

Oberlin College
Department of Politics

Politics 110: Revolution, Socialism and Reform in China

Fall 2010

Professor Marc Blecher

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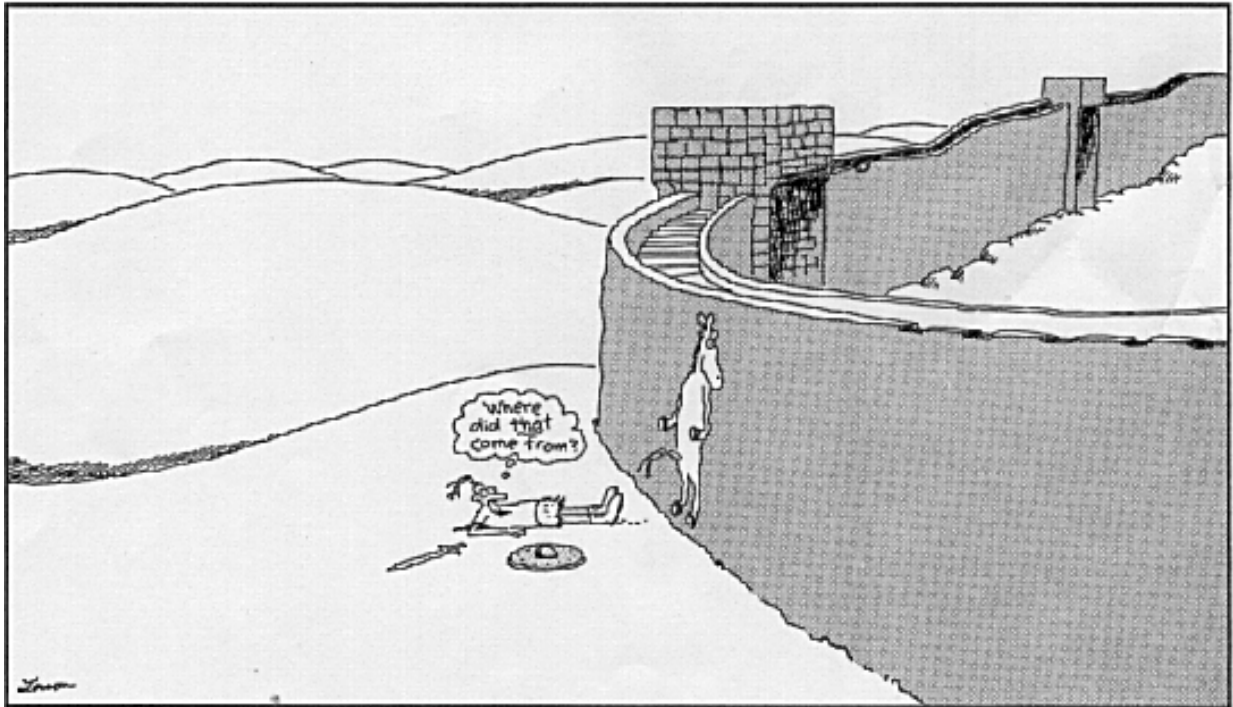
Website: <http://tiny.cc/Blecherhome>

Office hours: Tuesday/Thursday, 3:00-4:00 &

Wednesday 3:30-4:30

(Sign up at: <http://tiny.cc/BlecherOfficeHours>)

