

CHINESE CULTURE AND SOCIETY

FALL 2020, TSINGHUA UNIVERSITY

YUAN XIANXIN, Department of Chinese Language and Literature

Tuesdays 13:30-15:05, CST

Room 6A213

OPENING QUESTIONS

- What first comes to your mind when you think of Chinese culture and society?
- What background do you have that you feel might connect with this course?
- What do you hope to get out of this course? Why you registered this course?

TO THINK ABOUT CHINA...



👉 The result of searching images about “China” on www.bing.com

TO THINK ABOUT CHINA...

- Long-lasting history and civilization
- Rapid economic growth and modernization in last three decades; “world’s factory”; a rising global power
- Revolution and Socialist experiment in last century

👉 **CONTINUITY** and **DISCONTINUITY** in thinking over Chinese culture and society

PURPOSES OF THIS COURSE

- NOT TO provide a comprehensive overview of Chinese culture and society;
- BUT TO offer an analytical sketch of **some key features and issues** of Chinese culture and society;
- AND TO familiarize students with some **major sources and representative studies** on Chinese culture and society.

TEACHING TEAM

INSTRUCTOR

YUAN Xianxin 袁先欣

yuanxx@mail.tsinghua.edu.cn

Field: Modern Chinese
literature

Office Hour: Tuesdays 16:00-
17:00 CST and by appointment

GAO Jin 高瑾

gaojin@tsinghua.edu.cn

Field: Comparative literature

Office Hour: by appointment



TEACHING TEAM

GUEST SPEAKER

FENG Naixi 冯乃希

Post-doctoral fellow, Tsinghua
Institute of Advanced Studies
in Humanities and Social
Science

In charge of Week 8

TEACHING ASSISTANT

Jocelyn Wong 王芷茵

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MIN Ji Hye 闵智惠

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TEACHING METHOD

- Please be aware: **students should attend all classes from Week 1-14.**
- **First class:** Lecture (no preparation required)
- **Week 2-14: Seminar**
 - All students should read required readings before class.
 - In each class (except for Week 1, 8 and 15) **two students** will give presentation **introducing and commenting on (one of) the required readings**. The presenters are encouraged to consult the whole book and other readings under the same topic.
 - Presentation (**15-20 mins**), Q & A (unlimited)
- **Week 15: Writing workshop (voluntary attendance)**

TEACHING METHOD

- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most registered students will not be able to physically come to the classroom. In this sense, we will conduct this course in a hybrid interactive way.
- For students stay on campus: required to show up at classroom.
- For students currently outside mainland China: required to attend online classes. You may find access on WebLearning--Online Courses.
- If you do have problems to attend online classes at China standard time: please contact TAs with clear explanation. With instructors' approval, you may learn through the replay at RainClassroom. You are also required to send a summary (no less than 250 words) of the content taught at classes every week to TAs. Written summaries will be collected as your record of attendance.

WEB LEARNING

 清华大学
Tsinghua University

网络学堂
WEB LEARNING

袁先欣 ▾ ⚙ Settings 🔍 Course Search 中文 ? Help 🚪 Logout

[Homepage](#) 

 Notices

 Overview

 Documents

 Works

 Discussions

 Q&A

 Notes

 Grades

 Email

 Students Activity

 Online Courses

More  Students Groups Students Interface Instructors Interface Instructors Setting Course Import Course MergingChinese Culture and Society (60610082-0)

Time and Location: Section 4 of Tues (Week all), 六数6A213

 Notices

Join our WeChat Group 2020-09-14 👁 40

Survey about the Mode of Attendance 2020-09-11 👁 57

 Works

Title	Uncommitted / Submitted	Deadline(GMT+8)
		
You hadn't assign any coursework. Click here to assign coursework		

 Documents

Patricia Buckley Ebrey - The Cambri...	Recommended...	pdf	129.0M	👁 0
Syllabus		docx	31K	👁 0
Arif Dirlik Timespace, Social Space...	Recommended...	pdf	1.0M	👁 0

 Q&A

 Query Regarding Procedure to take...
亚茹碧 | 2020-09-08  Reply

 Discussions

You may access Web Learning from <http://learn.tsinghua.edu.cn>; or log in <http://info.tsinghua.edu.cn>, then go to “Web learning” on the left side bar menu.

10

Homepage

Notices

Overview

Documents

Works

Discussions

Q&A

Notes

Grades

Email

Students Activity

Online Courses

More

Students

Groups

Students Interface

Instructors Interface

Instructors Setting

Course Import

Course Merging

Chinese Culture and Society (60610082-0)

Search in my course

Search

Online Courses

+ New online course

Teachers can create a schedule for online courses, and students can browse the schedule and enter the meeting.

