

## Syllabus of Record

**Program:** CET Shanghai

**Course Code / Title:** SH/HIST 350 Shanghai: A Modern History

**Contact Hours:** 45

**Recommended Credits:** 3

**Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings:** History / East Asian Studies, International Relations, Urban Studies

**Language of Instruction:** English

**Prerequisites/Requirements:** None

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### Description

The city of Shanghai has had multiple and changing historical representations. It has been simultaneously blamed as the source of all that was wrong in China and praised as the beacon of an advanced national future. Historically, the city has been the empire's cotton capital, a leading colonial-era treaty port, the location of Chinese urban modernity, a national center of things from finance to publishing, an exotic space that attracted and repelled, a home to new ideas and public activism, and the country's industrial powerhouse. This course examines the social, political, economic, and cultural history of Shanghai and uses it to analyze if and how the city's history provides keys to understanding the making of modern China.

After a critical examination of concepts of tradition and modernity and approaches that have been used to understand Shanghai history, the class explores the city during the late imperial, Republican, and People's Republic periods. Throughout, it contends with the contemporary return of Shanghai to urban preeminence and how this process intersects with the city's history. Themes include commercialism, modernity, how the city's "semi-colonial" past has shaped its history, migration, and whether Shanghai is somehow unique or representative of what we know as modern China. The course takes advantage of its location with at least three field classes at significant historical sites and exhibits.

### Objectives

Through their participation in this course, students will:

- Gain a nuanced understanding of Shanghai's history and how it connects to the modern historical experience of the nation.
- Build their analytical skills through the critical interpretation of secondary and primary sources and learning how to weigh and utilize historical evidence.
- Master a historical tradition outside the western one.
- Compare different approaches to the study of history and international relations.

## Syllabus of Record

### Requirements

Students are expected to attend each class, including all field classes, as outlined in the CET Attendance Policy. Active participation is essential. Students are to read all assigned materials before each class session and come prepared to participate thoughtfully in class discussions. Reading assignments average about 50-80 pages per class.

Graded assignments include:

- **Site Visit Essay:** Students choose a historical site in the city to visit and then write a short paper (1,200 words) focused on analyzing the site within its historical and contemporary context. Analysis should connect the site to knowledge gained in the course and include additional research.
- **Analytical Essay:** Students write a critical review or analysis (1,200 words) of a chosen primary source (documents, excerpts from memoirs, or novel/short stories) with respect to the portrayal of Shanghai in these works.
- **Final Project:** All students write a research paper and prepare a 15-20 minute in-class presentation on their topic. Students are expected to submit a double-spaced 2,250-word historiographical essay (about 8-10 pages) on one of the main themes of Shanghai's history, or on a topic related to the issues explored in the course or on a different aspect of Shanghai's history. Consultation with the instructor on topic, methods, and sources is required.

### Grading

The final grade is determined as follows:

Participation	20%
Site visit essay	20%
Analytical essay	20%
Final project	40%
○ Paper: 25%	
○ Presentation: 15%	

### Class Participation Grading Rubric

	A – 90-100% Exemplary	B – 80-89% Proficient	C – 70-79% Developing	D – 60-69% Unacceptable	F – 0-59% Missing
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Frequency of class participation	Actively contributes 2+ times per meeting	Actively contributes at least 1 time per meeting	Actively contributes at least half of the time during term	Actively contributes less than half of the time during term	Does not contribute
Quality of class participation*	Contribution is always thoughtful, accurate, and constructive, frequently interacting with peers	Contribution is mostly thoughtful, accurate, and constructive, usually interacting with peers	Contribution is somewhat thoughtful, accurate, and constructive, sometimes interacting with peers	Contribution is rarely thoughtful, accurate, and constructive, rarely interacting with peers	Does not contribute or interact with peers
Level of class preparation	Always fully prepared and on task	Mostly prepared and on task	Somewhat prepared and on task	Rarely prepared and on task	Consistently unprepared and not on task

### Readings / Resources

Bergère, Marie-Claire. *Shanghai: China's Gateway to Modernity*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009.

Braester, Yomi. "A Big Dying Vat': The Vilifying of Shanghai during the Good Eighth Company Campaign." *Modern China* 31, no. 4 (Oct. 2005): 411-47.

Ding Ling. "Shanghai, Spring 1930." In *I Myself Am a Woman: Selected Writings of Ding Ling*, edited by Tani E. Barlow with Gary J. Bjorge, 112-71. Boston: Beacon Press, 1990.

Field, Andrew David. *Shanghai's Dancing World: Cabaret Culture and Urban Politics, 1919-1954*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2010.

Fogel, Joshua. "'Shanghai-Japan': The Japanese Residents' Association of Shanghai," *Journal of Asian Studies* 59, no. 4 (Nov. 2000): 927-50.

