EAST 303
Borderlands of Modern China
Fall 2021
T/TH 4:05-5:25 PM
Location: 688 Sherbrooke, Room 491
McGill University

INSTRUCTOR
Dr. David Porter
Office: Ferrier 330
Office Hours: Friday 1:45 PM – 3:45 – available in person OR by Zoom
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OVERVIEW
This lecture course explores how China came to acquire its current shape and population through centuries of imperial conquest, colonial expansion, and cross-ethnic alliance building along its northwestern and southwestern borders. Beginning around 1600, with the rise of the Manchu-dominated Qing dynasty along the Ming state's northeastern frontiers, the course continues to the present day, as the People's Republic of China imposes new forms (but not without historical analogs) of forcible cultural assimilation and policies designed to suppress distinctive forms of ethnic, religious, and linguistic identity in regions like Xinjiang, Tibet, Hong Kong and Inner Mongolia. We will first investigate how and why the Qing empire extended its borders far into Inner Asia and deepened control of regions like Guizhou and Taiwan, with close cultural and historical links to Southeast Asia and largely non-Han populations. The course will then explore how Chinese intellectuals and political figures, mostly Han, in the late Qing and Republic of China, transformed territories conquered by the armies of a Manchu dynasty into integral parts of their idea of China. Finally, we will look at the development of the PRC as a self-consciously multiethnic state and the spread of revolutionary ideas under social and economic conditions far different from those that prevailed in the Han-dominated center. Throughout the course, students will learn how Manchus, Mongols, Tibetans, Uyghurs, Dai, Miao, Zhuang and other non-Han groups from the outlying zones of China-based states have contributed to, resisted, and experienced their incorporation into those states. Conversely, we will consider how Han settlers in these regions and writers from outside them have made sense of their relationship to China. Moreover, we will see how distinct forms of Han identity have developed in borderlands like Taiwan and Hong Kong.

COURSE GOALS
You will leave this course with an understanding of the immense diversity of the contemporary People's Republic of China and the imperial roots (both historical and present) of that diversity. You will be able to explain the historical roots of issues of immense importance today, from the question of Taiwan's political status to the internment of hundreds of thousands of Uyghurs to the protest movement in Hong Kong. And you will have an appreciation for the tension that exists, both now and in the past, between two visions of China: as a nation-state for the Han people and as a multi-ethnic polity that incorporates different peoples as partners in a shared political project.

In addition, you will develop some of the skills that are central to doing historical scholarship, but also will serve you well in nearly any job that relies on your intellectual labor. In particular, you will learn to read critically both primary sources and the writing of scholars. To put it in more concrete terms, you will both read material that was not designed with a reader like you in mind and extract valuable information from it and read works written to argue for a particular interpretation in order to comprehend that argument and assess its strengths and weaknesses. You will learn to synthesize and digest large amounts of information and explain it succinctly, as you will be asked to do in your midterm essay. But you will also learn to use sources to build an argument, as you will be asked to do in your paper.

**READINGS**

All readings will be available online via MyCourses.

**COURSE STRUCTURE**

We will meet two days per week and class sessions will include both lecture and discussion. Students are expected to have read the assigned readings (or watched the assigned film) for each class session in advance, in order to be well-prepared to discuss those readings during class.

**ASSESSMENT**

**Map Quiz (5%)**

We will have a quiz on **September 16** to ensure that you have basic familiarity with the geography of China. This is aimed at helping you contextualize the information that you encounter during the entire course. A guide to the quiz will be posted on MyCourses one week in advance – you will be expected to have familiarity with the names and locations of the provinces, important cities, and major features of the physical geography of contemporary China and its borderlands.

**Class Participation (10%)**

You will be expected to make thoughtful contributions to class discussions that show clear evidence of having done the required readings. Your contributions should be responsive to your classmates’ comments and should always be respectful to everyone else in the room. Quality is more important than quantity – of course, if you don’t say anything, you aren’t participating – but one or two excellent comments will impress me far more than dominating the conversation with ideas that suggest that you haven’t actually done the reading. Attendance is not graded.
explicitly, but since it is impossible to participate without being present, you will receive no credit for participation if you are absent without a valid excuse.

**Midterm Essay (35%)**

You will write a take home mid-term essay, due on October 18. The topic will be distributed on October 4, allowing you the time to choose whether to work on the essay during the Fall Break or to use the break entirely for relaxation. This essay will NOT be a research paper – rather, you will be asked to respond to a broad question on the basis of the readings, lectures, and class discussions. Your essay should be around 4-5 double-spaced pages; there will be a strictly-enforced maximum of 1500 words.

