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PSCI 422.01: Revolution and Reform in Modern China

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chineseposters.net

Xiang Yang, "Carry Out Birth Planning for the Revolution," 1974. In this picture: criticizing the old society, education, tai chi, welding, and happy dancing minorities. What do these all have in common?

PSCI 422:
 Revolution and Reform in Modern
 China
 MW 12:30-1:50
 Davidson Honors College 119

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Course Description

Over the last two centuries, the people of China have experienced brutal hardships and spectacular successes. People today are clamoring to understand China or to explain it to others – to control the narrative behind the rise of one of the world’s most powerful countries.

However, China’s history is not a simple story. This is a survey course of modern Chinese history, and students will learn the events, figures, and forces that have shaped it, from the height of the Qing dynasty at the end of the eighteenth century, through more than a century of struggle, and into the present day. At the same time, it is a course about the ideas that are important to how people understand, think, and talk about China. In this course, we will develop critical skills for approaching theories and narratives about the Chinese past, present, and future. We will work together to make sense of 218 years of complicated events, from political movements to social changes and beyond. We will interrogate and evaluate differing arguments about the past that touch on basic questions about what it is to belong and how and why human beings cooperate and compete.

Students will build a foundational knowledge of Chinese history and politics from 1799 to the present. We will apply the historical method to trace the institutional, intellectual, and social origins of modern China. Students will learn to closely analyze primary sources, including both texts and objects. This course will prepare students to engage critically with the present in historical context, especially with regard to a rising world power. It is essential background for further study in Chinese politics.

A central goal of this course is to help students become “fluent in China” – that is, to speak and write about modern China with nuance, confidence, and knowledge. Your written work is not just a way to get a grade – it’s part of a dialogue going on between you, your classmates, me, and the literally billions of people thinking and talking about China right now. We will work together

to refine your writing. At the same time, the classroom is a space for us to construct our knowledge together. This is why it's important that everyone has a chance to speak and to be heard and respected, both in presentations and together as a class.

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- 甲. Understand and critically analyze the central debates over the history of modern China, such as those over the causes of imperial decline, the etiology of mass violence, and the sources of ethnic conflict
- 乙. Identify critical events, figures, and phenomena and define their significance in the history and politics of modern China
- 丙. Speak and write intelligently and with empirical grounding about Chinese issues

Required Readings

There are two required textbooks for this course:

Keith Schoppa, *Revolution and Its Past: Identities and Change in Modern Chinese History*, 3rd edition, (Prentice Hall, 2010).

Pei-Kai Cheng and Michael Lestz, *The Search for Modern China: a Documentary Collection*, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1999).

All other readings will be distributed electronically through the course's website.

Your Feedback

You will have several chances to send me **anonymous feedback** regarding the course so far. Surveys will be posted on the course site. I will take your feedback into consideration when planning and adjusting the course schedule and our class meetings.

Office Hours

I am always open to meeting with you during office hours. It helps to send me an email to schedule 15 or 30 minutes of time beforehand. If you have a scheduling conflict and cannot make it to office hours, we can find another time to meet. Please arrive at the **beginning** of your scheduled time.

Activities and Assessment

The assessment scheme for this course is designed to give you flexibility in pursuing your interests and exploring modern Chinese history and politics. There are a maximum 240 possible points available for this class. Your maximum possible grade is only 100 points. Some of your

assignments are *mandatory*. Others are *options* you may pick and choose. *If you do not complete a given mandatory assignment, you will not be permitted to make it up with points from options.*

Mandatory Assignments must be done by every member of the class. They are:

1. Read and prepare.

For each class meeting, you must read 1. the assigned textbook chapter, 2. the assigned primary sources, and 3. the assigned secondary reading for that day. I strongly advise that you use paper copies of each of these – experience shows that **students who work with paper copies get much higher grades**. That is because paper allows you to read much more carefully and closely. This is the minimum work you must do to participate effectively in this course.

I have chosen the **textbook** because it presents a very simple, easy-to-follow narrative of Chinese history. The **primary sources** supplement the textbook by presenting competing perspectives – they are not meant to support the textbook’s simple narrative, but to complicate it! The **secondary readings** present scholarly arguments about the period in question. Each week, the Tuesday secondary reading and the Thursday secondary reading are meant to contrast with each other. In this course, knowing the rough outlines and events of modern Chinese history is just the beginning – the point is to learn to think about that story in new ways.