Gerth, Karl. "Shanghai Fashion: Merchants and Business as Agents of Urban Vision." In *Cities in Motion: Interior, Coast, and Diaspora in Transnational China*, edited by Sherman Cochran et al., Chap. 6. Berkeley, CA: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California Berkeley, 2007.

## Syllabus of Record

Goodman, Bryna. Introduction to *Native Place, City, and Nation: Regional Networks and Identities in Shanghai, 1853-1937*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

Henriot, Christian. "The Crisis of 1931-32." In *Shanghai 1927-1937: Municipal Power, Locality, and Modernization*. Trans. by Noel Castelino. Berkeley, CA: Univ. of California Press, 1993.

———. "Guilds, Charities, and the Community Management of Death" and "Invisible Deaths, Silent Deaths." In *Scythe and the City: A Social History of Death in Shanghai*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2016.

Hershatter, Gail. "Modernizing Sex, Sexing Modernity: Prostitution in Early-Twentieth-Century Shanghai." In *Chinese Femininities/Chinese Masculinities: A Reader*, edited by Susan Brownell, et al., Chap. 7. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.

Ho, Denise Y. "The Cultural Revolution's Object Lessons: The Exhibition of Red Guard Achievements." In *Curating Revolution: Politics on Display in Mao's China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.

Johnson, Cooke. *Shanghai: From Market Town to Treaty Port, 1074-1858*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995.

Li, Jie. *Shanghai Homes: Palimpsests of Private Life*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2014.

Lin Zexu. "Commissioner Lin Zexu's Letter to Queen Victoria, 1839." Adapted from Chinese Repository 8 (February 1840): 497-503; reprinted in William H. McNeil and Mitsuko Iriye, eds., *Modern Asia and Africa, Readings in World History* 9: 111-18. New York: Oxford University Press, 1971. Published online in *The Modern History Sourcebook*:  
<https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/mod/1839lin2.asp>

Lu, Hanchao. *Beyond the Neon Lights: Everyday Shanghai in the Early Twentieth Century*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004.

Mao Dun. *Midnight*. Translated by Xu Mengxiong. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1957.

Perry, Elizabeth J. "Tobacco." In *Shanghai on Strike: The Politics of Chinese Labor*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995.

## Syllabus of Record



\_\_\_\_\_ and Nara Dillon. "Little Brothers' in the Cultural Revolution: The Worker Rebels of Shanghai." In *Chinese Femininities/Chinese Masculinities: A Reader*, edited by Susan Brownell and Jeffrey Wasserstrom, Chap. 10. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2002.

Qin Shao. "Nightmares: Old and New." In *Shanghai Gone: Domicide and Defiance in a Chinese Megacity*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2013.

Rottmann, Allison. "Crossing Enemy Lines: Shanghai and the Central China Base." In *In the Shadow of the Rising Sun: Shanghai Under Japanese Occupation*, edited by Christian Henriot and Wen-hsin Yeh, 90-115. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

\_\_\_\_\_. "To the Countryside: Communist Recruitment in Wartime Shanghai." In *Cities in Motion: Interior, Coast, and Diaspora in Transnational China*, edited by Sherman Cochran et al., Chap. 4. Berkeley, CA: Institute of East Asian Studies, Univ. of California Berkeley, 2007.

Strand, David. "A High Place is No Better than A Low Place': The City in the Making of Modern China." In *Becoming Chinese: Passages to Modernity and Beyond*, edited by Wen-hsin Yeh, Chap. 3. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000.

Swislocki, Mark. "Only Available in Shanghai: The Honey Nectar Peach and the Idea of Shanghai." In *Culinary Nostalgia: Regional Food Culture and the Urban Experience in Shanghai*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009.

Wakeman Jr., Frederic. "Licensing Leisure: the Chinese Nationalists' Attempt to Regulate Shanghai, 1927-49." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 54, No. 1 (Feb. 1995): 19-42.

Wang Anyi. *The Song of Everlasting Sorrow: A Novel of Shanghai*. Translated by Michael Berry and Susan Chan Egan. Chapter 1. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.

Wasserstrom, Jeffrey. "The May Fourth Movement." In *Student Protests in Twentieth-Century China: The View from Shanghai*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997.

Xu Naiji. "Memorial on Legalizing Opium, June 10, 1836." In *The Search for Modern China: A Documentary Collection*, edited by Janet Chen et al., 110-14. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2013.

## Syllabus of Record

Yeh, Catherine Vance. "Playing with the Public: Late Qing Courtesans and Their Opera Singer Lovers." In *Gender in Motion: Divisions of Labor and Cultural Change in Late Imperial and Modern China*, edited by Bryna Goodman and Wendy Larson, Chap. 6. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005.

