



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

CONSTRUCTIONS OF MODERNITY IN CONTEMPORARY CHINA - 46813

Last update 12-02-2016

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: asian studies

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. Orna Naftali

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

Coordinator Office Hours: Wed., 12:15-13:15

Teaching Staff:

Dr. Orna Naftali

Course/Module description:

The course discusses the interplay between modernization processes and 'traditional' elements in the formation of contemporary Chinese culture and society by drawing on anthropological theory and current ethnographic studies. It considers the effects of modernization and the construction of 'modernity' in areas such as consumerism and the new market economy; migration and the reconfiguration of urban and rural space; religion and ritual practice; child birth and population; intimacy and the family; as well as ethnic and national identities in contemporary China (1978-present).

Course/Module aims:

To examine the effects of modernization processes and the constructions of the idea of 'modernity' among different social groups in China, including men and women, adults and youth, urban and rural residents, migrant workers, middle and working classes, and Han and ethnic minorities. The course further considers the strategic deployment of 'modernity' and 'tradition' by the Chinese Communist Party, and the interplay between government discourses on modernity and modernization and the views and practices of individuals 'on the ground'.

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

- Present the main approaches to the study of modernity in the field of anthropology, and in the field of China anthropology more specifically
- Describe the effects of recent modernization processes on various areas of life in China, including consumerism and economic life; population and the family; urban and rural spaces; religion; and ethnic and national identities
- Compare notions of 'modernity' among different social groups in China
- Expound how the Chinese government deploys the notions of 'modernity' and 'tradition' for its political aims
- Explain the interactions between Chinese government discourse on 'modernity' and 'tradition' and the views and practices of individual citizens on the ground

Attendance requirements(%):

100

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Lecture and seminar

Course/Module Content:

1. Introduction
2. The anthropology of modernity: Theoretical and Methodological considerations
3. Constructions of modernity in contemporary China: Central Issues and Debates
4. Cultural and intellectual Discourse in post-1978 China: Between 'Modernity' and 'Westernization'
5. Modernity, Consumerism and the New Market Economy
6. Modernity and the Reconfiguration of Urban Space
7. Modernity and China's Internal Migrants
8. Modernity and the Transformation of the Chinese Countryside
9. Modernity, birth and population
10. Modernity, Intimacy and the Family
11. Religion, Modernity and the Invention of Tradition
12. Modernity, 'Tradition' and China's Ethnic Minorities
13. Conclusion

Required Reading:

*The following list is subject to change. Please consult the class website on the Moodle2 system for the most updated information:

Giddens, Anthony. 1991. *The Consequences of Modernity*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. Pp. 1-6; 36-45; 55-65 [HM 131 G397]

Appadurai, Arjun. 1996. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press. Ch. 1: pp. 1-23.

Bauman, Zygmunt. 2000. *Liquid Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press. "Forward: On Being Light and Liquid," Pp. 1-15

Kipnis, Andrew. 2012. "Introduction: Chinese Modernity and the Individual Psyche."

In Chinese Modernity and the Individual Psyche. Andrew Kipnis (ed.), Pp. 1-18. New York: Palgrave Macmillan

Ong, Aihwa. 1996. "Anthropology, China and Modernities: The Geopolitics of Cultural Knowledge." In Henrietta L. Moore (ed.). *The Future of Anthropological Knowledge*. Pp. 60-89. London: Routledge.

Chen, Xiaomei. 1995. *Occidentalism: A Theory of Counter-Discourse in Post-Mao China*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press. Ch. 1: Pp. 27-48.

Xu, Ben. 1998. "'From Modernity to Chineseness': The Rise of Nativist Cultural Theory in Post-1989 China". *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique*, Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 203-237

Nonini, Donald M. 2008. "Is China Becoming Neoliberal?" *Critique of Anthropology*, Vol. 28, pp. 145-175.

Yang, Mayfair Mei-hui. 2002. "The Resilience of Guanxi and its New Deployments: A Critique of Some New Guanxi Scholarship." *The China Quarterly*, No. 170, pp. 459-476.

Pan, Tianshu. 2010. "Place Attachment, Communal Memory, and the Moral Underpinnings of Gentrification in Postreform Shanghai." In Arthur Kleinman et al. (eds.). *Deep China: The Moral Life of the Person, What Anthropology and Psychiatry Tell us about China Today*. Pp. 152-176. Berkeley: UC Press. [GN 296.5 C6 D44]

Zhang, Li. 2006. "Contesting Spatial Modernity in Late-Socialist China." *Current Anthropology*, Vol. 47, No. 3, pp. 461-484

Lei, Guang. 2003. "Rural Taste, Urban Fashions: The Cultural Politics of Rural/Urban Difference in Contemporary China". *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique*, Vol. 11, No. 3, pp. 613-646.

Yan, Hairong. 2008. *New Masters, New Servants: Development, Migration, and Women Workers*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Luo, Youmin. 2012. "Making Sense of Good Life: Local Modernity from a Traditional Industrial-Commercial Region in Southern China". *International Journal of Business Anthropology* Vol. 3(1): 82-10

Anagnost, Ann. 1997. *National Past-Times: Narrative, Writing, and History in Modern China*. Durham: Duke University Press. Ch. 5: pp. 117-137

Greenhalgh, Susan. 2011. "Governing Chinese Life, From Sovereignty to Biopolitical Governance." In Everett Zhang, Arthur Kleinman, and Tu Weiming Tu (eds.). *Governance of Life in Chinese Moral Experience: The Quest for an Adequate Life*. Pp.

146-162. London: Routledge.

Wu, Fei. 2010. "Suicide: A Modern Problem in China." In Arthur Kleinman et al. (eds.). *Deep China: The Moral Life of the Person, What Anthropology and Psychiatry Tell Us about China Today*. Pp. 213-236. Berkeley: UC Press [GN 296.5 C6 D44]

Hansen, Mette Halskov, and Cuiming Pang. 2010. "Idealizing Individual Choice: Work, Love, and Family in the Eyes of Young, Rural Chinese". In *iChina: The Rise of the Individual in Modern Chinese Society*. Edited by Mette Halskov Hansen and Rune Svarverud. Pp. 39-64. Copenhagen: NIAS

Wang, Mingming. 2006. "'Great Tradition' and its Enemy: The Issue of 'Chinese Culture' on the Southeastern Coast." In Tan Chee-beng (ed.). *Southern Fujian: Reproduction of Traditions in Post-Mao China*. Pp. 1-34. Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Wu, Ka-ming. 2011. "Tradition Revival with Socialist Characteristics: Propaganda Storytelling Turned Spiritual Service in Rural Yan'an." *The China Journal*, No. 66, pp. 101-117.

Gladney, Dru C. 1994. "Representing Nationality in China: Refiguring Majority/Minority Identities." *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 53, No. 1, pp. 92-123

Schein, Louisa. 1999. "Performing Modernity." *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 14, No. 3, pp. 361-395.

Additional Reading Material:

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 0 %

Presentation 30 %

Participation in Tutorials 20 %

Project work 50 %

Assignments 0 %
Reports 0 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 0 %

Additional information:

**The participation grade includes full attendance (10%) and active participation (10%)*

**Optional: Students may submit a research project for additional credit.*