**Syllabus (Fall 2009)**

**HIS1673-H, Critical Historiography of Late Imperial and Modern China**  
**Instructor: Professor Li Chen**  
Office: UTSC Faculty Office, Department of History, Sydney Smith Hall  
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Class Time: Wed. 10 – 12:00; Location: University College 51 (at 15 King’s College Circle)

**Course Description and Objectives:**
This course introduces students to a host of important topics concerning late imperial and modern Chinese history. It covers major issues and debates related to history and theory, Orientalism and postcolonial theories, gender studies, urban studies, civil society and public sphere, print culture, history of emotions, nationalism, material culture and everyday life, literary history, subaltern studies, and globalization. Mindful of the traditional approaches, these topics will be discussed through comparative and global perspectives and through the lens of more recent historiographic theories and debates. All the readings are selected to reflect both the cutting-edge scholarship on the topics and the important methodological questions at issue. Students will be asked to write reaction papers (3 pages long). Students can opt to write and present a substantive research paper on a topic of Chinese history with the instructor’s approval.

**Requirements:**
Attendance, class preparation, and active participation in class discussion are required of all students. The quality of participation is valued more than the quantity.

Except for those who opt to write a research paper, all students will write and turn in a **3-page-long reflection essay for at least SIX (6) weeks** based on the weekly readings. Each essay should be double-spaced, with font equivalent to 12 Times New Roman and at least 1-inch margins on all sides. Rather than just a summary of the readings, each essay should be a concise synthesis and critique of the arguments, debates, and historiographic issues covered in the readings for that week. Important things I am looking for in the essays include the ability to identify, connect, and analyze the key issues/arguments in the different readings of that week and to organize the analysis coherently. There is no uniform format for this, and one way is to start with a very brief summary of the readings (or their overarching themes) before comparing and critiquing their similarities/differences and strengths/weaknesses. When writing for the later weeks, you could also reference to prior readings/discussions in your essay. Depending on the size of the class, each student might be asked to sign up for six weeks.

Those who prefer to write a research paper are required to turn in TWO such reflection essays. The research paper should be **15-20 pages (double-spaced) long.** It can be an original research paper or a fairly extensive critical analysis of some important issues in China historiography. In either case, the quality of the research and analysis is the key. **This option should be made within the first two weeks.**

**Grading policy:**
(1) Attendance & Class Participation: 40%  
Reflection Essays: 6*10%=60%
(2) **For those who opt to write a research paper:**  
Attendance & Class Participation: 40%  
Reflection Essays: 2*10=20%  
Research Paper: 40%

**Readings:**
- Except for those indicated as “References,” all readings listed below are required for this course.  
All required books are put on reserve in the Robarts Library for short-term loan. Journal articles are available from U of T Library’s electronic databases.
- **Please note:** The reading assignments are subject to change with advance notice.
Here is how you can find the call number of the books on reserve or the e-links to the journal articles:
(1) Please first go to U of T Library’s Website, (2) click “Research” at the top, (3) then click “Find Books,” (4) then choose “Course Reserves,” (5) and you can click the “Course Code” and type in “HIS1673,” or the instructor’s name “Chen, Li,” or the Course Name “Critical Historiography of Late Imperial and Modern China.”

For the book excerpts underlined below, I will also make PDF files available through Blackboard.

I have ordered the following books through the Women’s Bookstore (Located at 73 Harbor Street, Toronto, Telephone: 416-922-8744; 1800-861-8233). These recent publications have been selected mostly as the major works on a particular topic and thus I would strongly recommend that you purchase them, especially if you are or will pursue a Ph.D. in Chinese history or Chinese studies. Please call the bookstore in advance about the availability.

Robert Young, White Mythologies: Writing History and the West (New York: Routledge, 1994).
Prasenjit Duara, Rescuing History from the Nation (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).
Dorothy Ko, Cinderella’s Sisters: A Revisionist History of Footbinding (University of California Press, 2005).
S. Cochran, Inventing Nanjing Road: Commercial Culture in Shanghai, 1900-1945 (Ithaca: East Asia Program Cornell University, 1999).
David Wang, Fin-de-Siecle: Repressed Modernity in Late Qing Fiction (Stanford University Press, 1997).

Week 1 (Sept. 9): Introduction.

Week 2 (Sept. 16): Debates on History and Theory
Prasenjit Duara, "Why is History anti-theoretical?" Modern China 24, No. 2 (April 1998): 105-120 [available on-line at JSTOR]*
Exchange between Esherick and Hevia:*

References:

Week 3 (Sept. 23): Orientalism and Chinese Historiography
Edward Said, Orientalism (New York: Pantheon, 1978), 1-110


**References:**


**Week 4 (Sept. 30): Problematics of “National” History**


**References:**


Week 5 (Oct. 7): Rethinking of Gender and Studies of Chinese Women


Dorothy Ko, Cinderella's Sisters: A Revisionist History of Footbinding (University of California Press, 2005), 1-229.

References:


Dorothy Ko, Teachers of the Inner Chambers, Women and Culture in Seventeenth-Century China (Stanford University Press, 1995)


Dorothy Ko and Wang Zheng, eds., Translating Feminisms in China (Blackwell Pub. Ltd., 2007)

Week 6 (Oct. 14): History of Civil Society and Public Sphere in China


William T. Rowe, “The Problem of ‘Civil Society’ in Late Imperial China,” Modern China 19, No. 2 (April 1993), 139-57.


References:
Philip C. C. Huang, "Public Sphere"/"Civil Society" in China?: The Third Realm between State and Society,” Modern China 19, No. 2 (Apr. 1993): 216-240. (Recommended)

Frederic Wakeman, Jr., “Boundaries of the Public Sphere in Ming and Qing China,” Daedalus 127, No. 3, Early Modernities (Summer 1998): 167-189

William T. Rowe, “The Public Sphere in Modern China The Public Sphere in Modern China,” Modern China 16, No. 3 (Jul., 1990): 309-329.


Week 7 (Oct. 21): City as a Historical Text and Practice


S. Cochran, Inventing Nanjing Road: Commercial Culture in Shanghai, 1900-1945 (Ithaca: East Asia Program Cornell University, 1999), Excerpt TBA.

Another reading TBA.
References:
Yue Meng, *Shanghai and the Edges of Empire* (Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2006).

Week 8 (Oct. 28): History through Literature

References:
Lydia Liu, *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity – China, 1900-1937*.

Week 9 (Nov. 4): History of the Subjective (Affect/Emotion/Sensibility)

References:

**Week 10 (Nov. 11): Everyday Life and Material Culture**

**References:**
John Lufrano, *Honorable Merchants: Commerce and Self-Cultivation in Late Imperial China* (Columbia University Press, 1996)

**Week 11 (Nov. 18): Print Culture and the History of the Book/Reading/Authorship**

**References:**
Cynthia J. Brokaw and Kai-wing Chow, *Printing and Book Culture in Late Imperial China* (University of California Press, 2005).


**Week 12 (Nov. 25): Subaltern Studies**


**References:**


**Week 13 (Dec. 2): Globalization and Chinese History**


References:
R. Bin Wong, China Transformed: Historical Change and the Limits of European Experience, 1-206.

Week 14 (Dec. 9): Topic TBA