2. Online Responses (20 pts)

Before each class meeting, you must submit a paragraph-long response to the primary sources and secondary readings. These are to be posted in the Response Forum on the Moodle site. Submit your response **by 10:00 AM on the day of class**. It must be on the readings for that day, but it may reflect on the other readings for the week, as well.

A good response consists of an observation and a question. You will have discussion questions to guide your reading. It may help you to answer one of these in your response.

You should not summarize the reading in your response. Instead, reflect on an idea in the reading that you found confusing, compelling, or disagreeable. You should ask questions of the reading and argue with or against it. This will help prepare both you and me to participate in class discussion.

3. Analytical Essays (30 pts)

You will submit three analytical essays (500-800 words each, about 2-3 double-spaced pages) over the course of the semester. These must be based on **both of the “Secondary” readings for a given week**, which are available on the course site. They must be turned in **by 10:00 PM on the Monday of the assigned week**.

All of these “Secondary” readings are short works of scholarship. I have intentionally selected readings that present contrasting perspectives or arguments. **Your goal is to weigh the merits of either argument against each other.** You may take into account the *evidence, theory, perspective, or methodology* of either piece. In order to address the historiography effectively, it will help you to familiarize yourself with relevant historical background and the primary readings for a given week.

Do not just summarize the reading. Assume that I have read them and do not need to know what they say.

Group A will submit historiographical essays during weeks: 2, 6, 10

Group B: 3, 7, 11

Group C: 4, 8, 12

Group D: 5, 9, 13

Of course, you may submit a historiographical essay during an earlier week instead, if you find another topic more interesting or want to get ahead on your work.

4. Presentation (5 pts)

At the beginning of each Tuesday meeting, a pair of students will be responsible for presenting the previous week’s material and drawing connections with the current week’s material. The goal is to remind us what we have done and to help guide the current week’s discussion. Your presentation may take any form – an activity, a lecture, a multimedia performance – as long as it takes only 10 minutes and allows for 5-10 minutes of further discussion.

We will sign up for presentations in the second week of class.

5. Quizzes (5 pts)

We will have occasional quizzes. They are arranged purposefully, so as to help you structure your knowledge. See the semester schedule above.

Note: if you skip one of the “required” assignments and fail to make it up, it will lower your maximum final grade. For example, if you do not do a presentation, your maximum possible grade will be 95.

Options to choose from will allow you to participate in the course in the manner most useful and appropriate to your goals and learning style. They include:

1. Active Participation (1 pt per meeting)

Active participation means adding your voice to a productive discussion.

My criteria for good participation are these: excellent participation means listening to your classmates and engaging with what they say – either through substantive disagreement or by significantly building on it. To be able to do so, you must **come to class prepared**, both in the sense of having done your homework and in the sense of being ready to discuss. We will frequently break into small groups, in which your participation is even more important. An excellent class participant does the work.

Perhaps most importantly, **excellent participation means asking questions**. Good questions may certainly begin with, “I’m so confused. What does it mean when it says...” The first step to wisdom is acknowledging what you don’t know.

It will benefit you to print out **copies of your readings, take notes by hand on these physical copies, and then bring them to class**.

2. Research Proposal (15 pts)

The “research proposal” is a mock outline of a research project in Chinese politics and/or history. It must consist of: 1. an overview of current research, including a bibliography of scholarship you have consulted; 2. a hypothesis that your project could investigate, 3. an argument for the significance of the proposed research, and 4. a plan for research, including relevant primary sources.

The research proposal will be about 1,000-1,200 words. This is **due by 12 April**. I recommend consulting with me before pursuing the project, so that I can help you locate relevant materials.

3. Research Paper (20 pts)

If you wish, you may carry out your proposed project. The result must be in the form of a paper about 6,000 words in length. This paper must present and defend an argument on the basis of relevant primary sources, and it must respond to a certain amount of relevant secondary literature.

I am happy to read a draft of your research paper in advance as long as you submit it by 26 April. The final paper is **due by 4 May**.

4. Essays (20 pts each)

You may write up to **three essays** for this class. Each should be about **1,500 words in length**. (1,500 words is about five to six pages of double-spaced text.) Each will follow the conclusion of one of the course’s three “parts.” Each time, I will provide you with two prompts, of which you may choose one. The prompt will ask you to synthesize what you have learned during the

preceding “part” and give you the opportunity to relate your conclusions back to the previous “part.”