Yeh, Wen-hsin. Introduction to *Becoming Chinese: Passages to Modernity and Beyond*, edited by Wen-hsin Yeh, 1-30. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Shanghai Splendor: A Cultural History, 1843-1949*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007.

Yokomitsu Riichi. *Shanghai: A Novel*. Translated by Dennis Washburn. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Center For Japanese Studies, 2001.

Yue, Meng. "Introduction: The Border of Histories." In *Shanghai and the Edges of Empire*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

Zhang Ailing (Eileen Chang). "Sealed Off." In *Love in a Fallen City*, translated by Karen S. Kingsbury and Eileen Chang, 235-52. New York: New York Review of Books, 2007.

## Content

### Topic 1 – Themes in Chinese History, Politics, and Culture

- Defining tradition and modernity
- Modernization theory vs. the concept of multiple modernities
- Foundations of Chinese civilization: theories of governing, Confucian and other philosophies, religion, foreign affairs, class formation, and the examination system

### Topic 2 – Approaches to the Study of Shanghai

- Marxist and Chinese studies; western impact studies; new history in the 1990s
- Ming urban development; transition from market town to port city
- Pirate invasions and the building of the city wall
- Cotton capital and increasing commercialization and early industrialization
- Urban development during the "high Qing" period/1700s; continued spatial changes
- Motifs for the nineteenth century: rebellion, foreign invasion, and elite response
- Imperialism and global systems of trade

### Topic 3 – External Pressures: Tea and Opium

## Syllabus of Record

- The role of guilds in the city's growth; increasing commercialization
- The Canton system of trade, silver currency flows, trade imbalances
- The response to British opium smuggling; the Opium War and Treaty of Nanjing
- The creation of the foreign concessions in Shanghai
- The role of guilds in the city's growth
- How to read primary sources

### Topic 4 – Internal Pressures: The Taiping Rebellion

- The Small Swords uprising; rebellions lead to migration and rapid urban growth
- Chinese move into the foreign settlements
- The start of the shikumen housing tradition
- Taipings to Self-strengthening and ti-yong
- Sino-Japanese War and the Treaty of Shimonoseki; foreign factories open in the city;  
the treaty-port system fails; foreigners command spheres of influence

### Topic 5 – Fall of the Qing

- Elite activism in the city; publishing, study circles
- Tongmenghui; the rise of the nationalism as a response to imperialism
- Shanghai's leading role in the 1911 Revolution

### Topic 6 – The Rise of the Republic

- Sun Yatsen and Guomindang politics in the city and state; Song Jiaoren's assassination
- WW1 and economic development in the city
- An urban model for the nation

### Topic 7 – The New Culture and May Fourth Movements

- May Fourth in Shanghai; continued effects from the divided city
- Class dynamics in shaping social and political activism
- CCP founding in Shanghai
- May Thirtieth Movement; increasing nationalist activism

### Topic 8 – The Nanjing Decade (1927-37)

- SH Commune, April 12 Coup, Guomindang purge of the left
- White Terror and GMD cooperation with the Green Gang
- The changed nature of revolution: urban to rural
- The rise of consumerism and urban glamour
- Shanghai as defining urban modernity
- Shikumen and lilong living; the idea of Old Shanghai

## Syllabus of Record

- Vice and crime in the city delegitimizes the GMD
- Growth of the rural revolutionary movement; Jiangxi Soviet and the Long March

### Topic 9 – Occupied Shanghai and World War Two (1937-1945); Civil War (1945-49)

- GMD policy of “internal pacification before external resistance”; Second United Front
- Urban terrorism; Mao Liying
- The Battle of Shanghai and then Japanese occupation
- Shanghai’s contributions to the war and the New Fourth Army
- The end of the century of foreign concessions
- Underground CCP and GMD wartime resistance

### Topic 10 – The 1950s: Now the Revolution

- Liberation of Shanghai; urban/social/political change in the 1950s
- Urban change and reform through movements/campaigns
- Cleansing a city with a tarnished past
- Industrial powerhouse for the nation

### Topic 11 – The Cultural Revolution

- Working class response versus Red Guard activism
- Housing crisis
- Power shifts; return of local radical political and labor activism
- Home to the Gang of Four

### Topic 12 – Socialist Modernity to Shanghai Redux

- How national policy changes affect the city
- Shanghai’s plans to reclaim its historical position
- 1990s: a city for the next century starts to emerge
- What is lost in the creation of the new city?

### Field study and experiential learning components may include:

- Shanghai Tou-Se-We Museum and Zikawei Library  
土山湾博物馆、徐家汇书院
- Site of the First CCP Congress  
中国共产党第一次全国代表大会会址
- Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum  
上海犹太难民纪念馆



## Syllabus of Record

*Syllabus of Record is subject to minor changes in Term-specific Syllabus at faculty's discretion.*