

The CSUSB Modern China Lecture Series Presents
The 1911 Revolution and The Making of Modern Chinese Politics

A guest lecture with Dr. Xiaowei Zheng
(University of California, Santa Barbara)
Tuesday May 17, 2016, 12-2PM PL-4005

China Today declared itself a republic. From 1912 onward, notwithstanding political turmoil, assassinations, factionalism, civil wars, invasions, and revolutions, the policy of China has remained, at least in name, republican. Election of the head of state has always been nominally by the people, and the basis of state sovereignty always the popular will of the nation. However, despite the fact that eleven central government constitutions and constitutional drafts were written between 1908 and 1982, China has never attained to constitutionalism. In this talk, Dr. Zheng argues that the 1911 Revolution was a political transformation wrought by a vanguard of new ideas. During the revolutionary process, a new, democratic political culture was created, establishing popular sovereignty and republicanism as indisputable political principles. At the same time, the concepts of “separation of powers” and “limited government” - the tenets of Western constitutionalism - were never implemented in any serious fashion; impassioned public opinion rather than careful institutional design became the main mechanism for realizing political change.

This event is free and open to the public.

Dr. XIOWEI ZHENG is an assistant professor in History and East Asian Languages & Cultural Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Her research interests include local history of the Qing dynasty and early republican political culture, with a special focus on the emergence of popular nationalism and the potential of republicanism. Her publications have appeared in *Late Imperial China* and *Twentieth Century China*. Her book, *The 1911 Revolution and the Making of Modern Chinese Politics*, is scheduled for release by Stanford University Press this year.

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