Each essay must consist of an argument supported by textual evidence. You may draw on your **primary source** readings and on our related discussions in class.

I advise you to write concisely. In order to help you do so, I will ask you to turn in a **draft of the first essay** one week before its due date. The comments on this draft are meant to help you do the best job you can going forward.

The first essay is **due by 25 Feb by 12:00 noon**, the second essay is **due by 1 April at 12:00 noon**, and the third essay is **due by 4 May at 12:00 noon**.

5. Additional Analytical Essays (10 pts each)

See “Analytical Essays” above. You may submit additional essays (maximum 1 per week) for up to 10 pts each.

6. Oral Midterm (10 pts)

The oral midterm is an opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge and argument by answering a question, orally, without notes. A typical question is meant to be open-ended and to allow you to think through an issue. For example: “Why did the Qing dynasty fall?” “When did China become ‘modern?’” A good oral midterm turns into a conversation.

The oral midterm will take place on Thursday 8 March and Friday 9 March. Please sign up for 15-minute meetings in my office.

Please rest assured that I am a generous examiner. Sitting down with a professor to talk through a difficult question usually takes a certain amount of courage – just by electing to take an oral exam, you will have my respect.

7. Oral Final Exam (15 pts)

The oral final is much like the oral midterm, save that it consists of two questions and lasts 20 minutes. One question will ask you to synthesize what you have learned in the second half of the semester. The other will ask you to address the semester as a whole.

A typical exam question is meant to be open-ended and to allow you to think through an issue. For example: “Why has the conflict between Mainland China and Taiwan lasted so long?” “Why is Tibet part of China?”

The oral final will take place on Friday 4 May. Please sign up for 20-minute meetings at my office.

Please rest assured that I am a generous examiner. Sitting down with a professor to talk through a difficult question usually takes a certain amount of courage – just by electing to take an oral exam, you will have my respect.

8. Come See Me (5 pts)

If we have not met and discussed your interests, I would recommend that you schedule a 30-minute appointment to talk with me during office hours. (If you cannot make office hours, we can find another time!) This will help you plan your semester and, especially if you choose to take an oral midterm or final, to become more comfortable speaking to me one-on-one.

To review, these are the things that can count for a grade in this course:

<i>Mandatory</i>	<i>Options</i>
Weekly Responses (20 pts)	Active Participation (1 pt per meeting)
Analytical Essays (30 pts)	Research Proposal (15 pts)
Presentation (5 pts)	Research Paper (20 pts)
Quizzes (5 pts)	Essays (20 pts each, 3 possible essays)
	Oral Midterm (10 pts)
	Oral Final Exam (15 pts)
	Come See Me (5 pts)
	Additional Analytical Essays (10 pts x 10)
Total: 60 pts	Total: 240 pts

Graduate students enrolled in the course have a slightly different set of requirements, all of which are mandatory:

Analytical Essays (30 pts): three essays, as described above

Mini-Lesson (10 pts): You will design and carry out a lesson plan. We will work together to choose the topic and design the lesson. You will run the lesson in class.

Research Proposal (15 pts): see above

Research Paper (20 pts): The research paper will be about 8,000 words in length.

Oral Midterm (10 pts): see above, but two questions in 30 minutes

Oral Final (15 pts): see above, but three questions in 30 minutes

Attendance Policy

If you miss a quiz or other mandatory graded activity, you must arrange with me a reasonable way to make up the work.

Policy on Late Work

For every 24 hours an assignment is late, its grade will fall by one letter grade, ex. A to A-, B+ to B, C- to D+, etc.

Policy on Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code:

http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php).

Do not plagiarize. Plagiarism is defined as “Representing another person's words, ideas, data, or materials as one’s own.” When I ask you a question, it may be tempting to look up the answer online, copy it, and alter a few words to make it sound like your own thoughts. If you do so, you will betray your own education. I am invested in you as a student – I want you to learn this material, and to become a better thinker. Because plagiarism harms your development, I will discourage it: in the first instance of plagiarism, the assignment in question will receive a grade of 0 with no chance for revision. In the second instance, we will pursue the matter through established university disciplinary procedures.

Statement on Accommodations

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 or at (406) 243-2243. I will work with you and Disability Services to provide and appropriate modification.

