

EALC B225

Topics in Modern Chinese Lit: Queer China

Spring 2016, Bryn Mawr College

Taylor C, Tuesday and Thursday 9:55–11:15 a.m.

Instructor: Dr. Casey J. Miller

Office: Dalton 200D

Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:30–1:00 Friday 1:00–2:30 and by appointment

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Course Description:

China has perhaps the longest and most detailed history of homosexuality in the world, one that (in at least its male-male forms) is well-documented in historical and literary texts reaching as far back as the Zhou Dynasty (1046–256 BCE). However, many people both inside and outside of China today are unaware of this long and rich cultural history, and of the important role played by queer sexualities in the cultural and historical formation of modern China. In this course, students will explore the emergence and expression of queer/*tongzhi* 同志 identities, cultures, and communities in modern and contemporary mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the greater Sinophone through the critical reading and analysis of a wide range of literary, historical, filmic, and ethnographic texts.

A brief review of understandings and practices of gender and sexuality in traditional China will lay a foundation for our discussion of how and to what extent popular and scholarly attitudes towards homosexuality shifted during the Republican Period (1912–1949). Memoirs, novels, and films will allow us to catch glimpses of “hooligan” and other queer sexualities during Maoist China (1949–1976). We will examine the gradual emergence of queer culture in mainland China during the reform period (1977–present) and the explosion of gay literature (*tongzhi wenxue* 同志文学), queer literature (*ku'er wenxue* 酷儿文学), and queer film in mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the Chinese diaspora in the 1990s and 2000s. Recent ethnographic texts will also give us greater insight into contemporary queer Chinese cultures and communities.

Required Texts (in the order assigned):

Lilian Lee [李碧华]. 1993. *Farewell My Concubine* [霸王别姬]. Andrea Lingenfelter, trans. New York: HarperPerennial.

Tiantian Zheng. 2015. *Men Attracted to Men in Postsocialist China*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Bei-Tong [北京同志]. 2016. *Beijing Comrades* [北京故事]. Scott E. Myers, trans. New York: The Feminist Press at CUNY.

Hsien-yung Pai [白先勇]. 1990. *Crystal Boys* [孽子]. Howard Goldblatt, trans. San Francisco: Gay Sunshine Press.

Denise Tse-shang Tang. 2011. *Conditional Spaces: Hong Kong Lesbian Desires and Everyday Life*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

All required texts are available for purchase at the college bookstore and/or any major online bookseller. Books will also be made available at Canaday Library on reserve and/or online. Some books may be available for download in electronic form on Tripod. Additional required and supplemental readings will be posted on the course Moodle site. Please bring copies of all assigned readings with you to the appropriate class.

Course Requirements and Evaluation:

20% Class Participation and Attendance
20% Reading Responses
10% Film Presentation
20% Short Essay
30% Research Paper

Course Policies and Expectations:

Class Participation and Attendance: Please come to each class on time, having completed any reading and/or writing assignments that are due, and ready to participate fully in class discussions and activities. Bring hard copies of any assigned readings, along with prepared notes, questions, and comments, and be ready to share your ideas with others. Students who repeatedly come to class unprepared to participate will be marked absent. Students who are significantly or recurrently late will be also considered absent. If you must miss a class for any reason, please notify the instructor in advance (i.e. more than 24 hours before the class you will miss) providing a reason for your absence. **Students are allowed three absences over the semester;** every absence thereafter will result in a reduction of your final grade in the course by one third a letter (i.e. a B+ grade will be lowered to a B) and your dean will be notified. Seven or more absences over the semester will result in a failing grade for the course.