Class meets Monday,
Wednesday and
Friday, 1:30-2:20, King 239



Circa 300 B.C.: The first barbarian invader reaches the Great Wall of China

We must forgive our hapless equestrian. China has surprised many people – including its own leaders and people as well as foreign observers – more often than most of them care to remember. Its stunning downfall from the apex of world civilization, where it remained for millennia through the early nineteenth century, to the ignoble condition of the “sick man of Asia” by the late nineteenth century, still baffles. Subsequently, China could not consolidate a capitalist economy or a stable polity at a time when some of its neighbors did so. Instead it produced the most massive socialist revolution and transformation in the third world. It experienced several dramatic shifts in

the course of doing so. Departing early from the Soviet model, for years it evinced a driving impulse for “continuing revolution” that put it at the extreme left among state socialist countries. Then in 1979, China switched course, pioneering broad-gauged structural reform way ahead of other state socialist countries. In 1989 it switched back, moving more sternly, decisively and successfully against reform than any other state socialist country has yet done, precisely at a time when most others were being transcended by popular movements for change. Today China holds out the prospect of a “third way”, a hybrid combining in a new way features of state socialism and capitalism that may now be called “market Leninism”.

Politics 110 provides a comprehensive introduction to China’s revolution and the transmutations of its socialism and capitalism, focusing on these puzzles among others. The course is organized chronologically and topically. It involves the twin tasks of describing Chinese affairs and, on that basis, analyzing them. The course will familiarize you with what has been happening in China through readings, lectures and films. As we gain a base of knowledge, we will venture to come to terms with it through various kinds of conversations: discussions in and outside of class, and exchanges of our questions, concerns and views in writing on our blog.

Before each class I expect you to complete readings that will cover the subject for the day. In class the material cannot be covered in anything approaching the fullness of what you need to know about it; *ipso facto*, lectures cannot substitute for the reading. If you have not done the reading before class, you will not be able to get much out of that session, and you will, unavoidably, feel lost.

We will be making intensive and regular use of Blackboard.

- § To encourage reflective reading, help you retain what you have read, and help me calibrate what we do in class, once each week I expect you to write on Blackboard a short response to questions about the works we are confronting that we will have posed in advance. You are also invited to comment there at any time on what others in the class have written. Start a debate! You may also use the blog to raise questions on which you would like help from us or from fellow students.
- § I use the blogs to promote your learning, not to evaluate it. I want you to think and write your blogs freely and creatively, and to take risks. Therefore I do not grade them. But because I view them as very important for your learning, I do factor heavily into your final grade whether you have simply done them seriously and regularly.
- § Once each week you should respond in writing on the blog to questions that I will pose for each session. Specifically, those of you with surnames beginning A-H will do so by Monday morning at 9:00 AM, and those with surnames I-P by 9:00 AM Wednesday, and those with surnames Q-Z by 9:00 AM Friday. The 9:00 deadline is firm because that’s when I start preparing for class. Moreover, the blog closes at 9:00 AM, both to enforce this deadline and also because I do not want students making up missed blogs later in the semester; the whole point of the blogs is to do them week-in, week-out, not subsequently in order to meet a requirement. If you must miss or inadvertently have missed your appointed day, just post a reply for another day that week; if you miss a week, do two the following week. You may, of course, respond more than once each week if you like; the more often you do, the more you will learn.
- § On each morning or early afternoon before class, prepare by taking a few moments to log in to the blog to read what everyone has written.

You will also write two open-book, take-home essays of approximately 1,500 words (\approx 6 pages) each. The schedule can be found in the course outline below. These require a command of the material, but they are oriented mainly toward developing your engagement with and analysis and interpretation of it. To give you an idea of what to expect and to help you orient your reading and thinking, starting on page 15 you will find the essay questions used in the most recent offering of the course. You can expect many of the same issues to be treated this time around, perhaps with some of the same or similar questions. Sonia Roubini, our writing tutor, can help you write great papers. I will be happy to review drafts of your papers before you finalize them. And if you are not happy with the outcome of your first paper, you are welcome to rewrite it any time during the rest of the semester.

I will evaluate your work according to the following weightings:

Blog comments	40%
Papers	30% each
Active listening and participation in class	A “fudge factor”

Please take careful note of these proportions. They reflect my conviction that *the daily process of the course is as important* to your learning as the two papers you will write. In the past students who assumed that the papers were their only significant responsibilities for the course have been unpleasantly surprised at the end of the semester. ☹

We are screening several films. Some can be viewed online, but others have to be shown **OUTSIDE OF REGULAR CLASS TIME**. These are noted in **BOLDFACE** in the schedule below. Please peruse the course schedule, **PLAN ACCORDINGLY**, and accept my sincerest thanks for your flexibility.

