



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

The Anthropology of Contemporary Chinese Society - 46123

Last update 12-12-2023

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: Asian Studies

Academic year: 0

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Prof. Orna Naftali

Coordinator Email: orna.naftali@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: First semester: Tue., 12-1 PM

Teaching Staff:

Prof Orna Naftali

Course/Module description:

In this class, we will survey recent trends in Chinese culture and society while drawing on anthropological studies and documentary films of contemporary China. The focus of our discussion will be the dynamics of cultural unity and cultural diversity as well as the interaction between modernity & globalization processes and the role of China's past heritage in the shaping of 21st-century Chinese culture and society.

Course/Module aims:

- To survey central anthropological approaches to the study of Chinese culture and society*
- To outline main trends in contemporary Chinese culture and society while situating these trends within a comparative and global context*
- To discuss how macro-processes of change and continuity are expressed - and shaped - by the everyday experiences of individuals in China*
- These issues will be examined in a variety of areas, including: religion and ethnic identity, family, gender and sexuality, food, health and the environment, economy, consumption and migration*

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- Describe central anthropological approaches to the study of contemporary Chinese culture and society*
- Delineate recent developments in Chinese culture and society while situating these developments within a comparative and global context*
- Provide examples of how macro-processes of continuity and change are expressed - and shaped - by the everyday experiences of individuals in China*

Attendance requirements(%):

80

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Seminar

Course/Module Content:

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- *The anthropological perspective
 - *Morality and the individual
 - *Corruption and the gift economy
 - *labor, education and social class
 - *Religion and life-cycle rituals
 - *Marriage
 - *Childrearing
 - *Inter-generational relations
 - *Ethnic minorities: representations and identity struggles

-Please refer to the class website on the Moodle2 system for the updated, detailed list of topics

Required Reading:

*The following list is subject to change. Please see the class website on the Moodle2 system for the final reading list:

Pieke, Frank N. 2014. "Anthropology, China, and the Chinese Century." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 43: 123-138.

Yan, Yunxiang. 2021. "The Politics of Moral Crisis in Contemporary China". *The China Journal* 85: 96-120.

Osburg, John. 2018. "Making Business Personal: Corruption, Anti-corruption, and Elite Networks in Post-Mao China". *Current Anthropology* 59, Supplement 18: S149-S159.

Peng, Xinyan. 2020. "The 6pm Struggle: The Changing Meaning of Work, a Culture of Overtime Work, and Corporate Governmentality in Urban China". *Asian Anthropology* 19(1): 39-52.

Iskra, Anna, Fabian Winiger, and David A. Palmer. 2020. "Remaking the Self: Spirituality, Civilization and the Chinese Quest for the Good Life in the Reform Era." In Stephan Feuchtwang (ed.). *Handbook on Religion in China*. Pp. 54-74. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing

Chau, Adam Yuet. 2019. *Religion in China: Ties that Bind*. Cambridge: Polity Press. Ch. 1 and 2, pp. 23-59

Oxford, Ellen. 2020. "Life-Cycle Rituals in Rural and Urban China: Birth, Marriage, and Death." In Stephan Feuchtwang (ed.). *Handbook on Religion in China*. Pp. 110-131. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing

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

Liu, Jieyu. 2021. "Childhood in Urban China: A Three-Generation Portrait." *Current Sociology*. Published online first, pp. 1-20,
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120985861>

Eklund, Lisa. 2018. "Filial Daughter? Filial Son? How China's Young Urban Elite Negotiate Intergenerational Obligations." *NORA - Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research* 26 (4): 295-312

Bulag, Uradyn E. 2021. "Minority Nationalities as Frankenstein's Monsters? Reshaping 'the Chinese Nation' and China's Quest to Become a 'Normal Country'". *The China Journal*. Published electronically, May 5, 2021, DOI: 10.1086/714737

Sum, Chun-Yi, Tami Blumenfield, Mary K. Shenk, and Siobhán M. Mattison. 2021. "Hierarchy, Resentment, and Pride: Politics of Identity and Belonging among Mosuo, Yi, and Han in Southwest China." *Modern China*, published online first, 1-25.

Additional Reading Material:

Please check class site on Moodle

Grading Scheme:

Presentation / Poster Presentation / Lecture/ Seminar / Pro-seminar / Research proposal 50 %

Active Participation / Team Assignment 8 %

Submission assignments during the semester: Exercises / Essays / Audits / Reports / Forum / Simulation / others 12 %

Presentation / Poster Presentation / Lecture 30 %

Additional information:

-In this course you may submit either a final paper OR an extended seminar paper (50%)