**Paper (total 50% for 2 components)**

1. **Proposed topic and preliminary biography (10%)** – due November 5 at 5PM via MyCourses
2. **Final Paper (40%)** – due December 5 at 5PM via MyCourses (MAXIMUM 3000 WORDS)

You will write a final paper, due on December 5. For this assignment, you should choose a region or people of particular interest to you and write a paper exploring how this place/group's relationship to China has changed over the period covered in our course (from the Qing to the present). The paper should be about 10 pages, with a strictly enforced maximum of 3000 words. Further instructions will be provided on MyCourses.

To ensure that you are able to do adequate research for this paper, you are required to submit a proposed topic and preliminary bibliography (including a MINIMUM of 5 sources not found on the course syllabus) by November 5.

**COURSE POLICIES**

**Absences and Late Work**

You are expected to attend all class meetings and to submit all work on time. Missed class will result both in failing to learn the material covered (which can affect your success in other assignments) and in a failure to participate in discussion, directly lowering your participation grade. I recognize that there will be situations that make it impossible (or unwise) for you to attend class or to submit a paper on time, including illnesses (if you’re sick, please rest and recover; don’t come to class). I treat my students as responsible adults; if you are genuinely unable to come to class or submit a paper on time for a legitimate reason, I simply ask that you inform me IN ADVANCE (no extensions are offered if they are requested after an assignment's due date) and let me know the reason. The length of extension you are offered will depend on the nature of your excuse and is at my discretion. I reserve the right to request documentation of your excuse.

Unexcused late assignments will be marked down by 5% for each day late, though in no case will a paper that would otherwise receive a passing grade receive a failing grade (which is to say,
you won’t drop below a D), as long as it is submitted by the end of the semester (I have a grading deadline).

**Covid-19-Related Academic Accommodations**

Per McGill policy, all students in need of academic considerations on account of Covid-19 are required to fill out the online form, available in the "Personal" tab of their Minerva account, titled "COVID-19 Academic Accommodations Request Form." You are welcome to contact me directly as well, but the university insists on maintaining centralized tracking and it is mandatory to use the official form.

**Office Hours**

I will hold regular office hours on Fridays from 1:45-3:45 PM in my office in Ferrier 330 (and will be simultaneously available over Zoom). I will also be available for appointments outside those times if they are incompatible with your schedule. In order to avoid lines outside my office, appointments should be made in advance for all office hour meetings; for meetings during my scheduled office hours, a sign-up link will be made available via MyCourses. I encourage you to come by early in the semester to chat so that I can get to know you a bit better, as well as to visit whenever you have questions about the course material or assignments or simply wish to talk about Chinese history or your academic goals.

**Academic Integrity**

“McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the [Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](#).” (See McGill’s [guide to academic honesty](#) for more information.)

« L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l’honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le guide pour l’honnêteté académique de McGill.)

**Language of Submission**

“In accord with McGill University’s [Charter of Student Rights](#), students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.”

« Conformément à la [Charte des droits de l’étudiant](#) de l’Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté. »

**STUDENT FEEDBACK**

I encourage you to complete a Mercury evaluation for this course upon its conclusion. Your experiences and observations will help me make this class, and all classes I teach, better for future students.
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you are a student with a disability that requires accommodation, please register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (https://www.mcgill.ca/osd/) and inform me of the accommodations you require during the first week of class (or the first week after the disability arises). Anything you tell me will be kept confidential.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Week 1 – Introduction

September 2 – Course Introduction and the Manchu Conquest

Reading:
Peter Perdue, China Marches West, pp. 109-127

Week 2 – Qing Manchuria

September 7 – Manchuria as Manchu Homeland

Reading:

September 9 – Manchuria as Borderland

Reading:
Seonmin Kim, Ginseng and Borderland: Territorial Boundaries and Political Relations between Qing China and Chosŏn Korea 1636-1912, ch.3 "Managing the Borderland," pp. 77-104

Week 3 – The Southwest and Taiwan in the High Qing

September 14 – Qing Colonialism

Reading:
2. Jodi Weinstein, Empire and Identity in Guizhou: Local Resistance to Qing Expansion, ch.3 "The Consolidation of Qing Rule" (pp. 37-58).

September 16 – Qing Views of Indigenous Peoples

MAP QUIZ - In Class September 16

Reading:
Emma Teng, Taiwan's Imagined Geography: Chinese Colonial Travel Writing and Pictures, 1683-1895, ch. 5, "The Raw and the Cooked" (pp. 122-148), ch. 7 "An Island of Women" (pp.
173-193) and Appendix B, "Excerpts from Ding Shaoyi’s Brief Record of the Eastern Ocean" (pp. 281-284). Be sure to pay attention to the color plates that follow p. 186.