Expand

Courses Unclosed

Courses Closed

No.	Starts(GMT+8)	Weeks	Assign to	Topic	Type	No./PW	Action
1	2020-09-15 13:30 10:14:30	第一周 周二 第三节	全体学生-全体	Chinese Culture and Society	腾讯会议	697 9435 2376	Join Del
2	2020-09-15 13:30 10:14:30	第一周 周二 第三节	全体学生-全体	Week 1	雨课堂		Join Del

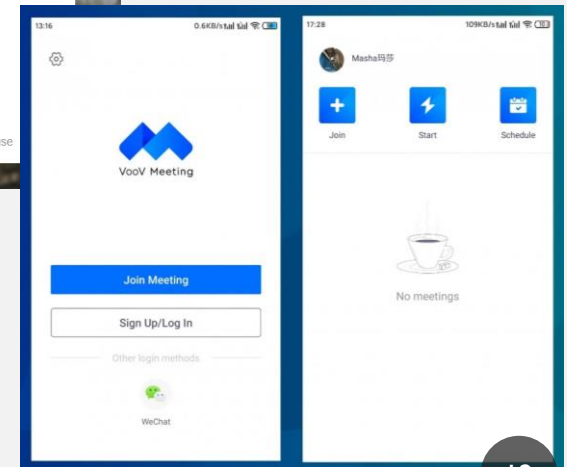
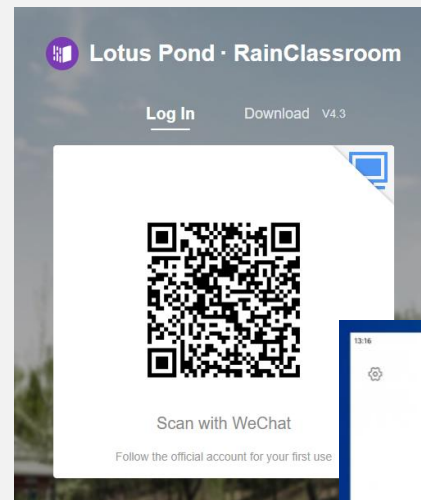
2 results in total

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*** Use WebLearning properly:** you may find the syllabus, all reading materials, important notices, online class access & etc. on it. Your assignments will also be submitted to WebLearning-Works.

ONLINE CLASS TOOLS

- We will use **RainClassroom** + **Tencent Meeting** to conduct the online classes.
- **RainClassroom:**
pro.yuketang.cn
 - Watch on-site live; read slides; replay
- **Tencent Meeting/VooV Meeting**
 - Watch on-site live; ask questions; presentations; discussions



WECHAT GROUP



2020_Chi Culture
and Society



Valid until 9/21 and will update upon joining group

- We invite all registered students to join our wechat group.
- You may communicate with TA conveniently here and get latest updates of our course.

GRADING & ASSESSMENT

CLASS ATTENDANCE 20%

- **Mandatory attendance from Week 1-14**
 - On-campus students: Sign-up Sheet
 - Off-campus students: Online class attendance record by TA
 - Off-campus students who are unable to attend online classes at CST: written summary each week (250 words)
- Ask for Leave (max. 3 times)

GRADING & ASSESSMENT

- **PRESENTATION OR ACADEMIC BOOK REVIEW 30%**
 - 24 students give presentation on required readings (please register with TA; first come, first served)
 - Other students submit an academic book review before Nov. 17. (Choose one of all assigned readings; word count: no less than 1500 words)
- **FINAL PAPER 50%**
 - Choose one of the topics discussed in this course to write an academic paper and submit before Jan 4, 2021.
 - Word count (excluding bibliography): no less than 3000 words; MLA format

SCHEDULE

Week	Topic	Instructor
Wk 1, Sept. 15	Introduction: The Question of Chinese Culture	YUAN
Wk 2, Sept. 22	Who is Confucius?	GAO
Wk 3, Sept. 29	Warring States Philosophy: Besides Confucius	GAO
Wk 4, Oct. 6	The Early Empire 1: Institutions, Ideology and Ritual Practice in the Qin and Han	GAO
Wk 5, Oct. 13	The Early Empire 2: Art and Politics in the Han	GAO
Wk 6, Oct. 20	The Tang Dynasty: China's Cosmopolitan Empire	GAO
Wk 7, Oct. 27	Culture and Political Pursuits in the Song Dynasty	GAO
Wk 8, Nov. 3	Society and Empire in Late Imperial China	FENG

