

National Taiwan University

Seminar on Culture and Society in Contemporary China

Semester Two

Instructor: Dr. Lake Lui

Email: lakelui21@ntu.edu.tw

Office: Department of Sociology, 414

Office Hours: By appointment

COURSE OUTLINE AND OBJECTIVES

The course is designed for students who do not have much background about Chinese society. From a sociological perspective, we begin with a discussion on the main features of traditional Chinese society and investigate how they have changed and/or continued under the rule of the Chinese Communist Party. We then focus on the post-1978 reform period and discuss the social changes in various aspects of contemporary Chinese societies, including the economy, family, social stratification, internal and international migration, politics, and the civil society. Some knowledge in sociology will be useful, but not necessary.

Upon completion of this course,

- students will have preliminary understanding of Chinese societies as a knowledge base for analyzing current affairs in relations to China
- students should have a broader sociological imagination of China
- students should have learned various perspectives to pursue further engagement with China

COURSE PHILOSOPHY

I believe the best way to learn is to actively immerse you into understanding, observing, reflecting, and critically analyzing the subject matter. While you are in Taiwan, and China is not directly observable, you can narrow this gap by doing the required readings, reading related news, talking to people in Mainland China in Taiwan, and attending seminars related to issues about China.

Although this course is a lecture class, my aim is to involve you as much as I can. Throughout the class, I expect you to respond, ask questions, and raise and discuss “contemporary” issues related to this course that you see and hear from the news or people around you. You are encouraged to analyze these through sociological lens.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

1. Response Papers (40%)

a) Students in Taiwan: An excursion to 故宮博物館

Students who are not in Taiwan: Visit a Chinese museum/ Chinese art center/ China town

b) Movie watching *The Chinese Mayor*

2. Project (40%)

Come up with a research question related to the Chinese culture and Chinese societies. This includes transnational Chinese societies. Answer the question using methods like interviews (could be done over skype, signal, etc), content analysis (including studying social media and art work, news media), data analysis (including web scrapping), analysis on the macro data.

Any topic is fine, including (but not exclusive to because you can still study topics we have covered) those that are not covered in the class. Here are some examples:

Public health in China

Chinese immigrants

Class inequalities in China

Cross-strait relationship

Sex and sexuality in China

Land grabs in China

China and its environment

And many more...

3. Lecture Participation (20%)

TEXTBOOK:

Basic Books

Fei, Xiaotong. 1992. *From the Soil: The Foundations of Chinese Society*, trans. Gary G. Hamilton and Wang Zheng. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.

Naughton, Barry. 2007. *The Chinese Economy: Transition and Growth*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

COURSE PLAN

I. Background

Week One: Sociological imagination of China and its imagined communities

Required readings:

Stockman, Norman. 2000. "The Study of Chinese Society", *Understanding Chinese Society*.
Cambridge: Polity Press. Pp. 1-22.

Naughton, Barry. 2007. *The Chinese Economy: Transition and Growth*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. (Ch. 1)

Extended Reading (not required):

Naughton, Barry. 2007. *The Chinese Economy: Transition and Growth*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. (Ch. 2)

Chandra Mohanty. *Under Western Eyes*.

Week Two: Foundations of Chinese Society

Fei, Xiaotong. 1992 (Textbook). Introduction, Ch. 4-7.

Week Three: Experiencing China from outside

Students in Taiwan: An excursion to 故宮博物館

Students who are not in Taiwan: Visit a Chinese museum/ Chinese art center/ China town

Week Four: Politics and Private Life Under Mao

Film appreciation: *To Live* by Zhang Yi Mou

Required readings:

Naughton, Barry. 2007. *The Chinese Economy: Transition and Growth*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. (Ch. 3)

Yan, Yunxiang. 2003. Chapter 1: "The Changing Local World: Political Economy, Public Life, and Social Networks." In *Private Life under Socialism*. Pp. 17-41.

II. Market Economy and Politics

Week Five: China's Market Transition

Required Readings

Naughton, Barry. 2007. *The Chinese Economy: Transition and Growth*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. (Ch. 4).

Lee Ching Kwan. 1995. Engendering the Worlds of Labor: Women Workers, Labor Markets, and Production Politics in the South China Economic Miracle. *American Sociological Review* Vol. 60, No. 3 (Jun., 1995), pp. 378-397

Extended reading (not required):

Nee, Victor. 1989. A Theory of Market Transition: From Redistribution to Markets in State Socialism. *American Sociological Review* 54(5): 663-681.