Schedule of Meetings and Assignments

Part I: From Golden Age to Revolution, 1799-1911

Week 1: If This is “Modern,” What is “Traditional?”: the Problem of China’s Past

24 Jan: 5,000 Years in 80 Minutes

26 Jan: Introducing “China”

- Schoppa, Ch. 1
- SMC 5.3, 6.2, 6.4, 6.5

27 Jan: **Syllabus quiz due at 5:00 PM** (see course site)

Week 2: The Basics: Rural Society, Popular Religion, and Local Government

31 Jan: Popular Religion

- Schoppa, Ch. 2
- SMC 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 8.1
- “Introduction” from Shahar, Meir and Robert P. Weller, eds., *Unruly Gods: Divinity and Society in China*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1996), 1-31.

2 Feb: Local Government

- Huang Liuhong, *A Complete Book Concerning Happiness and Benevolence*, Djang Chu, trans., (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1984), 53-59, 140-155, 251-279, 507-522.
- Prasenjit Duara, “Superscribing Symbols: the Myth of Guandi, Chinese God of War” in *Journal of Asian Studies* 47.4 (1988), 778-795.
- **Come prepared to roleplay the magistrate!**

Week 3: Fragmentation and Transformation in the Qing Empire

7 Feb: Opium and Empire

- Schoppa, Ch. 3
- SMC, Ch. 7
- **Map Quiz 1 (Regions and Cities ca. 1800)**
- James Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads: a History of Xinjiang* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 124-139.

9 Feb: The Taiping Civil War

- Schoppa, Ch. 4
- SMC, 8.3, 8.5, 8.6
- Mary Backus Rankin, “Social and Political Change in 19th-Century China” in Merle Goldman, ed., *Historical Perspectives on Contemporary East Asia*, 42-84.

Week 4: Violence in Social, Cultural, and Environmental Perspectives

14 Feb: The Tongzhi Restoration

- Schoppa, Ch. 5
- SMC, 9.2, 9.5, 10.1, 10.3
- Selections from a Uyghur history, Mullah Mūsa Sayrāmī's *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* (Schluessel, trans.)
- Perry, Elizabeth J. *Rebels and Revolutionaries in North China, 1845-1945*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1980. ch.1 (1-19) ch. 3 (48-95)

16 Feb: The Boxer Rebellion

- Schoppa, Ch. 6
- SMC, 10.5, 10.6
- Paul Cohen, *History in Three Keys*, chs. 2-3 (69-118)

Week 5: Imagining a New China

21 Feb: Reformers

- Schoppa, Ch. 7
- SMC, 11.1, 11.2, 11.3, 11.4, 11.5
- Rebecca Karl, "Creating Asia: China in the World at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century" in *The American Historical Review* 103:4 (October 1998), 1096-1118.

23 Feb: Revolutionaries

- Packet from *Sources of Chinese Tradition* (Vol. 1, pp. 240-267; Vol. 2, pp. 334-337)
- **Timeline Quiz 1 (1799-1911)**
- Elizabeth Perry, "Teaching Revolution: The Strike of 1922" in *Anyuan: Mining China's Revolutionary Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 46-77.

Part II: Madness and Modernisms, 1912-1949

Week 6: Constructing an Urban Nation

28 Feb: New Citizens

- Schoppa, Ch. 8
- SMC, 13.1, 13.2
- **Map Quiz 2** (regions and cities ca. 1911)
- Henrietta Harrison, *The Making of the Republican Citizen: Political Ceremonies and Symbols in China, 1911-1929*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, ch. 2 (49-92).

2 Mar: New Cities

- Schoppa, Ch. 9
- SMC, 12.3, 13.4
- Newspaper advertisements (see course site)

- Hanchao Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights: Everyday Shanghai in the Early Twentieth Century*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999, ch. 5 (189-242).

Week 7: The New Woman

7 Mar: The Bourgeois New Woman

- Schoppa, Ch. 10
- SMC, 13.3, 13.5
- Goodman, Bryna, “The New Woman Commits Suicide: the Press, Cultural Memory, and the New Republic” in *Journal of Asian Studies* 64.1 (2005) 67-101.

9 Mar Radical Feminists

- Schoppa, Ch. 11
- He-Yin Zhen (online)
- SMC 14.2
- Dorothy Ko, *Cinderella's Sisters: a Revisionist History of Footbinding*, (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2005), introduction and ch. 1 (1-37).