**Week 4 – Tibetan Buddhism and the Mongols**

**September 21 – The Zunghar Wars**

**Reading:**
1. Yingcong Dai, *The Sichuan Frontier and Tibet: Imperial Strategy in the Early Qing*, excerpt from ch. 2 "A Strategic Turn from the Steppe to Tibet" (pp. 36-54)
2. Perdue, *China Marches West*, excerpts from ch. 6 "Imperial Overreach and Zunghar Survival" (pp. 209-213; pp. 227-248)

**September 23 – Qing Tibet**

**Reading:**
1. Max Oidtmann, *Forging the Golden Urn: The Qing Empire and the Politics of Reincarnation in Tibet*, excerpt from introduction (pp. 1-9), Act II, "Shamanic Colonialism" (pp. 95-156), and "Translation of the Qianlong Emperor's Discourse on Lamas (pp. 239-243)
   In recognition of the length of this reading, pp. 105-111 ("Colonial Discourses on Shamanism") and pp. 117-126 ("Heliyen and the Prosecution of the Oracles") are recommended, not required
2. "Qing's 29 Regulations for Reorganizing Tibet (2 pages)

**Week 5 – Muslims and Xinjiang in the Qing**

**September 28 – The Hui**

**Reading:**
1. Jonathan Lipman, "A Fierce and Brutal People: On Islam and Muslims in Qing Law" in *Empire at the Margins: Culture, Ethnicity, and Frontier in Early Modern China* (pp. 83-112)

**September 30 – Xinjiang and the Uyghurs**

**Reading:**
2. Millward and Laura Newby, "The Qing and Islam on the Western Frontier," in *Empire at the Margins* (pp. 113-134).

**Week 6 – The Muslim Rebellions**

**October 5 – Hui Rebellion in the Northwest and Yunnan**

**Reading:**
1. Reading: Jonathan Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, "Every Sixty Years a Big Rebellion," (portion of ch. 4, pp.115-138),
3. "Panthay Rebellion Summons to Arms" (2 pp.)
4. "Rumors of a Tungan Massacre" (1 p.)

October 7 – Rebellion in Xinjiang

Reading:
1. (recommended) Reading: Hodong Kim, *Holy War in China: The Muslim Rebellion and State in Chinese Central Asia*, ch. 2 "Xinjiang in Revolt" (pp. 37-71)
2. Selections from accounts of the Muslim rebellions by Donjina and Mullah Musa Sayrami
3. "Robert Shaw's Visit to Yarkand and Kashgar" (2 pp.)

Week 7 – Rethinking Frontier Governance

October 12 – Fall Break, NO CLASS

October 15 (NOTE: This is a Friday but will follow Tuesday schedule) –

Reading:
2. (recommended) Scott Relyea, "Indigenizing International Law in Early Twentieth-Century China: Territorial Sovereignty in the Sino-Tibetan Borderland," *Late Imperial China* 38.2 (2017), pp. 1-50

Week 8 – 1911 and the National Question

**MIDTERM ESSAY DUE – October 18 at 5 PM**

October 19 – From Empire to Nation

Reading:
1. Joseph Esherick, "How the Qing Became China," in *Empire to Nation: Historical Perspectives on the Making of the Modern World*, ch. 8 (pp. 229-259)
2. Zhang Binglin (Zhang Taiyan), "Explaining the Republic of China" (pp. 15-40).
3. Zou Rong, *The Revolutionary Army*, Ch.4, "For Revolution, Race Must Be Clearly Distinguished" (pp. 106-110)

October 21 – Frontiers of Republican China

Reading:
2. (recommended) Uradyn Bulag, "Going Imperial: Tibeto-Mongolian Buddhism and Nationalisms in China and Inner Asia," in *Empire to Nation*, ch. 9 (pp. 260-295)

Week 9 – Revolution and the Borderlands

October 26 – Communism and the Frontier
Reading:
1. Leibold, *Reconfiguring Chinese Nationalism*, ch. 3, "Domesticating Minzu: The Communists and the National Question" (pp. 81-109)
2. Uradyn Bulag, "Good Han, Bad Han: The Moral Parameters of Ethnopolitics in China," in Thomas Mullaney, et. al., eds., *Critical Han Studies: The History, Representation, and Identity of China's Majority*, ch. 4 (pp. 92-109)