You should keep up with the news from China. There are several possibilities:

§ The best China journalism in major newspapers can be found *The Financial Times*, *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times* and *The Washington Post*, all available in Mudd or on line. Chingching Ni, a writer for the *Los Angeles Times*, is a veteran of Politics 110, which, I like to think, helps account for her penchant for stories about the human costs of China’s very rapid development.

§ James Miles, of *The Economist*, is an outstanding journalist (and the son of an Obie). Be aware of the magazine’s definite neo-liberal ideology, though, which often gets inserted by editors.

§ Yahoo provides a reasonably comprehensive source of Western wire-service reports at <http://asia.news.yahoo.com/china.html>

§ So does the *Financial Times*: <feed://www.ft.com/rss/world/asiapacific/china>

§ Official news from China can be found in the *Beijing Review* (a weekly magazine, in Mudd) and *China Daily* (<http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/en/home/>). For official state publications, they are actually fairly lively, somewhat objective, and often even critical.

§ The Chinese Embassy to the US web site contains official government news releases and other basic information): <http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/>

Please consult our schematic chronology (page 10) and guide to the rudiments of Chinese pronunciation (page 14). The timeline can help bring some order to the complex sequence of events we will be studying. The pronunciation guide will help you discharge your responsibility as students of China to pronounce Chinese words and names properly, or at least better than much of the broadcast news media who are shirking their duty in this respect.

Newspapers and cyberspace can provide timely information; but information is not knowledge. For that, we still need, among other things, analyses contained in books. Each year Americans spend five times as much on dog food as on college books. Politics 110 is doing its part to help us get our priorities right. The following books are available for purchase at the Oberlin Bookstore:

Robert Benewick and Stephanie Donald, *The State of China Atlas* (second edition [*N.b.* avoid the first edition])

Marc Blecher, *China Against the Tides: Restructuring Through Revolution, Radicalism and Reform* (third edition [*N.b.* avoid earlier editions])

Barbara Entwisle and Gail E. Henderson, eds., *Re-Drawing Boundaries: Work, Households and Gender in China*

William Hinton, *Fanshen*

William Joseph, *Politics in China*

Elizabeth Perry and Mark Selden, eds., *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict and Resistance* (third edition [*N.b.* avoid earlier editions])

Vivienne Shue, *The Reach of the State*

William Strunk and E.B. White, *Elements of Style*

Gordon White, *Riding the Tiger: The Politics of Economic Reform in Post-Mao China*

Several other readings are also on reserve, all indicated in the schedule below. There are 5-6 copies of everything on print reserve. Everything is also on electronic reserve (Eres). You can find Eres at <http://eres.cc.oberlin.edu/eres/default.aspx> . The Eres password is Polt110 (and it is case-specific).

Social science should be read differently than other kinds of material. Don't be a dumb reader, by which I mean don't let the author (including me) lead you around by the nose.

§ Don't start with the first word and continue to the last word. Try to figure out the overall argument before you begin reading, by looking for summaries at the end of each section or chapter. (This isn't a detective novel.) Or if they are at the beginning, focus on them.

§ Have questions in mind whose answers you are seeking out. The blog questions will help you in this respect by providing them, though you should of course add your own.

§ Don't get bogged down. Once you know what you're looking for, it'll be easier to choose which paragraphs and sections to read carefully and which you can skim. Yes, skim.

