

China and the World

Fall 2015
21:510:396
Monday 2:30-3:50 pm
Wednesday 1:00-2:20 pm
Engelhard Hall 215

Instructor: Daniel Asen
Office hours: Mondays, 4:00-5:00 pm and by appointment, Conklin 328
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1. Course Description

China has been involved in long-distance and global trade for a long, long time. In ancient times and during the imperial era China was an important participant in central Asian trade routes (the “Silk Road”). During the early modern period (ca. 1500-1800 AD), Chinese porcelain and silk played important roles in global patterns of trade that linked Asia, Europe, the Americas, and Africa. Beginning in the mid-1800s, China became integrated into a new kind of world order, one based on Western countries’ economic and political domination. The 21st century promises to radically transform this order, placing China in the unprecedented position of a modern global superpower with tremendous economic and political power vis-à-vis the West.

Focusing on these moments in China’s long historical interactions with the world, this course introduces the major patterns that have defined China’s regional and global interactions, the effects of these global connections on Chinese society, politics, culture, and economy, and the significant impact that China’s global involvement has had, and will continue to have, on the world beyond its borders.

This class requires no previous knowledge of or coursework about China. Enrollment is limited to honors students and history majors.

2. Learning Goals

1. Develop an understanding of China’s connections with the wider world since ancient times. Gain an understanding not simply of the nature of these connections but of the ways in which they have affected the course of Chinese history and world history.

2. Develop an informed perspective with which to understand China's current role in the world. What does it mean to talk about China's "rise"? Can precedents or cases drawn from history help us to understand what this might involve? If so, which ones?

3. Critical reading skills. In this class you will be exposed to a range of historical documents, including travel writings, official speeches, maps, and visual images. We will also read selections from some of the most exciting historical scholarship on Chinese and global history. Because this is an upper-level history class, we will pay more attention to *how* we read sources – both "primary sources," the historical documents that historians use as evidence when making claims about the past, and "secondary sources," books and journal articles written by historians in the present. Both kinds of sources are crucial for the discipline of history. Secondary sources further raise questions of historiography, the academic study of history and historical interpretation. In this class we will focus on some basic skills in historiography, including identifying the main thesis of a book or article, critically evaluating scholarly arguments, and thinking about how we define our terms (for example, what is "modernity"? Was the Qing a "Chinese" dynasty?).

3. Assignments and Grading

Class participation – 10%
Reading responses – 50%
Midterm exam – 20%
Final – 20%

1. Class participation (10%). To receive full credit for participation, you must arrive on time, actively contribute to class discussion, and be respectful of your classmates. If you cannot come to class because of an emergency, please try to contact me in advance. I will record attendance in each class.

2. Nine (9) short reading responses (50%). Over the course of the semester you will post 9 reading responses on Blackboard. Each reading response should be 1-1.5 pages in 12 point double spaced type (note: 1.5 pages is the absolute maximum). The goal of the reading responses is to hone your skills in the active reading and historical analysis of primary and secondary sources. I will give you a detailed handout that explains what the reading responses are all about.

3. Midterm (20%). The midterm and final will include the following kinds of questions:

a. Map question: For the midterm and final you will be asked to identify places and geographical features that are important to China's regional and global interactions. You will be provided with a list of the places/features in advance as well as a map with the places filled in (the map on the test will be a blank version of this same map). The map question on the midterm will cover places that we discuss in the first half of the semester; the question on the final will cover locations from the second half.

b. Identifications: You will be asked to identify several persons/things/events/concepts that we have discussed in class. You will be asked to identify the person/thing/concept in a couple of sentences and then discuss its larger historical significance for our class. Your response should be about 4-5 sentences for each identification question. Anything that we cover during the lecture is fair game, especially names/terms that are written on the board.

c. Document identification: Over the course of the semester you will read many primary source documents for homework, identified on the syllabus with this symbol 😊 (note: the reason for these symbols will be explained). For the midterm and final you will be presented with short excerpts from these primary documents. You will be asked to identify the general time period of the document, the probable author (i.e. Silk Road traveler, Japanese military official, Chinese Communist Party leader), and the historical significance of the document. Your response should be about 4-5 sentences for each document identification question.

d. Short essay: Short essay questions on the midterm and final will ask you to make broad connections and comparisons and think about the bigger themes of the class. We will discuss the kinds of questions/themes that will appear on the essay questions in class.