SCHEDULE

Week	Topic	Instructor
Wk 9, Nov. 10	From Empire to Nation-State	YUAN
Wk 10, Nov. 17	May Fourth and Script Reform	YUAN
Wk 11, Nov. 24	Rural, Colonial, and the Probability of Revolution	YUAN
Wk 12, Dec. 1	Ethnicity and Nationalities	YUAN
Wk 13, Dec. 8	Gender	YUAN
Wk 14, Dec. 15	Post-Revolution	YUAN
Wk 15, Dec. 22	Writing Workshop	YUAN



**American
Chinese
Studies**



**European
Sinology**



**Japanese
Tōyōgaku
東洋学**



Traditions of studies on China



James Legge, 1815-1897



Paul Pelliot, 1878-1945



Matteo Ricci, 1552-1610



Shiratori Kurakichi 白鳥庫
吉
1865-1942



Naitō Konan 内藤湖南
1866-1934



Aoki Masaru 青木正児
1887-1964



Oven Lattimore, 1900-1989



John K. Fairbank, 1907-1991

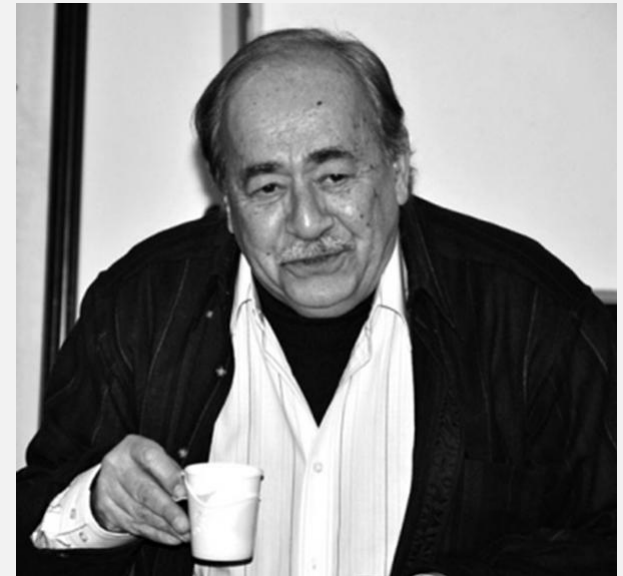


Philip A. Kuhn, 1933-2016

INTRODUCTION: THE QUESTION OF CHINESE CULTURE

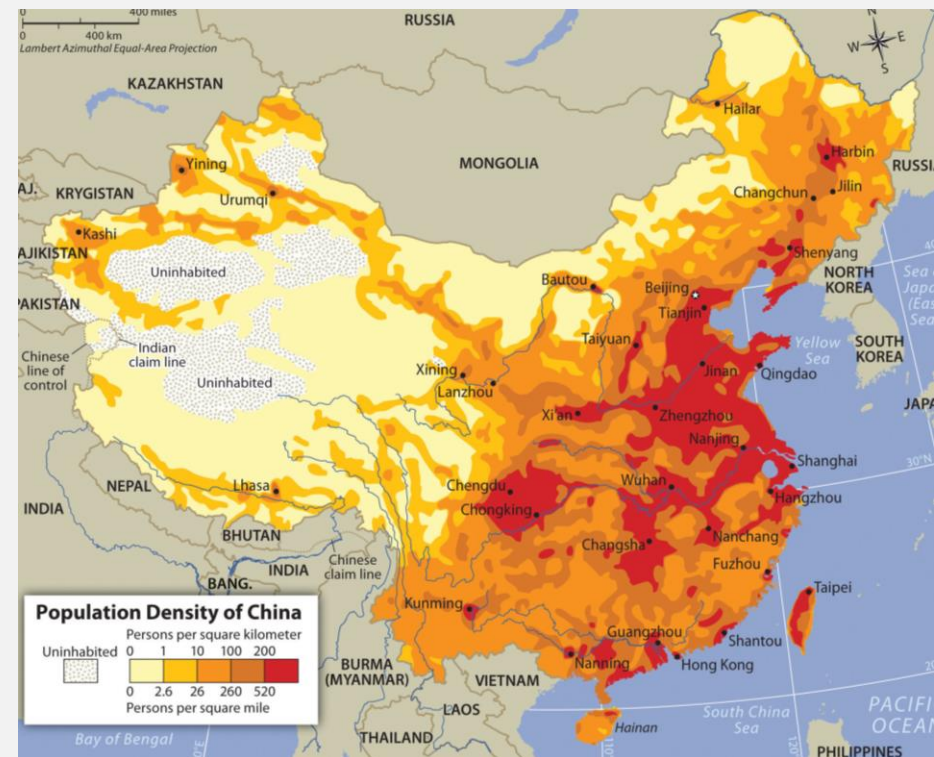
Recommended Readings:

