

CONTEMPORARY CHINESE SOCIETY -- SOC 225

**Fall 2006
VAN VLECK B223**

Tue 2.25-4.55pm

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Course Description

This course surveys important changes in Chinese society since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. It provides an overview of Chinese society, its structure and institutions during the Mao period, and the changes introduced by the economic reforms of the last three decades. We begin with some necessary historical, economic and political background on the Mao era and the post-Mao reform period. To provide context for later discussions, we then consider developments in urban and rural social organization and social relations. In the second part of the course, the social transformations introduced by the reforms will be analyzed with respect to several central themes: social stratification and inequality; the rural/urban divide; gender; love, sex and marriage; and population and the birth planning program. There will also be a few guest lectures on current topics in Chinese society and politics.

Class Format

Most classes will be a mixture of lectures and discussions. You should come to class having read the materials. Discussions will involve the required readings and may also cover new material presented in class.

Required/recommended books/readings

Lectures will rely heavily on one required book and one recommended book and a course packet containing the remaining required readings. The books are available for purchase at the UW bookstore, and the course packet is available in the Copy Center of the Sewell Social Science Building, Room 6120. All readings for the course will be on reserve in the College Library (Helen C. White Hall).

Required: Chan, Anita, Richard Madsen, and Jonathan Unger. 1992. *Chen Village Under Mao and Deng. Expanded and Updated Edition.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Recommended: Yan, Yunxiang. 2003. *Private Life Under Socialism.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Student Evaluation

- *Class attendance (25 points)* – Attendance is mandatory. I will allow one absence, after which your grade will be affected.
- *Four tests (350 points total)* – two tests will consist of multiple choice questions as well as short, to-the-point conceptual questions and two tests will consist of conceptual materials.
- *Class discussion (50 points):* -- Class discussions will have the following aims: to critique the contents of the readings (“I found this article confusing, because...,” “I disagree with the point the author made about, because...”), to recognize the strength of the readings (“It occurs to me that if the author is correct about...”), to ask questions (“I am not sure what the author means on p. xx when s/he says that ...”), to compare data and conclusions (“I don’t think the study results really support the conclusion that...”), or to compare the articles read. In discussions, you can also debate a point made by a classmate, or explain where someone else missed the point. You can also point out areas that you feel are neglected in the readings. You are expected to read the pages assigned for that week and to participate in the class discussion. You should write your question on a piece of paper and come to class with it. Having your question ready will facilitate discussion.
- *Review of News on Contemporary China (50 points):* Chinese politics, society and the economy are ongoing topics of discussion in the media. Groups of up to 4 students will collect 2 or 3 news articles published since January 2005 on one of the following contemporary China topics: (1) urban social stratification and inequality, (2) rural to urban migration, (3) gender, (4) marriage, (5) sexual revolution, and (6) Chinese birth planning policies. Based on these articles, each group will make a brief presentation and lead class discussion. Presentations should not exceed 30 minutes and should feature a review and critique of the selected articles in light of the themes and contents covered by the course. Paper copies or electronic links to the chosen articles should be made available to class participants at least *24 hours* before the date of presentation. Groups will be formed in early October and presentations will begin on October 31. This assignment requires familiarity with electronic databases of news sources. A library instructional session has been scheduled for September 26 in Memorial Library.

Grading Scale – (Max. points possible = 475 points): 100-93% = A; 88-92% = AB; 83-87% = B; 78-82% = BC; 70-77% = C; 60-69%=D; <60% = F.

Schedule and readings

READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS SHOULD BE COMPLETED BEFORE CLASS ON THAT DATE.

Sept 5: Introduction to the course

Sept 12:

Urban Social Organization

- I. From the 1950s to the early 1980s: danwei, hukou and neighborhood committees.
- II. The household registration system
- III. The changing social contract

Whyte, Martin K. and William L. Parish. 1984. *Urban Life in Contemporary China*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 1-26.

Tang, Wenfang and William L. Parish. 2000. "The urban social world," in Tang and Parish, *Chinese Urban Life Under Reform*. Cambridge University Press, pp.17-48.

Wang, Feng. 1997. 'The breakdown of a Great Wall: Recent changes in household registration system in China,' In *Floating Population and Migration in China: the Impact of Economic Reforms*, Thomas Scharping (ed.). Hamburg: Institute of Asian Studies. Pp. 149-165.

Dutton, Michael. 1998. "The strategies of government and tactics of the subaltern," in Dutton. *Streetlife China*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 77-103.

Sept. 19: Rural Social Organization

- I. Communes, Collectives and the Class system
- II. The Cultural Revolution

Parish, William L. and Martin K. Whyte. *Village and Family in Contemporary China*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 30-43.

Chan *et al.* *Chen Village*, pp. 13-40, 74-168.

Sept. 26. Library instruction session on the use of news databases. Memorial Library, Room 436.

Note: The library session will take about one hour. Class lecture/discussion of this week's readings will take place in the same classroom.

First test (Multiple choice – will include materials covered up to this date)

Duration: 30 minutes

Points: 50

Oct 3. Stratification and Inequality

I. Stratification under and after Mao

II. The emergence of new classes: Political and business elites, unemployed workers and rural migrants

Goodman, David S.G. 1999. The new middle class, pp. 241-261 in M. Goldman and R. MacFarquhar, eds. *The Paradox of China's Post-Mao Reforms*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Lee, Ching Kwan. 2000. "Pathways of labor insurgency," pp. 41-61 in Perry and Selden, eds. *Chinese Society. Change, Conflict and Resistance*.