4. Final exam (20%). Map question, identifications, document identifications, and essay questions.

4. Course Readings

Weekly reading assignments will usually include two parts – a selection from our textbook and a couple of short historical documents or a journal article or book chapter.

The textbook: Joanna Waley-Cohen, *The Sextants of Beijing: Global Currents in Chinese History*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1999. [WC]

This book will be made available on library reserve, at the Campus Bookstore, and can be purchased from other sources as well (i.e. Amazon.com).

Unless otherwise noted, all other readings are available on Blackboard.

If you would like some suggestions for general readings on Chinese history or world history to supplement the course readings, feel free to ask me in class, over email, or in my office hours.

5. Course Policies

1. Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, abides by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments (ADAA) of 2008, and Sections 504 and 508 which mandate that reasonable accommodations be provided for qualified students with disabilities and accessibility of online information. If you have a disability and may require some type of instructional and/or examination accommodation, please contact the Paul Robeson Campus Center, which administers disability services on the Rutgers-Newark campus. For more information, please see the following link: <http://roberson.rutgers.edu/>

2. If you disagree with a grade on a test or other assignment I will be happy to discuss it, but will not discuss changing it until 24 hours have passed. At that time, please email me a short paragraph explaining why the grade should be changed and then we can talk about it.

3. Academic dishonesty in this class will not be tolerated. Period. This includes plagiarism, cheating, and any other behavior described in the Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy. **For this reason it is absolutely crucial that you familiarize yourself with this document, which describes the actions that will be counted as violations of academic integrity:** <http://policies.rutgers.edu/10213-currentpdf>

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You must include the following Rutgers Honor Code Pledge statement on every assignment which you turn in: "On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination/assignment. (Print your name) (Signature) (Date)".

If anyone has any questions at all about this policy, what counts as a violation of academic integrity, or even simply how to cite sources on a paper, I am always willing to discuss these issues with you. Students who plagiarize assignments or otherwise violate academic integrity can receive serious penalties, ranging from a failing grade in the class to suspension.

6. Class Schedule

Sept. 2 Welcome to China and the World!

- Introduction / overview of class

Sept. 8 Geography of China

- For today's class I would like you to read "Hauling New Treasure Along the Silk Road," a recent article from the New York Times that discusses some of the ways in which the old trade routes of the Silk Road are being used to transport computer equipment and other high-technology products. Also take a look at the related multimedia feature "Riding the New Silk Road."

This is the link:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/21/business/global/hauling-new-treasure-along-the-silk-road.html?smid=pl-share>

If you have trouble accessing it, a .pdf of the article is posted on our class's Blackboard site.

We will return to this article at several points over the course of the semester as it raises some interesting questions about the changing nature of the trade and exchange in which China is, and has been, involved. I would also like you to read it because it shows some of the environmental and climactic differences that exist across Asia. This will be an important theme in our class today and going forward.

- In the first half of today's class we will discuss China's natural and human geography and its location in East Asia and Central Asia. We will then shift gears to discuss the differences between primary sources and secondary sources and talk about writing strategies and how to write the reading responses for this class.

Sept. 9 Introduction to Imperial China: Politics, Society, Culture

- Waley-Cohen (WC) 11-37
- "The Examination System" (4 pages) ☺

Sept. 14 China and the Silk Road I

- WC 37-45
- "The Sogdian Ancient Letters" ☺
(<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/texts/sogdlet.html>)

Sept. 16 China and the Silk Road II

- Valerie Hansen, "The Hejia Village Horde: A Snapshot of China's Silk Road Trade," *Orientalism* 34.2 (February, 2003): 14-19. ☀

Sept. 21 The World of the Mongols I

- Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250-1350* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989): pp. 153-184. ☀