- ▣ Arif Dirlik, “Timespace, Social Space and the Question of Chinese Culture”, *Monumenta Serica* Vol. 54 (2006), pp. 417-433
- ▣ Patricia B. Ebrey, *The Cambridge Illustrated History of China*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996, reprinted in 2000

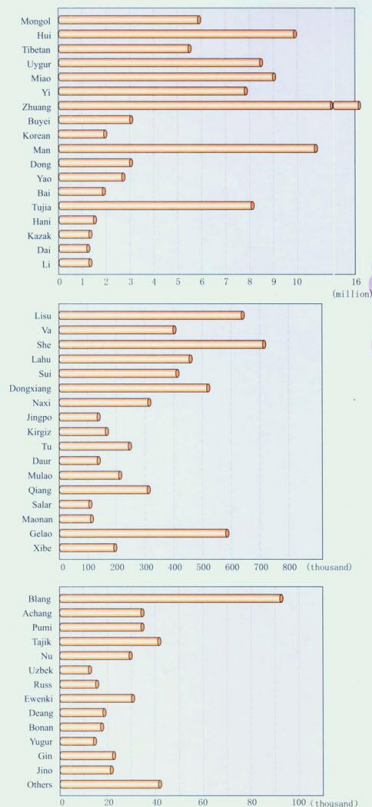


Arif Dirlik, 1940-2017

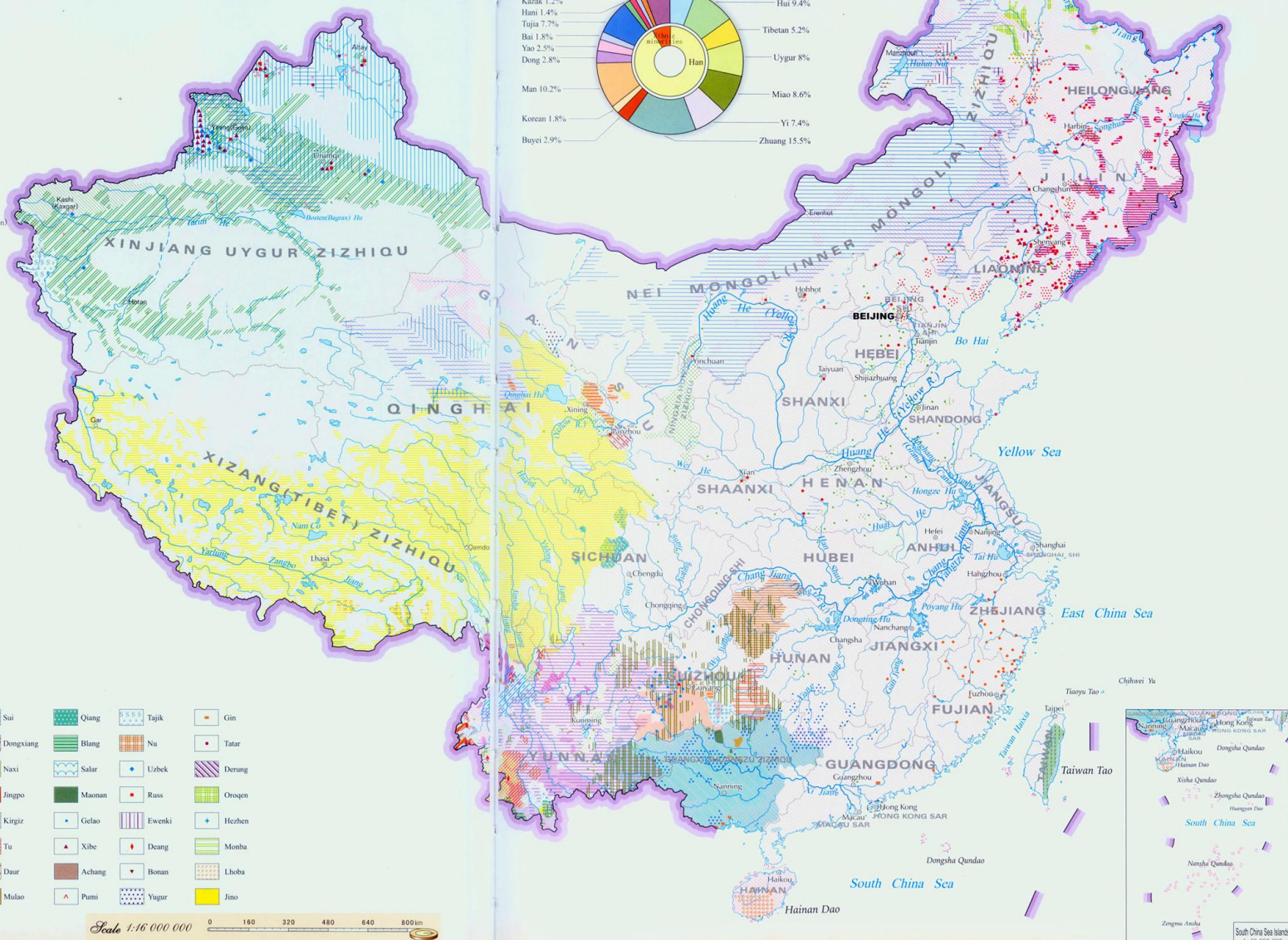
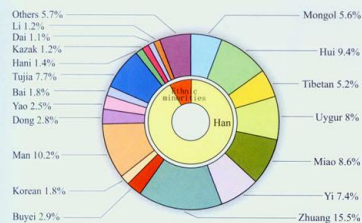
WHAT IS CHINA?