Reading Responses: Each student will be responsible for composing approximately 14 short reading responses (one per week) over the duration of the semester. The responses should be 250–300 words each, and should discuss what you found interesting about the readings, what you found questionable or confusing, and raise 1–2 questions for class discussion. Reading responses are an informal way for you to organize your thoughts about the readings, make connections, and ask questions, and will also serve as the basis for our class discussions. **Reading responses are due on Moodle by 9 a.m. the morning of class.**

Film Presentation: Over the semester we will watch seven films that supplement the course readings. Films will be available on reserve at Canaday; every student should have watched the film before the class in which it is assigned. Working alone or in small groups, each student will choose one film to present to the class. Rather than provide a summary of the film, your presentation should discuss its connections to the reading, thematically, theoretically, or otherwise. If the film is an adaptation, how is it similar/different? What changes does it make, and why? You are encouraged to prepare handouts and/or slides to go with your presentation.

Short Essay: For this class you will write a 4–5 page essay containing a critical analysis of one of the texts we have read by the middle of the semester (**due in class on Tuesday, March 22**). Students will choose either a fiction or a nonfiction text or texts (i.e. a novel, one or two short stories, or an ethnography) and write an original and critical close reading. You are not to use any outside sources for this assignment, but should rather focus exclusively on presenting an original argument based on evidence from your chosen text(s). Themes or questions you explore in your One-Page Essays may be used as inspiration for your research paper.

Research Paper: In lieu of a final exam, students will complete a 10–12 page Research Paper on a topic of their own choosing. Additional information and paper topics will be distributed in class. **A one-page paper proposal will be due in class on April 7.** The Research Paper will be **due in my office mailbox by noon on May 6.** Students are encouraged to discuss essay topics, ideas, theses, outlines, sources, etc. with the instructor before beginning work on the assignment.

Late and/or Missing Work: Reading Responses are due on Moodle by 9 a.m. the morning of the class in which the readings are assigned. All other written assignments are due in class on the day they are listed on the syllabus, unless otherwise noted. Assignments will generally not be accepted over e-mail. I am happy to grant students extensions on their assignments if they have a legitimate need; however, except for cases of emergency, all extension requests must be made at least 24 hours before an assignment is due. Papers will be marked down a grade for each day they are late (i.e. a B+ paper turned in a day late will receive a B). *Please note that you must complete and hand in all required assignments in order to receive a passing grade in this class.*

The Writing Center: In addition to receiving feedback on their writing from the instructor and their peers, students are encouraged to make use of the resources available to them through the Bryn Mawr College Writing Center, where a staff of trained tutors offer individual sessions to help students with their writing assignments, including rough drafts and final essays. The Writing Center is located on the first floor of Canaday Library. It is now open Monday-Friday from 2-6 and 7-10 p.m. and on Sunday from 2-8 p.m. Appointments may be made online at www.brynmawr.edu/writingcenter.

Honor Code: Maintaining one's individual academic integrity is a crucial component of the Bryn Mawr College Honor Code (<http://sga.blogs.brynmawr.edu/honor-board/honor-code>). As specified in the Honor Code's policies on academic work, "Sources of information and of ideas and opinions not the student's own must be clearly indicated; the source of direct quotations must be acknowledged. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism." Every student bears the primary responsibility for understanding the nature and importance of academic honesty, and any instances of plagiarism will not be tolerated. If a student has any questions or concerns at any time about source documentation and plagiarism, they should contact the instructor immediately.

Access and Accommodations: Students who may need accommodations because of a learning difference should contact me as soon as possible. Students should also contact Deb Alder, Coordinator of Access Services, at 610-526-7351 or dalder@brynmawr.edu, as soon as possible, to verify their eligibility for reasonable accommodations.

Class schedule: *Subject to change based on course pace and inclement weather*

Unit I. Gender and (Queer) Sexuality in Traditional China

Tuesday, January 19

Course overview and self-introductions; in-class readings.

Thursday, January 21

Louie, Kam and Louise Edwards. 1994. "Chinese Masculinity: Theorizing *Wen* and *Wu*." *East Asian History* 8:135–148.