Sept. 23 The World of the Mongols II

- WC 37-49
- Selections from *The Travels of Marco Polo* (Read both documents, 4 pages total) ☺

Sept. 28 Rise of the Ming Dynasty

- WC 45-62

- “Proclamations of the Hongwu Emperor” (3 pages) 😊

Sept. 30 The Chinese Tributary System

- John King Fairbank ed. *The Chinese World Order* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), 1-14. ☀

Oct. 5 China and Early Modern World Trade I

- Timothy Brook, *Vermeer’s Hat* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2008), 54-83 ☀

Oct. 7 China and Early Modern World Trade II

- Timothy Brook, *Vermeer’s Hat*, 117-151 ☀

Oct. 12 The World of the Qing Empire I

- WC 62-80
- Catherine Jami, “Imperial Control and Western Learning: The Kangxi Emperor’s Performance.” *Late Imperial China* 23.1 (June 2002), 28-49. ☀

Oct. 14 The World of the Qing Empire II

- WC 92-105, 124-128
- “Qianlong’s Edict to King George III of England (September 23, 1793)” (3 pages) 😊

Oct. 19 Midterm Review Session

- Bring questions that you have about anything that we have covered so far
- We will spend the class session reviewing material and discussing larger themes and connections

Oct. 21 Midterm

Oct. 26 Opium War I: Causes

- WC 129-148
- “Letter of Commissioner Lin to Queen Victoria” (3 pages) 😊

Oct. 28 Opium War II: Consequences

- WC 148-65
- “Treaty of Nanjing” (1842) 😊

Nov. 2 1911 and the Fall of the Qing

- WC 182-205
- Tong Lam, “Policing the Imperial Nation: Sovereignty, International Law, and the Civilizing Mission in Late Qing China.” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 52.4 (2010): 881–908. ☀

Nov. 4 China, WWI, and Nationalism

- WC 207-229
- “The Twenty-One Demands” (4 pages) 😊

Nov. 9 Pacific War

- WC 229-246
- “China and Greater East Asia” (7 pages) 😊

Nov. 11 Communist Revolution and Maoist China

- WC 247-61
- Mao Zedong, “In Memory of Norman Bethune” (1939) 😊
(http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-2/mswv2_25.htm)

- Also take a look at PRC propaganda posters depicting Norman Bethune on Chinese posters.net (<http://chinese posters.net/themes/bethune.php>)

Nov. 16 From Mao Zedong to Deng Xiaoping

- WC 261-4
- “Joint Communiqué of the United States of America and the People’s Republic of China” (“Shanghai Communiqué”) (1972) 😊

Nov. 18 Reform and Opening I

- WC 264-9, 270-82
- “Deng Xiaoping in Shenzhen” (2 pages) 😊

Nov. 23 Reform and Opening II

- “Tables and Figures on Trends and Developments in post-1978 China” (15 pages) 😊
- What patterns can you discern from the figures? What do they tell you about how everyday life has changed under the reforms?

Thanksgiving Recess

Nov. 30 Watch excerpts from “China on Four Wheels” (2012) in class

- Document: “‘Life on the Outside’: An Interview with an Itinerant Worker, Lu Naihong.” (4 pages) 😊
- We will spend most of class watching “China on Four Wheels,” a BBC documentary that provides an interesting look at the current state of China’s economic reforms and their broader domestic and global impacts

Dec. 2 Imagining China’s (21st Century) World I

- Jennifer Hubbert, “Of Menace and Mimicry: The 2008 Beijing Olympics,” *Modern China* 39.4 (2013), 408-37. ☀

Dec. 7 Imagining China's (21st Century) World II

- Arif Dirlik, "Confucius in the Borderlands: Global Capitalism and the Reinvention of Confucianism." *boundary 2* 22:3, 1995, 229-73. ☀

Dec. 9 Review Session (Mandatory)

- We will spend the class reviewing material that will be on the final exam and thinking about the larger themes and questions of the course

Final Exam: Monday December 21st, 3:00-6:00 pm