Population of ethnic minorities



Ethnic composition



THE DYNASTIES SONG



HISTORICAL CHANGE IN CHINESE TERRITORY

1600 BC



WHAT IS CHINESE CULTURE

Is there **ONE** Chinese culture?

- “To say that we call Chinese culture is complicated, that it is subject to immense variation over time and space, and that it is inflected differently depending on social location is to state the obvious. And yet that has not, and does **not**, seem to **deter anyone in China or abroad from speaking as if there were only on Chinese culture**. Chinese and non-Chinese alike continue to speak about a Chinese culture of long duration which marks all the people we describe as Chinese who in turn participate in the propagation of that culture.” (Arif Dirlik, “Timespace, Social Space and the Question of Chinese Culture”, 417)
- “Contact zone” of social space

WHAT IS CHINESE CULTURE

- The **traditional account** of the formation of Chinese civilization:
 - Civilization **radiating from a center toward peripheries** where barbarism gradually takes over, defining the limits of the world worth knowing.
 - **The inside and the outside interact** in producing the cultural formation
- The **nationalist** historiography
 - China civilization appears as a radiation in time and space from a Yellow River core, fulfilling its destiny in the occupation and transformation of the area that the nation claims as its own.
 - Han's cultural dominance or even superiority over other ethnicities; Unclearly recognition of regional difference

WHAT IS CHINESE CULTURE

- Challenges toward an unchanging culturist image of China:
 - An identifiable “Chineseness” or Chinese culture; **a civilization with “great tradition” continuous** from the earliest times to the present
- Recent scholarship to place territorial and maritime frontiers at the center:
 - “The reason Han ethnicity provided the dominant strain in the Chinese nation, and constituted one of the most populous and powerful ethnicities globally, was its ability to ceaselessly absorb other groups of people. ... the author offers a justification of Han-centrism, which here qualifies for the place it holds in Chinese history not because it assimilates others, but because it absorbs them, gathering in cultural and political strength through the very absorption of difference.”
(Dirlik, 425)

WHAT IS CHINESE CULTURE

- The paradox of “rescuing history from the nation”
 - “From a historiographical perspective, **a national perspective on the past**, including the national past, is **woefully inadequate as some of the most important forces in the shaping of the past transcend national boundaries.**” (A. Dirlik, 428)
 - “**The denial of the nation is also simplistic**, however, because it **does not recognize that the nation itself is historical**, which may make the national space into an ‘artifice of history’, it nevertheless carries all the force of a historical reality.” (A. Dirlik, 428)

WHAT IS CHINESE CULTURE

- The challenges in forming a non-reductionist analysis of culture:
 - Associating culture with **civilization**: historically tied with **elites**, always with **philosophical and religious traditions that are largely transnational**, such as Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism
 - Nationalist paradigm: created an urge to identify essence. However, “the national cultural project also **must open up** to the culture of the population, which brings into its interior **the difference that are built into the social constitution of the nation**...from spatial to social differences, and difference in the practice of everyday life.” (A. Dirlik, 429)

WHAT IS CHINESE CULTURE

- The necessity of **avoiding of attaching culture to homogenizing conceptions of people and territory**.
 - “A concomitant of this tendency is the urge to find a essence that serve to fulfill this relationship by defining a common identity for the people and territory thus conceived.” (A. Dirlik, 430)
- How to face the challenge presented by **transnationality** in our conceptualization of historical processes.
 - Transnational but not world-wide; transnational as translocal
- To reconceive nations and civilizations not as homogenous units but as **historical ecumenes**.
 - Ecumene: areas of intense and sustained cultural interaction