

ANT 265: Contemporary Chinese Society and Culture
Spring 2005 M,W,F 12:30-1:20pm, Chambers 1027

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Office Hours: M, W, F 9:30 – 10:30 am
T, Th 10:00 – 11:30 am or by appointment
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This seminar examines Chinese society from the “bottom up,” with an emphasis on the structure of everyday life. The first part deals with pre-revolutionary (non-communist) Chinese society. Topics include marriage and adoption strategies, concubinage, inheritance patterns, gender roles, lineage organization, and life crisis rituals. The second part focuses on post-revolutionary society and Maoist attempts to construct a new culture. Topics include land reform and collectivization, marriage, women’s liberation, changing family organization, anti-superstition campaigns, population control, and the impact of post-Mao reforms. The third part will be topical: looking at two social institutions in contemporary China (popular religion and lineages) that have been transformed through historical experiences.

Contemporary China will be studied from the anthropological perspective – largely a “bottom-up,” comparative examination of particular social processes that is presented in the form of ethnographic monographs and articles that describe everyday life in detail. Our emphasis will be on understanding how Chinese traditions and culture have shaped Chinese society today. What is uniquely Chinese in Chinese culture? How have over three thousand years of history and tradition and its recent emergence out of Maoist socialism shaped everyday life in China? How do social units like the family or practices such as life-cycle rituals give structure to Chinese society? What will China be like in the 21st century?

Course Readings

- Farquhar, Judith 2002. *Appetites: Food and Sex in Postsocialist China* Durham: Duke University Press. (ISBN: 0822329212)
- Gladney, Dru 2004. *Dislocating China: Muslims, Minorities, and Other Subaltern Subjects*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (ISBN: 0226297756)
- Hertz, Ellen 1998. *The Trading Crowd : An Ethnography of the Shanghai Stock Market*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (ISBN: 0521564972)
- Ruf, Gregory 1998. *Cadres and Kin: Making a Socialist Village in West China, 1921-1991*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. (ISBN: 0804741298)

Yan, Yunxiang 2003. *Private Life Under Socialism: Love, Intimacy, and Family Change in a Chinese Village*. Stanford: Stanford University Press (ISBN: 0804744564)
Zhang, Li 2001. *Strangers in the City: Reconfigurations of Space, Power, and Social Networks Within China's Floating Population* Stanford: Stanford University Press. (ISBN: 0804742065)

Additional articles will be available on Blackboard.

Course Requirements

The most important work in this course is to be prepared for each seminar meeting; this means having thoroughly read the material and being prepared to discuss particular points from the reading. Readings are due on the day listed in the class schedule. Your engagement with the material is vital for the success of this learning experience.

Class Participation: 10%

The most important work in this course is to be prepared for each class; this means having thoroughly read the material and being prepared to discuss particular points from the reading. Readings are due on the day listed in the class schedule. I will not summarize the readings in lecture, but will discuss the implications and difficult points in the material. Remember, there is no such thing as a dumb question or comment. A good strategy is to mark a part of the reading that you feel is important, unclear, or thought-provoking – you can then share the passage with the class.

Response Papers: 10%

You will write five (5) response papers throughout the term, no more than two pages and double-spaced. They will be graded ($\sqrt{+}$, $\sqrt{}$, $\sqrt{-}$) and require timely submission for full credit. Response papers will serve as a diagnostic for me to help me see how much you understand the reading and the concepts that we will discuss in class.

Review Essay: 40% (2 short essays)

This assignment is designed to help you review the literature that we have read and give you the opportunity to think through a particular issue that we have encountered in our readings on China; it should also help prepare your thoughts for your research paper. There will be two short essays of no more than five pages, double-spaced. I will have handouts on your writing and my grading of these essays on the course website. The first essay is due on **21 February**, and the second essay is due on **21 March**.

Research Paper (total 40%: proposal 5%, final paper 35%): Based on your research interests, you will select a particular topic for more in-depth research and analysis. I will distribute handouts on the proposal and citing format for this term paper of no more than fifteen pages. This can be an expansion of either of your review essays. I would recommend that you meet with me individually or email me to discuss possible topics before submitting your proposal. The proposal is due on **14 March** and the final paper is due on, **5 May**.

Submission of Writing Assignments: All assignments must be submitted to me electronically. You can do this in two ways: as an email attachment; or through the digital drop box in Blackboard. If you are not using Microsoft Word, please save the file as in “rich text format.” If you have any questions about how to submit assignments, please see me individually. I will be returning your work to you electronically as well, with comments visible in Adobe Acrobat.