Solinger, Dorothy. 1999. China's floating population, pp. 220-240 in M. Goldman and R. MacFarquhar, eds. *The Paradox of China's Post-Mao Reforms*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Dutton, Michael. 1998. "Subaltern tactics, government response." *Streetlife China*, pp. 131-153.

Oct 10: Screening of *Beijing Bicycle* and discussion

Oct 17 – New trends in urban China: Consumerism, media and communications and the internet.

Guest lecture by Professor Zhou Yongming, Department of Anthropology, University of Wisconsin on the Internet in China.

Deborah Davis.2000. Introduction: A revolution in consumption. In D. Davis, ed. *The Consumer Revolution in Urban China*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Yan, Yunxiang. 2000. Of Hamburger and Social Space: Consuming McDonald's in Beijing. In D. Davis, ed. *The Consumer Revolution in Urban China*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Zhou, Yongming. 2005. Living on the cyber border: Minjian political writers in Chinese cyberspace. Unpublished Manuscript.

Oct 24: Corruption in China

Guest lecture by Professor Melanie Manion, Department of Political Science and Public Affairs at the University of Wisconsin, Madison: Corruption in China.

Manion, Melanie. 2004. *Corruption by Design: Building Clean Government in Mainland China and Hong Kong*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Chapter 3:84-118.

Bernstein, Thomas, P., and Xiaobo Lu. 2000. "Taxation without Representation: Peasants, the Central and Local States in Reform China," *China Quarterly*, 163: 742-763.

Second test (conceptual materials – will cover materials covered up to this point) –

Duration: 1 hour 15 minutes

Points: 100

Oct 31: Decollectivization and the changing roles of rural cadres – the emergence of new classes in rural areas.

Chan *et al.* *Chen Village*, pp. 236-333.

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS – (1) Urban Social Stratification and Inequality (2) Rural-Urban Migration

Nov 7: Gender inequality

Video: *Small Happiness*

Honig, Emily. 2000. "Iron Girls Revisited: Gender and Politics of Work in the Cultural Revolution, 1966-1976, pp. 97-110 in *Ibid.*

Zheng, Wang. 2000. "Gender, employment and women's resistance," pp. 62-82 in E. Perry and M. Selden, eds. *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict and Resistance*. New York: Routledge.

Zuo, Jiping and Yanjie Bian. 2001. "Gendered resources, division of housework and perceived fairness – A case in urban China." *Journal of Marriage and the Family*. 63(4):1122-33.

STUDENT PRESENTATION – (3) Gender

Nov. 14: Love and marriage

Zhang Jie. "Love cannot be forgotten," pp. 92-106 in Helen, Siu and Zelda Stern, eds. *Mao's Harvest: Voices from China's New Generation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Chen *et al.* *Chen Village*, pp. 186-212.

Yan, Yunxiang. 2003. *Private Life Under Socialism*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, pp. 86-111; 140-161.

STUDENT PRESENTATION: (4) Marriage

Nov. 21 The Sexual Revolution, STDs and HIV/AIDS

Farrer, James. 2002. *Opening Up: Youth Sex Culture and Market Reform in Shanghai*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, pp. 22-52.

Parish William L., Edward O. Laumann, Myron S. Cohen, MD; Suiming Pan,; Heyi Zheng, Irving Hoffman, Tianfu Wang, Kwai Hang Ng. 2003. Population-Based Study of Chlamydial infection in China. A hidden epidemic. *JAMA* 289(10):1265-1273.

Evelyne Micollier. 2005. Aids in China: Discourses on Sexuality and Sexual Practices The state's management of the epidemic both reflects and illuminates social **contradictions**. *China Perspectives* 60, July - August 2005. Note: You should access this article by clicking http://www.cefc.com.hk/uk/pc/articles/art_ligne.php?num_art_ligne=6001#_ftn52

STUDENT PRESENTATION – (5) Sexual revolution

Screening of China's Only Child

Nov 28 – Population and the Chinese Birth Planning Policy

I. The Chinese demographic system and the origins of the Chinese fertility decline

Lee, James and Feng Wang. 1999. Malthusian Models and Chinese Realities: The Chinese Demographic System Revisited. *Population and Development Review* 25(1):33-65.

Third test (conceptual materials -- will cover materials covered Oct 31 thru Nov 21)
Duration: 1 hour 15 min
Points: 100

Dec 5: China's Population and the Birth Planning Policy

- I. China's one child policy and its rural adaptations**
- II. Recent adjustments and prospects for the future**

White, Tyrene. 2000. "Domination, resistance and accommodation in China's one-child campaign," pp. 102-119 in Perry and Selden (eds.) *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict and Resistance*. New York: Routledge.

Merli, M. Giovanna, Zhenchao Qian and Herbert L. Smith. 2004. "Adaptation of a Political Bureaucracy to Economic and Institutional Change under Socialism: The Chinese State Family Planning System." *Politics and Society* 32(2):231-256.

Nie, Yilin and Robert J. Whyman. 2005. The One-Child Policy in Shanghai: Acceptance and Internalization. *Population and Development Review* 31(2):313-336.

STUDENT PRESENTATION – (6) Chinese birth planning policies

DEC. 12:

Fourth test (multiple choice -- cumulative)
Duration (2 hours)
Points: 100