Hinsch, Brett. 1990. *Passions of the Cut Sleeve: The Male Homosexual Tradition in China*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Introduction: pp. 1–14.

Lau, M.P., and M.L. Ng. 1989. "Homosexuality in Chinese Culture." *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry* 13:465–488.

Tuesday, January 26

Hinsch, Brett. 1990. *Passions of the Cut Sleeve: The Male Homosexual Tradition in China*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Appendix: pp. 173–178.

Ng, Vivien. 1997. "Looking for Lesbians in Chinese History." In Martin Duberman, ed., *A Queer World: The Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*. New York: New York University Press, pp. 199–204.

Sankar, Andrea. 1986. "Sisters and Brothers, Lovers and Enemies: Marriage Resistance in Southern Kwangtung." *Journal of Homosexuality* 11(3–4):69–81.

Wu, Tsao. 1972. "To the tune 'The Pain of Lovesickness,'" "For the Courtesan Ch'ing Lin, to the tune 'The Love of the Immortals,'" and "To the tune 'The Joy of Peace and Brightness.'" in Kenneth Rexroth and Ling Chung, eds. and trans., *Women Poets of China*. New York: New Directions Books, pp. 72–74.

Sung, Marina H. 1998. "Wu Zao." In Lily Xiao Hong Lee and A. D. Stefanowska, eds., *Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Women: The Qing Period, 1644–1911*. Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, pp. 234–236.

Unit II. Debates over Understandings of Homosexuality in Republican China (1912–1949)

Thursday, January 28

Hinsch, Brett. 1990. *Passions of the Cut Sleeve: The Male Homosexual Tradition in China*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Epilogue: pp. 162–171.

Dikötter, Frank. 1995. *Sex, Culture, and Modernity in China: Medical Science and the Construction of Sexual Identities in the Early Republican Period*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, pp. 137–145.

Sang, Tze-lan D. 1999. "Translating Homosexuality: The Discourse of *Tongxing'ai* in Republican China (1912-1949)." In Lydia Liu, ed., *Tokens of Exchange: The Problem of Translation in Global Circulations*. Durham: Duke University Press, pp. 276–304.

Unit III. Gender and (Queer) Sexuality in Maoist China (1949–1976)

Tuesday, February 2

- Dikötter, Frank. 1995. *Sex, Culture, and Modernity in China: Medical Science and the Construction of Sexual Identities in the Early Republican Period*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, pp. 180–186.
- Dutton, Michael, Boliang Chen, Fei Ge, and Ren Jin. 2000. "Defining 'Outsiders,' Labelling *Liumang*." In Michael Dutton, ed. and trans., *Streetlife China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 62–74.
- Zha, Jianyin. 1994. "Beijing Notebooks: Tabloids, Schlock Art, and Hope in the New China." *Utne Reader* 65:98–105.
- Xiao, Tang. 2004. "Blushing in the Dark." *Beijing Review* 47(43):26–27.

Thursday, February 4

- Min, Anchee. 1994. *Red Azalea*. New York : Pantheon Books. Selections.
- Honig, Emily. 2003. "Socialist Sex: The Cultural Revolution Revisited." *Modern China* 29:143–175.

Tuesday, February 9

- Dolby, William. 1978. "Introduction." In William Dolby, ed. and trans., *Eight Chinese Plays from the Thirteenth Century to the Present*. New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 15–18.
- Mei, Lanfang. 1978[1956]. *Hegemon King Says Farewell to His Queen*. In William Dolby, ed. and trans., *Eight Chinese Plays from the Thirteenth Century to the Present*. New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 111–137.
- Lee, Lilian. 1993. *Farewell My Concubine*. Andrea Lingenfelter, trans. New York: HarperPerennial. *Begin reading*.

Thursday, February 11

- Lee, Lilian. 1993. *Farewell My Concubine*. Andrea Lingenfelter, trans. New York: HarperPerennial. *Finish reading*.
- Farewell My Concubine* (1993, 171 minutes) *Watch film before class*.