Week Six: Globalization, Work, and Social Stratification

Pun Ngai. 2013. "The politics of global production: Apple, Foxconn and China's new working class." *New Technology, Work and Employment* 28:2, pp. 100-115.

Otis, Eileen. 2016. Bridgework: globalization, gender, and service labor at a luxury hotel. *Gender and Society* (November 28).

Week Seven: Urbanization, Development, and Social Problems

Video watching: *The Chinese Mayor*

Whyte, Martin K. 2009. "The Paradoxes of Rural-Urban Inequality in Contemporary China." In Martin K. Whyte (ed.) *One Country Two Societies*, Harvard University Press, Chapter 1.

Chan, Kam Wing, 2014. "China's Urbanization 2020: A New Blueprint and Direction," *Eurasian Geography and Economics* 55(1): 1-9.

Week Eight: Consuming China and Xi's Anti-Corruption Campaign

Osburg, John. 2013. "From Fruit Plates to License Plate: Consumption, Status, and Recognition Among Chengdu Elites" In *Anxious Wealth, Money, and Morality Among China's New Rich*. Pp. 113-142.

Shin, Solee, and Lake Lui. Forthcoming. Guanxi and Moral Articulation: Strategies of Corruption During China's Anti-Corruption Drive. *Journal of Development Studies*.

Week Nine: One Belt One Road Under Xi

III. The society

Week Ten: Chinese families and Marriage

Required Readings:

Lui, Lake. 2021. Filial Considerations in Mate Selection: Urban and Rural Guangdong in the Post-Mao Era. *Modern China*, 47(4), pp.383-411.

Lui, Lake. 2016. Gender, rural-urban inequality, and intermarriage in China. *Social Forces* 95(2): 639-662.

Zhang, Jun. "(Extended) family car, filial consumer-citizens: becoming properly middle class in post-socialist south China." *Modern China* 43, no. 1 (2017): 36-65.

Extended Reading:

Stevan, Harrell & Santos Goncalo. 2016. "Introduction." In *Transforming Patriarchy: Chinese Family in the 21st Century*. University of Washington Press. pp. 3-38.

Yan, Yunxiang. 2010. "The Chinese Path to Individualization," *The British Journal of Sociology* 61(3): 489-512.

Week Eleven: Policing Fertility

Greenhalgh, S. (2005). *Governing China's Population: From Leninist to Neoliberal Biopolitics*. Pp. 1-54

Liu, Ye. 2021. As the Two-Child Policy Beckons: Work–Family Conflicts, Gender Strategies and Self-Worth among Women from the First One-Child Generation in Contemporary China. *Work, Employment and Society*, p.09500170211016944.

Week Twelve: Technologizing ethnicities (emphasis on ethnicities)

Grose, Timothy. "Uyghur language textbooks: competing images of a multi-ethnic China." *Asian Studies Review* 36, no. 3 (2012): 369-389.

Byler Darren. 2022. *Terror Capitalism Uyghur Dispossession and Masculinity in a Chinese City*. Duke University Press. (Introduction).

Week Thirteen: Technologizing ethnicities (emphasis on surveillance and technologizing)

Byler Darren. 2022. *Terror Capitalism Uyghur Dispossession and Masculinity in a Chinese City*. Duke University Press. (Chapter 1-3).

IV. Outside PRC

Week Fourteen: China and Hong Kong

Mathews, Gordon, Eric Ma, and Tai-lok Lui. 2007. *Hong Kong, China: Learning to belong to a nation*. Routledge. (Chapter 1-3).

Week Fifteen: Preparation for Individual/Group presentation

Week Sixteen: Individual/Group presentation

Some useful local websites in China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong:

The State Council of the People's Republic of China <http://english.gov.cn/>

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the P.R. China <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng>

China News <http://www.chinaguide.org>

National Library of China <http://www.nlc.gov.cn/english.htm>

Xinhua News Agency <http://www.xinhua.org>

People's Daily <http://www.peopledaily.net>

China Daily <http://www.chinadaily.com.cn>

Beijing Review <http://www.bjreview.com.cn>
China News Service <http://www.chinanews.com.cn>
Hong Kong SAR government <http://www.gov.hk/en/residents/>
South China Morning Post <http://www.scmp.com/frontpage/international>
Taiwan Government <http://www.taiwan.gov.tw/>
Taipei Times <http://www.taipeitimes.com/>
The Taiwan Post <http://www.chinapost.com.tw/>
Taiwan News http://www.etaiwannews.com/etn/index_en.php

* Here I only show the English version of the websites.