History 767: War and Society in Modern East Asian History

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Purport:

This seminar will explore the military origins of the modern nation-state in China with a focus on the period from the late 19th century to the 1950s. Major issues include the Manchu conquest of Ming China, the colonization of frontier regions in early modern China, the rebellions and militarization of 19th century China, the Republican Revolution and the rise of warlordism, the Civil War and the Japanese invasions, the victory of the CCP, and Chinese involvement in the Korean War (1950-1953). Paper topics are open-ended, but should involve the issue of “human conflict” in modern China.

Weekly Participation (40%):
You are expected to attend each class, having read and considered the required readings as well as some of the recommended readings. As you read these works, think about the argument being advanced, the kinds of supporting evidence used, and the place of the work in the larger historiographic context. You are expected to contribute to class discussions about the readings. 50% of the participation mark will be based on attendance and 50% on the quality of your contribution. If you miss a class without notifying the instructor in advance (and without providing a reasonable excuse), you will be penalized.

Research Essay (60%): MA and PhD students are responsible for writing a research paper (historiographic essays) on war and society in modern China. If students choose the latter, they must use primary sources. Topics must be approved by the instructor.

Length: 20-25 pages. (Due on April 20th)

Due: TBA

All assignments must follow formal academic (Chicago Style) conventions and use end notes or footnotes (I prefer footnotes). Do not use internal citations. Assignments are due on the dates specified in the syllabus and a penalty of 3% a day (including weekends) will be imposed on late papers.

Email addresses: It is the policy of the Faculty of Humanities that all email communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail accounts. The
and confirms the identity of the student. Instructors will delete messages that do not originate from a McMaster email account.

**Academic Integrity:** You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at [http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity)

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

**Course Modifications:** The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

**Recommended Textbooks on East Asia**


**Course Outline**

**Week I (Jan 10): “From Empire to Nation in modern Chinese history”**

Documentary Film: *China a Century of Revolution*

**Week II (Jan 17): Approaches and Theoretical Frameworks**


**Week III (Jan 24). Warfare and Empire-building in Early Modern China**


<Recommended>


**Week IV (Jan 31). Rebellion and the Militarization of Chinese Society**


<Recommended>


Week V (Feb 7). War with Modern Powers

Lovell, Julia. *The Opium War: Drugs, Dreams, and the Making of Modern China*. Picador, 2012 (Selected chapters)


<Recommended>


Week VI (Feb 14). “Warlordism” in Modern China


Week VII (Feb 21): No Class

Week VIII (Feb 28): War in the making of Modern China


<Recommended>


<Recommended>

Week X (March 14) The Rape of Nanking


James Burnham Sedgwick. “Memory on Trial: Constructing and Contesting the 'Rape of Nanking' at the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, 1946-1948.” Modern Asian Studies, Vol. 43, No. 5 (Sep., 2009), pp. 1229-1254


<Recommended>


Week IX (Mar 21): The Nationalist Party (GMD) vs. The Communist Party (CCP)


<Recommended>


**Week XI (March 28). The Korean War, 1950-53**


<Recommended>


**Week XII (Apr 4): Review.**