Unit IV. Queer Lives in Post-Socialist China (1977–)

Tuesday, February 16

- Zheng, Tiantian. 2015. *Tongzhi Living: Men Attracted to Men in Postsocialist China*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, Introduction and Chs. 1–3, pp. 1–95.

Thursday, February 18

- Jin, Ha. 2000. "The Bridegroom." In *The Bridegroom: Stories*. New York: Pantheon Books, pp. 91–115.
- Zheng, Tiantian. 2015. *Tongzhi Living: Men Attracted to Men in Postsocialist China*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, Ch. 4, pp. 96–122.

Tuesday, February 23

Community day of learning

Thursday, February 25

Zheng, Tiantian. 2015. *Tongzhi Living: Men Attracted to Men in Postsocialist China*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, Chs. 5–7 and Conclusion, pp. 123–194.

Tuesday, March 1

Zhang Hongling and Jason Sommer. 2007. "Introduction." In Hongling Zhang and Jason Sommer, trans., *Wang in Love and Bondage*. Albany: State University of New York Press, pp. vii–xiv.

Wang, Xiaobo. 2007. "East Palace, West Palace." In Hongling Zhang and Jason Sommer, trans., *Wang in Love and Bondage*. Albany: State University of New York Press, pp. 119–155.

Thursday, March 3

Lim, Song Hwee. 2006. "The Uses of Femininity: Chen Kaige's *Farewell My Concubine* and Zhuang Yuan's *East Palace, West Palace*." In *Celluloid Comrades: Representations of Male Homosexuality in Contemporary Chinese Cinemas*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, pp. 69–98.

East Palace, West Palace (1996, 94 minutes). *Watch film before class.*

Spring Break

Tuesday, March 15

Bei-Tong [北京同志]. 2016. *Beijing Comrades* [北京故事]. Scott E. Myers, trans. New York: The Feminist Press at CUNY. *Begin reading.*

Thursday, March 17

Bei-Tong [北京同志]. 2016. *Beijing Comrades* [北京故事]. Scott E. Myers, trans. New York: The Feminist Press at CUNY. *Finish reading.*

Eng, David L. 2010. "The Queer Space of China: Expressive Desire in Stanley Kwan's *Lan Yu*." *positions: east asia cultures critique* 18(2):459–487.

Lan Yu (2001, 86 minutes). *Watch film before class.*

Tuesday, March 22

Short paper due in class today

Engbreetsen, Elisabeth L. 2009. "Intimate Practices, Conjugal Ideals: Affective Ties and Relationship Strategies among *Lala* (Lesbian) Women in Contemporary Beijing." *Sexuality Research & Social Policy* 6(3):3–14.

Wang, Anyi. 2001. "Brothers." Jingyuan Zhang, trans. In Patricia Sieber, ed., *Red Is Not the Only Color: Contemporary Chinese Fiction on Love and Sex between Women, Collected Stories*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, pp. 93–141.

Thursday, March 24

Martin, Fran. 2010. "Critical Presentism: New Chinese Lesbian Cinema." *Backward Glances: Contemporary Chinese Cultures and the Female Homoerotic Imaginary*. Durham: Duke University Press, pp. 147–179. [*you may skim pages 153-164*]

Shi, Liang. 2015. "Discovering and Normalizing Lesbians: *Fish and Elephant*." *Chinese Lesbian Cinema: Mirror Rubbing, Lala, and Les*. Lanham: Lexington Books, pp. 107–125.

Optional: Liu, Petrus and Lisa Rofel. 2010. "An Interview with Shi Tou." *positions: east asia cultures critique* 18(2):409–416.

Fish and Elephant (2001, 106 minutes). *Watch film before class*.

Unit V. Queer Cultures and Communities in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the Chinese Diaspora

Tuesday, March 29

Fang, Hanquan, and J. H. Heng. 1983. "Social Changes and Changing Address Norms in China." *Language and Society* 12:495–507.