Week 8: The Nanjing Decade and the Long March

14 Mar: Communists on the Long March

- Schoppa, Ch. 12
- SMC, 14.4, 14.5, 14.6, 16.1, 16.2
- From Edgar Snow, *Red Star Over China*.
- William Kirby, “Engineering China: Birth of the Developmental State, 1928-1937” in *Becoming Chinese: Passages to Modernity and Beyond* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 137-160. (**Available online through the Mansfield Library.**)

16 Mar: Nationalists Police the Cities

- Schoppa, Ch. 13
- SMC, 15.1, 15.2, 15.6, 15.7
- Janet Chen, *Guilty of Indigence*.

Week 9: The Sino-Japanese War

28 Mar: Japanese Empire and Manchukuo

- Schoppa, Ch. 14
- SMC, 15.3, 17.1, 17.2, 17.3
- Manchukuo documents (course site)
- Louise Young, “Brave New Empire: Utopian Vision and the Intelligentsia” in *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 268-307. (**Available online through the Mansfield Library.**)

30 Mar: A Decade of Struggle

- Schoppa, Ch. 15
- Nanjing Massacre accounts (course site)
- SMC 17.4, 17.5, 17.7
- Yang Daqing, “The Challenges of the Nanjing Massacre: Reflections on Historical Inquiry” in *The Nanjing Massacre in History and Historiography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 133-172.

Part III: The People’s Republic of China, 1949-Present

Week 10: The Communist Experiment in China

4 Apr: Out of the Countryside

- Schoppa, Ch. 15
- From Hinton, *Fanshen*.
- SMC, 18.4, 18.5, 18.6.
- **Prepare for the Land Reform Game!**
- Joseph Esherick, “Ten Theses on the Chinese Revolution” in *Modern China*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (January 1995), 45-76.

6 Apr: Serve the People

- Schoppa, Ch. 16
- SMC, 19.3, 20.2, 20.3, 20.4, 20.5
- From Sigrid Schmalzer, *The People’s Peking Man*.
- **Map Quiz 3 (regions and cities after 1949)**

Week 11: Maoism

11 Apr: The Great Leap Forward

- Schoppa, Ch. 17
- SMC, 21.1, 21.2, 21.3, 21.4, 21.5, 21.6
- Gail Hershatter, “The Gender of Memory: Rural Chinese Women and the 1950s” in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 28:1 (2002), 43-70.

13 Apr: The Cultural Revolution

- Schoppa, Ch. 18
- SMC, 22.1, 22.2, 22.3, 22.4, 22.5, 22.6, 22.7
- Propaganda posters (course site)
- Emily Honig, “Socialist Sex: The Cultural Revolution Revisited” in *Modern China*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (April 2003), 143-175.

Week 12: Reform and Opening Up

18 Apr: Black Cat, White Cat

- Schoppa, Ch. 19
- SMC, 23.4, 23.5, 23.6, 25.1, 25.2
- Susan Greenhalgh, “Missile Science, Population Science: The Origins of China’s One-Child Policy” in *The China Quarterly*, No. 182 (June 2005), 253-276.

20 Apr: Chinese Democracy and Tian’anmen

- Schoppa, Ch. 20
- SMC, 26.1, 26.2, 26.3, 26.4, 26.5
- Film: “Gate of Heavenly Peace” (1995, 180 minutes)
- Joseph Esherick and Jeffrey Wasserstrom, “Acting Out Democracy: Political Theater in Modern China” in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 49, No. 4 (December 1990), 835-865.

Week 13: China in the World

25 Apr: The New Nationalism

- Schoppa, Ch. 21
- SMC, 23.1, 23.2, 27.3, 27.6, 28.4
- **Timeline Quiz 2 (1911-2017)**
- Sautman, Barry. “Myths of Descent, Racial Nationalism and Ethnic Minorities in the People’s Republic of China” in Dikötter, Frank, ed., *The Construction of Racial Identities in China and Japan*. London: C. Hurst & Company, 1997, 75-95.

27 Apr: Contemporary Popular Culture

- Film: “Ai Weiwei: Never Sorry” (2012, 91 minutes)
- Tom Mullaney, *Coming to Terms With the Nation*.

Week 14: Other Chinas

1 May: Social Criticism and Minorities in China

- SMC, 27.4, 27.5, 28.1, 28.2, 28.3, 28.5
- Writings from Uyghur intellectuals (Schluessel, trans.)
- James Millward, “Introduction: Does the 2009 Urumchi Violence Mark a Turning Point?”
- Film: “Under the Dome” (2015, 104 minutes)

3 May: Taiwan and the South China Sea Conflict

- South China Sea documents (online)