

# Nationalism and Identity in Republican China

Professor Gina Anne Tam

“What does it mean to be Chinese?” A question whose complexity cannot be understated, the way in which we see ourselves are often seeped in histories. This class focuses on the root of Chinese nationalism and identity in China from 1911-1949. From learning to belong to a nation to testing its limits, from experiments with plural identities to the rejection of national identities altogether, this class will explore the realities, changes, and boundaries of the complex ways that Chinese identity developed, the historical legacies of which still exist today.

This class is an upper-level seminar whose purpose is to learn what it means to do historical research. Over the course of this class, you will collect primary documents and compose a 20-25 page piece of original research on the topic of Chinese identity in the twentieth century. The readings, a mix of primary and secondary sources, will allow us to both practice the skills of historical interpretation and narrative-building and familiarize ourselves with the major debates in Chinese historiography today, giving students the proper tools and context to select and research a topic of their own choosing.

## Readings:

All required readings will be found on T-learn or through the library website. For reference, please consider purchasing one of two textbooks:

Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China*

Jeffrey Wasserstrom, *The Oxford Illustrated History of Modern China*

## Grading

*Primary source paper (10%):* Since the anchor of any historical research is its primary sources, it is a requirement that students find *more than one* primary source upon which to base their research. Students will choose one for a 3-4 page analysis. In the first section of this paper (2 pages), students should summarize the following: the author, the main argument, the intended audience, the purpose of the source, and the materiality of the source. In the second section of this paper (1-2 pages), students should offer their own analysis of the source and the types of historical questions they will use to interrogate it—*this will be your first attempt to define your research topic*. Students are also required to come and see me to show me your source at least one week before the due date of the assignment.

*Annotated Bibliography (15%):* While research projects will be anchored in primary sources, students will need to familiarize yourself with the existing literature surrounding your topic. Using the library and library databases, students will collect 10-15 secondary sources that relate to their primary source. For each entry, students will provide a full bibliographical reference, as well as 4-5 sentences that summarize the main argument of the work, and how it would help to contextualize the history of their primary source. Further explanations for this assignment will be discussed in class. This annotated bibliography should then be preceded by a short introduction that will serve as a proposal for a research paper, including summaries of the current literature and how the topic fits into the scholarly conversation.

*Outline (5%):* Part of writing means organizing your thoughts. It is difficult to grasp how you will construct your argument without some sense of a roadmap. As such, students will construct an outline to help frame their papers.

*First five pages (5%):* Sometimes, the hardest part of writing can be getting started. The purpose of writing the first five pages is to simply begin the process of getting your ideas on paper. Students do *not have to start at the beginning of their paper*; in fact, sometimes it is useful to start in the middle rather than the end.

*Rough Draft (10%):* This rough draft must be complete, with relevant and consistent citations, using your best prose and edited for typos and incorrect syntax.

*Peer review (5%):* Once rough drafts are submitted, students will be required to give detailed comments to *two* peers on their rough drafts. This will take the form of a worksheet designed to guide students to provide constructive feedback. Instructions will be distributed in class.

*Final paper (20%):* For your final project, you will write a 20-25 page paper related to twentieth century Chinese history. It should draw on adequate relevant secondary and primary source material so as to make a significant historical argument.

*Class participation (30%):* Students are required to attend every class having done the readings and completed all assignments. Missing three classes will result in a zero for your class participation grade. Missing four or more classes is an automatic fail. In addition to attending class, each student will post *24 hours before class* a 100-word summary of the weeks' readings and 2 discussion questions. This will count towards the participation grade.

### **Policies:**

*Attendance:* You are expected to attend every class unless you must miss it for illness or another emergency. Absences or consistent lateness will negatively affect your grade. *Missing or being late for six classes will result in a zero for your attendance grade. Missing or being late for seven or more class will result in an automatic fail for the course.*

*Paper submission instructions:* Papers are due by the time class starts on T-learn. No late papers will be accepted if permission is not granted **24 hours in advance. No exceptions.**

*Technology inside and outside the classroom:* Cell phones must be switched off and remain off for the duration of each class. Laptops are permitted for class activities only. Taking notes and accessing readings are appropriate uses; social media, email, entertainment, or googling topics you find interesting are not. Inappropriate use of technology will result in being asked to leave class.

If you have any questions, you may email me at [gtam@trinity.edu](mailto:gtam@trinity.edu). Give me 24 hours to respond.

### *Honor code:*

All students are covered by a policy that prohibits dishonesty in academic work. Under the Honor Code, a faculty member will (or a student may) report an alleged violation to the Academic Honor Council. It is the task of the Council to investigate, adjudicate, and assign a punishment within certain guidelines if a violation has been verified. **Students who are under the Honor Code are required to pledge all written work that is submitted for a grade: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received any unauthorized assistance on this work" and their signature. The pledge may be abbreviated 'pledged' with a signature.**

### *Students with disabilities:*

If you have a documented disability and will need accommodations in this class, please speak with me privately early in the semester. All discussions will remain confidential. In order to receive accommodations, you must be registered with Disability Services for Students. If you are not already registered with DSS, please contact their office at 999-7411 or [dss@trinity.edu](mailto:dss@trinity.edu).