Wong, Andrew D. and Qing Zhang. 2001. "The Linguistic Construction of the Tongzhi Community." *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 10(2):248–278.

Thursday, March 31

Wong, Andrew D. 2002. "The Semantic Derogation of Tongzhi: A Synchronic Perspective." In Katherine Campbell-Kibler, Robert J. Podesva, Sarah Roberts, and Andrew Wong, eds., *Language and Sexuality: Contesting Meaning in Theory and Practice*. Stanford: Center for the Study of Language and Information, pp. 161–174.

Pai, Hsien-yung. 1990. *Crystal Boys*. Howard Goldblatt, trans. San Francisco: Gay Sunshine Press. *Begin reading*.

Tuesday, April 5

Pai, Hsien-yung. 1990. *Crystal Boys*. Howard Goldblatt, trans. San Francisco: Gay Sunshine Press. *Continue reading*.

Thursday, April 7

Research paper proposal due in class today

Pai, Hsien-yung. 1990. *Crystal Boys*. Howard Goldblatt, trans. San Francisco: Gay Sunshine Press. *Finish reading*.

Huang, Hans Tao-ming. 2010. "From Glass Clique to Tongzhi Nation: Crystal Boys, Identity Formation, and the Politics of Sexual Shame." *positions: east asia cultures critique* 18(2):373–398.

Crystal Boys (2003, 20 episode TV miniseries). *Watch at least the first two episodes before class. Episodes (with English subtitles) can be found on YouTube at: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCA_dai69vpHz1z4X7GsEChw/*

Tuesday, April 12

Chen, Xue. 2003. "Searching for the Lost Wings of the Angel." In Fran Martin, ed. and trans., *Angelwings: Contemporary Queer Fiction from Taiwan*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, pp. 167–187.

Martin, Fran. 2003. "Hybrid Citations: Chen Xue's Queer Tactics." *Situating Sexualities: Queer Representation in Taiwanese Fiction, Film, and Public Culture*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, pp. 119–140.

Thursday, April 14

- Marchetti, Gina. 2000. "The Wedding Banquet: Global Chinese Cinema and the Asian American Experience." In Darrell Y. Hamamoto and Sandra Liu eds., *Countervisions: Asian American Film Criticism*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, pp. 275–297.
- Chiang, Mark. 2002. "Coming Out into the Global System: Postmodern Patriarchies and Transnational Sexualities in The Wedding Banquet." In Peter X. Feng ed., *Screening Asian Americans*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, pp. 273–292.
- The Wedding Banquet* (1993, 106 minutes). *Watch film before class.*

Tuesday, April 19

- Kong, Travis S. K. 2008. "Where Is My Brokeback Mountain?" *Social Transformations in Chinese Societies* (Special Issue: Doing Families in Hong Kong), 4:135–159.
- Tang, Denise Tse-Shang. 2011. *Conditional Spaces : Hong Kong Lesbian Desires and Everyday Life*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, Introduction and Ch. 1, pp. 1–39.

Thursday, April 21

- Tang, Denise Tse-Shang. 2011. *Conditional Spaces : Hong Kong Lesbian Desires and Everyday Life*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, Chs. 2–3, pp. 41–88.

Tuesday, April 26

- Tang, Denise Tse-Shang. 2011. *Conditional Spaces : Hong Kong Lesbian Desires and Everyday Life*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, Chs. 4–5 and Epilogue, pp. 89–140.

Thursday, April 28

- Kong, Travis S. K. 2011. "Queer Diaspora: Hong Kong Migrant Gay Men in London." *Chinese Male Homosexualities: Memba, tongzhi, and Golden Boy*. London: Routledge, pp. 122–144.
- Cut Sleeve Boys* (2006, 86 minutes). *Watch film before class.*

Research paper due in my office mailbox by noon on Friday, May 6