a Chinese revolutionary and his experiences in the Northern Expedition. A good book on what Revolution is and what it does to people.

**Secondary books.** We will be reading selections from these, each of which is available on ebrary through the IUP library

-Mitter, Rana. *Modern China: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

This is our textbook. There are longer ones (Schoppa *Revolution and Its Past* is good if you want something more in depth) but this will give you a good overview of the period.

-Wang, Juan. *Merry Laughter and Angry Curses: The Shanghai Tabloid Press, 1897-1911*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 1982.

This is the most monograph-y book, and it deals with the creation of a modern public sphere in China.

-Friedman, Edward, Paul G. Pickowicz, and Mark Selden. *Revolution, Resistance, and Reform in Village China*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007.

A good account of life in a Chinese village. They have another volume that deals with the earlier period.

### Week One 8/28 How China worked

From the Forbidden City down to the villages, Chinese people had good reason to think their system was working well.

We will be reading and discussing the Mitter book this week

**Week Two 9/11 China coming apart.**

We will look at the crisis of Late Imperial China, from events like the White Lotus Rebellion and the Opium wars to *longue durée* trends like overpopulation and “corruption.”

-You also need to pick if you are doing Option A or Option B for your grade this week.

**Week Three 9/18 The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom.** We will look at the domestic and foreign causes of the great rebellion, and how it fit into China's international situation and the historiography.

**Week Four 9/25 Self Strengthening.** The officials who put down the Taiping spend the last part of the century trying to use what they had learned to deal with both internal and external problems. We will look at the institutions they established, the world of the treaty ports, and what all this meant for ordinary people.

**Week Five 10/2 Newspapers and reform.** Between 1895 and 1910 there were a mass of national and local reform efforts in China. We will look in particular at the emergence of newspapers and a modern public sphere.

Read *Merry Laughter and Angry Curses*. You will only have to read part of this, and we will be discussing it as collective reading assignment.

**Week Six 10/9 Revolution and Warlordism.** In 1911 the Qing dynasty was overthrown, possibly by Sun Yat-sen. We will try to figure out what this revolution was, as well as looking at warlordism and the golden age of the Chinese bourgeoisie.

**-Topic statement and working bibliography due for research paper.**

**Week Seven 10/16 May 4<sup>th</sup>** The May Fourth/New Culture movement was the most radical movement for intellectual and social change China had ever seen. We will look at the movements for language and family reform and the founding of the Chinese Communist Party.

**Week Eight 10/23 Revolution!** The Northern Expedition was the first modern revolutionary movement in Chinese history, and we will look what it was trying to achieve, what a revolutionary is, and the disagreements that tore the revolutionaries apart.

**-First chunk of research paper due.**

Read *China 1927*

**Week Nine 10/30 Nanjing Decade** From 1927 to 1937 China was ruled from Nanjing by what Chiang Kai-shek called a revolutionary government and Mao called a Fascist one. We will look at this government's successes in taking control of the country, its limited success in creating a new society, and its problems in dealing with its major threats, the Japanese and the Communists.

**Week Ten 11/6 War with Japan** This had a huge impact on China and the world, and we will look at it as seen from Chongqing, Shanghai and Yenan.

**Week Eleven 11/13 Liberation** In 1949 China was Liberated. How did this happen, and what did it mean? We will look at the military and political process of the Communist takeover and the social changes that came with it.

**-First draft of research paper due**

## Thanksgiving

**Week Twelve 11/27 Mao's China** From the Great Leap to the Cultural revolution we will look at the Maoist experiment and what it meant for China and its people.

Start reading *Revolution, Resistance, and Reform*

**Week Thirteen 12/4 Reform** From Deng to Xi via the thing that happened in 1989. We will look at what reform meant in China and what world power has done for the Chinese.

Finish reading *Revolution, Resistance, and Reform* We will do a quiz assignment on this just like we did with *Merry Laughter*

**-Research papers due, last day of class.**

## Grades and assignments

### Regular option (Option A)

-Quizzes 50% We will have frequent on-line discussions and assignments, and it is important to keep up with these, as they are a major part of your grade. Each assignment is worth points, and at the end of the semester I will add up all the points and set the highest amount anyone got as 100% of this category.

-*Heavenly Kingdom* paper 15% Each of you will write an essay on this book. I will pass out topics later.

-1927 paper 15% Each of you will write an essay on this book. I will pass out topics later.

-Midterm -There will not be a mid-term as such, but we will write some essays and do some other short writing that will more or less add up to a mid-term. These will all be part of your quiz grade.

- Final Exam 20% In class exam on the final exam day.

### Research paper option (Option B)

If you like, you can substitute a research paper for the final exam and the *Revolution, Resistance, and Reform* quiz assignment. This is a good option for anyone who is thinking of going on to graduate school, or who wants to present their work at something like the Pittsburgh Asia Consortium conference. Guidelines for this are [on D2L](#).

## Grading Scale

90%+ =A

80-89.999% =B

70-79.999% =C

60-69.999% =D

60% or less =F

**Attendance policy**-- You are expected to come to class every day, but the point is not just to come to class, but to come having done your reading and being ready to talk about it. That said there is no penalty for not coming to class besides the fact that you will not learn anything. If you are not in class it is your responsibility to get the notes and find out what we did and be ready for any

upcoming assignments.

-All work is due in class on the date announced. Late work may be turned in without penalty with a medical or other excuse. Unexcused late work will be marked down one grade a day (A- becomes a B+, etc.)

**Academic dishonesty**-- All students are required to abide by the University's policies on Academic Integrity, as found in the catalog.

**Indiana University of Pennsylvania and its faculty are committed to assuring a safe and productive educational environment for all students. In order to meet this commitment and to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and guidance from the Office for Civil Rights, the University requires faculty members to report incidents of sexual violence shared by students to the University's Title IX Coordinator. The only exceptions to the faculty member's reporting obligation are when incidents of sexual violence are communicated by a student during a classroom discussion, in a writing assignment for a class, or as part of a University-approved research project.**

**Faculty members are obligated to report sexual violence or any other abuse of a student who was, or is, a child (a person under 18 years of age) when the abuse allegedly occurred to the Department of Human Services (1-800-932-0313) and University Police (724-357-2141).**

**Information regarding the reporting of sexual violence and the resources that are available to victims of sexual violence is set forth at:**

<http://www.iup.edu/social-equity/policies/title-ix/>