## **Class Schedule**

**January 10: Theoretical approaches to nationhood**

- Jonathan Unger, “Introduction.” In *Chinese Nationalism* (1996) [T-learn]
- James Townsend, “Chinese Nationalism.” In *Chinese Nationalism* (1996) [T-learn]

#### January 17: Understanding China’s Response to the West

- John K. Fairbank, *China’s Response to the West* (1954) (1-21) [T-learn]
- Paul Cohen, *Discovering History in China: Historical Writing on the Recent Chinese Past* (1986) (9-55) [T-learn]

#### January 24: From culturalism to nationalism—elite discourses

- Kai-wing Chow, “Narrating Nation, Race and National Culture: Imagining the *Hanzu* Identity in Modern China.” In *Constructing Nationhood in Modern East Asia* [T-learn]
- Gang Zhao, “Reinventing China: Imperial Qing Ideology and the Rise of Modern Chinese National Identity in the Early Twentieth Century” *Modern China*. [JSTOR]
- *Primary Source*: Zou Rong, *Revolutionary Army* [T-learn]

#### January 31: Literature and Modernity

- Hung-Yok Ip, Tze-Ki Hon and Chiu-Chun Lee, “Review: The Plurality of Chinese Modernity: A Review of Recent Scholarship on the May Fourth Movement.” (Oct., 2003): 490-550 [JSTOR]
- *Primary Source*: Hu Shi, “On the Vernacular Literature Movement” [T-learn]
- *Primary Source*: Ding Ling, *Diary of Miss Sophia* [T-learn]

#### February 7: Politics

- Frederick Wakeman, “Confucian Fascism.” [JSTOR]
- Arif Dirlik, “Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution” [JSTOR]
- *Primary Source*: Liu Shaoqi, “How to be a good Communist” [T-learn]
- *Primary Source*: Mao Zedong, “Thoughts on the Yan’an Forum” [T-learn]
  - i. **Primary source paper due**

#### February 14: The National Body

- Susan Brownell, *Training the Body for China* (selections) [T-learn]
- Andrew Norris, *Colonial Project, National Game* (selections) [T-learn]
- *Primary Source*: Wang Zheng, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment* (Lu Lihua’s Oral History) [T-learn]
- *Primary Source*: Ling Long magazine  
[https://exhibitions.cul.columbia.edu/exhibits/show/linglong/about\\_linglong/woman](https://exhibitions.cul.columbia.edu/exhibits/show/linglong/about_linglong/woman)

#### February 21: Peasant Nationalism

- Paul Cohen, *History in Three Keys* (selections) [T-learn]
- Kate Merkel-Hess, *The Rural Modern* (selections) [T-learn]
- *Primary Source* “The Cause of Riots in the Yangtse Valley” (1891)  
[https://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/cause\\_of\\_the\\_riots/cr\\_book\\_01.html](https://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/cause_of_the_riots/cr_book_01.html)
  - i. **Presentation and proposal with annotated bibliography**

#### February 28: Information and knowledge in identity-construction

- Gina Tam, “Collecting the Folk: Fieldwork in Translation in the Folksong Collection Movement” (Working Paper) [T-learn]
- Tong Lam, *A Passion for Facts* (Selections) [T-learn]
  - i. **Outline due**

### **March 7: Frontier Nationalism**

- Rian Thum, “Modular History: Identity Maintenance before Uyghur Nationalism.” (2012) [JSTOR]
- Sebastian Veg, “Tibet, Nationalism, and Modernity: Two Chinese Contributions” (2009) [JSTOR]
- *Primary Source: TBD*

### **March 21: Urban modern**

- Ruth Rogaski. Hygienic Modernity: Meanings of Health and Disease in Treaty- Port China. (2004) [T-learn]
- Joshua Fogel. “The Recent Boom in Shanghai Studies” (2010) [JSTOR]
- *Primary Source: Modern Sketch*  
[https://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/modern\\_sketch/ms\\_essay01.html](https://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/modern_sketch/ms_essay01.html)
  - i. **First five pages due by March 20 at 5 PM**

### **March 28: Globalism**

- Emma Teng, *Eurasian* (Selections) [T-learn]
- Maxine Hong Kingston, *Woman Warrior* (selections) [T-learn]

**No class April 4: Work on your papers**

**Note: Rough Drafts due by April 8 at midnight. Peer reviews will be completed in class.**

**April 11: Peer reviews**

### **April 18: Manchuria and the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity sphere**

- Thomas Mullaney, “Controlling the Kanjisphere: the rise of the Sino-Japanese typewriter and the birth of CJK” [JSTOR]
- Rana Mitter, “Classifying Citizens in Nationalist China” [JSTOR]
- *Primary Source: Manchu girl* [T-learn]

### **April 25: Legacies**

- Wang Zheng, *Never Forget National Humiliation* (Selections) [T-learn]
- *Primary Source: Wolf Warrior II* [TriniTV]

**Final Paper due May 2**