

CRN 36424/36425 Spring 2017
276 ED
Wednesdays, 2-4:50

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Office: 331 MCK
Office Hours: Mondays 3:30-5:30pm

History 410/510: “Mao and Maoism in China and the World”

This class examines the historical Mao Zedong and his evolving ideas of revolution, in the interlinked contexts of modern Chinese and global history. We will examine Mao and Maoist theory and practice in terms of Communist revolution and governance in China. The class also looks beyond China to examine Maoism, images of Mao, and Maoist revolutionary movements in global circulation in a variety of political and geographic contexts. We will also examine the legacies of Maoism in the post-Mao “reform” era. The class takes contradictions between theory and practice, and conflicting representations of events and politics as a call for nuanced reflection and interpretation.

***Prerequisite for 410:** a prior class in modern history with interpretive writing, or a class that involves critical interpretation of theoretical or modern literary texts. If you do not have this prerequisite, you need permission from the instructor.

Class Format: This is a colloquium, focusing on seminar-style discussion (no lecture). Students will rotate responsibility for helping to facilitate class discussion by preparing key questions. Attendance and active reading and participation in discussion are required for success in this course. All readings must be completed for the date under which they appear in this syllabus. Grading reflects the expectation that all students read, think about, and discuss in class the assigned selections. *You should bring readings to class for easy reference to the texts you will be discussing.*

Requirements and Grading for 410: Grades are based on a one-hour midterm taken in a portion of class in Week 5, and a take-home final, each counting 25%. There are two 2-3 pp. papers (10% each). The first paper is due in class in Week 2 (see directions in schedule below for Week 2). Class participation counts for the remaining 30% of your grade (this is based on attendance 10%; informed discussion 10%; and weekly one-page “reaction papers” which are due in class on readings for all weeks that do not have another paper assigned).

HIST 597 Requirements (Graduates): Graduate students will participate in the regular Wednesday classes, make short in-class presentations, and have additional readings TBA. In addition graduate students will write three short (3-4pp.) papers, and write a longer critical book review. The first of the papers should follow the topic guidelines specified for Week 2. The other two short papers, which should offer a critical, topically-focused, synthesis of the assigned primary and secondary materials, may be turned in on weeks of your choice, on the dates for the assigned readings. In addition, a 5 page critical book review is due on June 12, on one of the books listed at the end of the syllabus.

Required Texts

•Timothy Cheek, ed., *A Critical Introduction to Mao* (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

- Timothy Cheek, ed., *Mao Zedong and China's Revolutions: A Brief History with Documents* (New York: Bedford/St. Martins, 2002)
- Rebecca Karl, *Mao Zedong and China in the Twentieth Century World: A Concise History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010).
- Maurice Meisner, *Mao Zedong* (Polity, 2007)
- Jeremy Brown and Matthew Johnson, eds. *Maoism at the Grassroots: Everyday Life in China's Era of High Socialism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015)**
- Alexander Cook, ed., *Mao's Little Red Book: A Global History* (Cambridge University Press, 2014)

Week 1 (April 5): Introducing Mao: Why Study Him?

Introductory discussion and film clips.

Week 2 (April 12): Divergent Biographies: What Constitutes Historical Responsibility, and What Makes an "Academic Scandal"?

Readings for April 12:

*Gregor Benton and Lin Chun, eds., *Was Mao a Monster?: The Academic Response to Chang and Halliday's Mao, the Unknown Story* (Routledge, 2010). pp. 1-29; 43-63 (Introduction, essays by Davin, Benton/Tsang, Nathan, Cheek). (on Canvas)

- Timothy Cheek, ed., *Critical Introduction to Mao*, pp. 1-30
- Jung Chang and Halliday, *Mao, the Unknown Story* (selection + footnotes on Canvas)

*2-page paper [3pp. for 510]: Why do the historians criticize Jung and Halliday? What are the key problems they raise? What do they suggest are the important questions to ask about Mao as a historical figure? Evaluate the Chang and Halliday selection. **Due in class on April 12.*

Week 3 (April 19): Approaching Mao, his Early Writings, Their Times (I)

- Rebecca Karl, *Mao Zedong and China in the Twentieth-Century World*, preface and pp. 1-34.
- Maurice Meisner, *Mao Zedong*, preface and pp. 25-41.
- Mao Zedong, "The Great Union of the Popular Masses" (1919), in Stuart Schram, ed. *Mao's Road to Power: Revolutionary Writings, 1912-1949*, pp. 378-389. [Canvas]
- Mao Zedong, "Commentary on the Suicide of Miss Zhao" and related essays on the Zhao Wuzhen suicide and the marriage question, in Stuart Schram, ed., *Mao's Road to Power*, pp. 378-444. [Canvas]
- "Report on the Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan" (March 1927) in Cheek, *Mao Zedong and China's Revolutions*, pp. 41-75.

Reaction papers should focus on the shifting focus of Mao's writing/thinking, in context, particularly the shift between the earlier writings and the 1927 report.

Week 4 (April 26): A Revolutionary Journey

- Karl 35-97
- Meisner 42-71
- “Oppose Book Worship,” (1930), *Selected Readings from the Works of Mao*, Just read Sections I,II,VI, and VII (pp. 40, 46-47). [Canvas]
- “Be Concerned with the Well-Being of the Masses,” (1934) [Canvas, in same pdf. file w/ book worship], pp. 51-56.
- “On New Democracy” (1940), in Cheek, *Mao Zedong and China’s Revolutions*, pp. 76-112.
- “The Chinese People Have Stood Up,” (1949), in Cheek, pp. 125-127
- “On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People,” (1957), in Cheek, *Mao Zedong and China’s Revolutions*, pp. 128-159.

Questions for reflection: Using Karl and Cheek for reference, note the historical context for each of the assigned writings by Mao, and consider his target audience. What is he saying in each text? Compare Mao’s discussions of violence in the 1927 report and in his 1957 essay on handling “contradictions among the people.” How are the approaches similar/different, and how might you account for this difference?

Week 5 (May 3): The Great Leap and Maoist Economics

- Karl: 99-116
- Maurice Meisner, *Mao Zedong*, pp. 119-160 (Land Reform-Utopianism).
- Li Zhisui, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*, pp. 268-312 [Canvas]
- “On Correctly Handling Contradictions Among the People (February 27, 1957), in Cheek, pp. 112-117.
- Mao, “Talks at the Beidaihe Conference” (1958), in Cheek, pp. 160-166.

Questions for reflection: Consider differences between Karl and Meisner’s accounts of the Great Leap. Then consider the Li Zhisui’s exposé of Mao’s “private life.” Come prepared to discuss the events and the effect of different lenses on Mao as head of state.

**410 MIDTERM

Week 6 (May 10): The Cultural Revolution

- Karl: 117-158
- Teiwes, “Mao and his Followers,” in Cheek, *A Critical Introduction*, pp. 129-157.
- Sigrid Schmalzer, “Youth and the ‘Great Revolutionary Movement of Scientific Experiment in 1960s-1970s Rural China,” pp. 154-178; Michael Schoenhals, “China’s ‘Great Proletarian Information Revolution’ of 1966-67,” pp. 230-258; S. A. Smith, “Redemptive Societies and the Communist State,” 340-364; and Vivienne Shue, “Epilogue,” 365-379, in Jeremy Brown and M. Johnson, eds. *Maoism at the Grassroots*.
- “Cultural Revolution Readings,” in Cheek, *Mao Zedong and China’s Revolutions*, pp. 169-179