

**Division of Humanities
Tentative Course Syllabus**

Course Code: HUMA 2470
Course Title: From Fung Shui to Mao's Villages: City Plans, Urban Politics & the Unseen World of Chinese
Course Offered in: Spring 2019
Course Instructor: Professor Virgil K Y HO

Course Description: A historical survey of the socio-cultural transformation in Chinese cities and villages from the late-Imperial to the modern periods. The process of “modernization” as well as the persistence of tradition is studied to redress some of the stereotyped pictures of Chinese society, both rural and urban. Important topics include: continuity and change in China’s city plans and their cultural meanings, the cultural meanings and importance of cities in Imperial China, the socio-economic-politico-cultural significances of treaty port cities as beachhead of Western expansion in China, urban modernization and its socio-economic-cultural impacts on China during the warlord period and under the Nationalist regime, the salient characteristics and the reality of Chinese rural society and politic in the pre-modern and modern periods, the social and economic development and devastation of the Chinese countryside between 1800 and 1940, and how the Chinese Communist Party made revolution in the countryside before 1937.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs):

Upon completion of this course, students are expected to be able to:

1	describe the social organization and the socio-cultural characteristics in traditional and early-modern Chinese villages and big urban centres in China.
2	paraphrase the imminent political and socio-economic challenges that Chinese ruralites and urbanites were facing in the late-Qing and the Republican times.
3	summarize some of the salient principles and ideologies of city planning in traditional and modern China.
4	Identify some of the major problems of historical representations of urban and rural lives in traditional and modern China by Chinese Marxist as well as Nationalist historians.
5	evaluate history texts, in particular nationalistic historical writings, more critically with the basic skills that they have learned in the course.
6	show improved communicative skills.

Weekly Topics:

1	China’s city plans: Principles employed in the Imperial designs; cosmology, feng shui and practical considerations in city’s plan
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2	Culture of cities in imperial China: Socio-cultural meanings of Chinese city; urbanism vs ruralism in traditional Chinese thinking; anti-urbanism in theory and practice; rise of the merchant and its challenge to traditional Confucian social-political order
3	Treaty port cities: Critiques on official Chinese interpretations of Western invasion of China; social, cultural, economic, and political functions of treat ports in modern China
4	Warlord cities: Urban degradation and development in China during the 'warlord period'; the nature and characteristics of warlord-controlled cities and their regimes; revisiting official Chinese interpretations of warlordism
5	Nationalist cities: Assess critically the accomplishments of Guomindang in the modern development of Chinese urban society in the 1920s through the 1930s. To what extent Guomindang was accountable for China's "failure" in modernization in the 1930s? City plans of Nanjing and how far did it depart from the traditional principles of town planning?
6	Impressions of life in Chinese countryside: 19th-century missionary impressions of the Chinese countryside and how far were those images accurate?
7	Rural society from a different angle: Critical analysis on the issue of economic exploitations in the countryside in the late-Qing and Republican period. The land problems: myth and reality of excessive taxation and rents, exploitative landlords, and government's inertia
8	Rural revolutions: Reviews of the tactics employed by the Chinese Communist Party in mobilizing peasants
9	Concluding remarks

Assessments:

Attendance:	10%
Performance in classroom, tutorial discussion:	20%
Essay and Presentation:	20%
Examination:	50%

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Readings:

Dick Wilson (ed.). 1977. Mao Tse-tung in the Scales of History. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

James P. Harrison. 1968. The Communists and Chinese Peasant Rebellions. New York: Atheneum.

Mark Elvin, "The Administration of Shanghai"