*October 28 – Non-Han Revolution*

Reading:
1. (recommended) Uradyn Bulag, *The Mongols at China's Edge: History and the Politics of National Unity*, ch. 4 "From Inequality to Difference: Colonial Contradictions of Class and Ethnicity in 'Socialist' China" (pp. 105-135)
2. David Brophy, *Uyghur Nation: Reform and Revolution on the Russia-China Frontier*, ch. 8, "The Battle for Xinjiang and the Uyghur Nation" (pp. 233-264)

*Week 10 – Southwestern Minorities in the Chinese Nation-State*

*November 2 – Classifying Minzu*

Reading:
Thomas Mullaney, *Coming to Terms with the Nation: Ethnic Classification in Modern China*, ch. 4, "The Consent of the Categorized," and ch. 5, "Counting to Fifty-Six" (pp. 92-133)

*November 4 – Representing Minorities*

Reading:
1. Louisa Schein, *Minority Rules: The Miao and the Feminine in China's Cultural Politics*, ch. 4, "Internal Orientalism: Gender and the Popularization of China's Others" (pp. 100-131)

Film:
Five Golden Flowers (*Wu duo Jinhua*), 1959 (approx. 95 minutes):
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ntx_EcTnzmg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ntx_EcTnzmg)

*Proposed Paper Topic and Preliminary Bibliography due November 5 at 5 PM*

*Week 11 – The Taiwan Question*

*November 9 – The Republic of China on Taiwan*

Reading:
Handbook of Contemporary Taiwan, ch. 25 (pp. 393-409)
3. "The 2-28 Incident in Taiwan" (10 pp.)

November 11 – Identity in Taiwan

Reading:
1. Christopher R. Hughes, "National Identity," in Schubert, Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Taiwan, ch. 10 (pp. 153-168)
2. Chun-Chieh Chi, "Indigenous Movements and Multicultural Taiwan," in Schubert, Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Taiwan, ch. 17 (pp. 268-279)

Week 12 – Tibet in the 20th Century

November 16 – Tibetans and the Chinese State

Reading:
1. Gray Tuttle, Tibetan Buddhists in the Making of Modern China, ch. 5, "The Failure of Racial and Nationalist Ideologies (1928-1932)" (pp. 128-155)
2. (recommended) Liu Xiaoyuan, To the End of Revolution: The Communist Party and Tibet, 1949-1959, ch. 2, "The 'Dalai Line'" (pp. 44-89)
3. "Seventeen Point Plan for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet" (2 pp.)

November 18 – Conflicting Views on Tibet's Transformation

Reading:
"Village Life After 1958: War, Collectivization, Famine and the Cultural Revolution" in Robert Barnett, et. al., eds., Conflicting Memories: Tibetan History under Mao Retold, Document 9 (pp. 363-387)

Film:
The Serf (Nongnu), 1963 (approx. 88 minutes total).
Part 1: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HN70Ms9Yerk
Part 2: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ats_Wx9c4LI

Week 13 – Hong Kong

November 23 – Hong Kong under British Rule

Reading:
1. John Carroll, Edge of Empires: Chinese Elites and British Colonials in Hong Kong (Harvard, 2005), ch. 1, "Colonialism and Collaboration: Chinese Subjects and the Making of British Hong Kong" (pp. 16-36)
3. 1984 "Sino-British Joint Declaration" (2 pp.)

November 25 – One Country, Two Systems
Reading:
1. Iam-Chong Ip, "Political De-institutionalization and the Rise of Right-Wing Nativism," in Tai-Lok Lui, et. al., eds., Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Hong Kong, ch. 26 (pp. 462-473)
2. Jeffrey Wasserstrom, Vigil: Hong Kong on the Brink (Penguin, 2020), chs. 3+5, "Victories" and "Battles" (pp. 37-56; 72-84)
3. Jiang Zemin and Christopher Patten's 1997 speeches at handover ceremony (2 pp.)
4. Hong Kong Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance Legislation (2020) (3 pp.)

Week 14 – Xinjiang and the Contemporary Politics of Assimilation

November 30 – Uyghur Culture and the Chinese State
Reading:

December 2 – War on Terror/War on Islam
Reading:
1. Sean R. Roberts, The War on the Uyghurs: China’s Internal Campaign against a Muslim Minority, ch. 6, "Cultural Genocide, 2017-2020" and Conclusion (pp. 199-251)
   Note that in view of the length of this reading, the Conclusion (pp. 236-251) is only recommended.

FINAL PAPER DUE – December 5, 8:00 PM