Grading System:

Grades will follow the college system using the 4.0 scale (i.e., A=4.0, A-=3.7, B+=3.3, etc. – see the college catalog) and weighted for each assignment as described above.

While students working with each other outside of class is highly encouraged, all graded, written work must be your own and pledged accordingly. All work is subject to the Davidson College Honor Code as stated in the student handbook. If there are individual accommodations for special needs, please let me know and authorize the Dean of Students to contact me so that we can work something out.

Class Schedule (subject to modification)

Monday, 10 January	Class Introduction
Wednesday, 12 January	Overview of Chinese History Reading: Richard Smith article; Timothy Cheek article (on Blackboard)
Friday, 14 January	Families Reading: Rubie Watson article; James Watson article; optional-Jack Potter article (on Blackboard)
Monday, 17 January	No Class: Martin Luther King Day Reading: Yan p. 1-41
Wednesday, 19 January	Reading: Yan p. 42-63
Friday, 21 January	Reading: Yan p. 64-85
Monday, 24 January	Reading: Yan p. 85-139 Assignment: Response Paper Due
Wednesday, 26 January	Reading: Yan p. 140-161
Wednesday, 26 January	Talk by Prof. James L. Watson, (Harvard University), former President of the Association for Asian Studies, 7:00 pm Mandatory Attendance
Thursday, 27 January	Talk by Prof. Rubie S. Watson, (Harvard University), 7:00 pm Mandatory Attendance
Friday, 28 January	Reading: Yan, p. 162-189
Monday, 31 January	Reading: Yan p. 190-235; optional - Susan Greenhalgh article, Hill Gates article (On Blackboard) Assignment: Response Paper Due (on either Watson lecture)
Wednesday, 2 February	Politics Reading: Ruf, p. 1-61
Friday, 4 February	Reading: Ruf, p. 62-121
Monday, 7 February	Reading: Ruf, p. 122-162 Assignment: Response Paper Due
Wednesday, 9 February	Economics Reading: Hertz p. 1-28
Friday, 11 February	Reading: Herz p. 31-70
Monday, 14 February	Reading: Herz p. 71-93
Wednesday, 16 February	Reading: Herz p. 94-125

Friday, 18 February	Reading: Herz p. 129-151
Monday, 21 February	Reading: Herz p. 152-173 Assignment: First Short Essay Due
Wednesday, 23 February	Reading: Herz p. 174-199
Friday, 25 February	Reading: Yan article on McDonalds in Beijing (On Blackboard)
26 Feb – 6 March	Spring Break: Have a Good Vacation
Monday, 7 March	Social Dislocation Reading: Brownell article (On Blackboard); Zhang 1-21
Wednesday, 9 March	Reading: Zhang p. 23-68 Assignment: Response Paper Due
Friday, 11 March	Reading: Zhang p. 69-114
Monday, 14 March	Reading: Zhang p. 115-158 Assignment: Term Paper Proposal Due
Wednesday, 16 March	Reading: Zhang p. 159-185
Friday, 18 March	Reading: Zhang p. 186-212
Monday, 21 March	Religion and Ethnicity Reading: Lozada article (on Blackboard) Assignment: Second Short Essay Due
Wednesday, 23 March	Reading: Gladney, p. 1-50
Friday, 25 March	Reading: Gladney, p. 150-175
Monday, 28 March	Easter Break: Have a Good Vacation
Wednesday, 30 March	Reading: Gladney, p. 176-204
Friday, 1 April	Reading: Gladney, p. 205-228
Monday, 4 April	Reading: Gladney, p. 260-311 Assignment: Response Paper Due
Wednesday, 6 April	Reading: Gladney, p. 312-335
Friday, 8 April	Reading: Gladney, p. 336-367
Monday, 11 April	Popular Culture Reading: Farquhar p. 1-33
Wednesday, 13 April	Reading: Farquhar p. 37-77

Friday, 15 April	Reading: Farquhar p.79-119
Monday, 18 April	Reading: Farquhar p. 121-163
Wednesday, 20 April	Reading: Farquhar p.167-209
Friday, 22 April	Reading: Farquhar p.211-242
Monday, 25 April	Reading: Farquhar p.243-292
Wednesday, 27 April	Last Day of Class: Overview
Thursday, 5 May	Assignment: Final Papers Due (5:00 pm)