Schedule of Classes, Topics, Readings and Assignments

September 8: Course Introduction

September 10-13: Imperial China

Marc Blecher, *China Against the Tides*, Introduction and pages 1-7

William Hinton, *Fanshen*, chapter 4

Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, pages 162-187 (on reserve and Eres)

Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, pages 67-80 (on reserve and Eres)

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 3:00-5:00 PM: Screening of *China in Revolution*, Mudd 050 (also available on Youtube in 10 parts: http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=%22china+in+revolution%22&aq=f)

September 15: Republican China

Blecher, pages 7-9

Moore, pages 187-201, 433-452

Skocpol, pages 147-154, 236-251

September 17: The Communist-Led Revolution, I

Blecher, pages 9-19

Moore, pages 201-227

Skocpol, pages 112-117, 252-262

Mao Zedong, "Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership" (on Eres)

Hinton, chapters 10, 15-19, 22, 23

September 20: A: The Communist-Led Revolution, II: Land Reform; B: Summation of Pre-1949 Period

A: Blecher, pages 27-32

Hinton, chapters 35-37, 46-53

B: Blecher, pages 19-26

September 22: The Early 1950s: Consolidation and Socialist Beginnings

Blecher, pages 27, 32-34

Mark Selden, ed., *The People's Republic of China*, pages 175-193, 254-277 (on reserve and Eres)

Vivienne Shue, "Mutual Aid" (on reserve and Eres; also in chapter four of her *Peasant China in Transition* [on reserve])

September 24: The Middle 1950s I: Accelerated Socialist Transformation in Urban Areas

Blecher, pages 34-38

Selden, ed., pages 290-314 (on reserve and Eres)

Stephen Andors, "From Reconstruction to the Great Leap Forward" (on reserve and Eres; also in chapter 3 of his *China's Industrial Revolution* [on reserve])

September 27: The Middle 1950s II: Accelerated Socialist Transformation in the Rural Areas

Blecher, pages 38-43

Shue, "Collectivization" (on reserve and Eres; also in chapter seven of her *Peasant China in Transition* [on reserve])

Selden, ed., pages 350-358, 364-373 (on reserve and Eres)

September 29: Sharpening Political Conflict

Blecher, pages 43-middle of 47

Selden, ed., pages 314-330 (on reserve and Eres)

FIRST ESSAY QUESTIONS DISTRIBUTED

October 1: The Great Leap Forward: Radical Communist Experimentation

Blecher, pages middle of 47-50

Hinton, *Shenfan*, chapters 29-34 (*n.b.* This is NOT *Fanshen*) (on reserve and Eres; photocopies also on reserve under the title "Great Leap")

Selden, ed., pages 467-482 (on reserve and Eres)

October 4: The Early 1960s: Readjustment and Emergent Two Line Struggle

Blecher, pages 50-54

Jack Gray, "The Two Roads" (on reserve and Eres; also in Stuart Schram, ed., *Authority, Participation and Cultural Change in China* [on reserve], pages 109-158)

Selden, ed., pages 530-541 (on reserve and Eres)

October 6: The Cultural Revolution, I: Narrative and Political Sociology

Blecher, 54-62

Marc Blecher and Gordon White, *Micropolitics in Contemporary China*, chapters 2-6 (on reserve and Eres; chapter 1 recommended to provide context)

October 8: The Cultural Revolution, II: Political Economy

Peer Møller Christensen, "The Shanghai School and Its Rejection" (on reserve and Eres; also in Stephan Feuchtwang and Athar Hussain, eds., *The Chinese Economic Reforms*, pages 74-90 [on reserve])

Mark Selden, ed., pages 651-662 (on reserve and Eres)

October 11: Summary of Maoist Period

Blecher, 143-145

October 13: Review for papers

OCTOBER 14, NOON: papers due via e-mail

October 15: Politics, I: Theory and Ideology

Blecher, pages 63-65, 167-169

Gordon White, *Riding the Tiger*, chapter 5

October 18: Politics, II: The State

Robert Benewick and Stephanie Donald, *The State of China Atlas*, maps 18-22
Blecher, chapter 4
White, chapter 6
Screen *China from the Inside, Part 1* online via Blackboard

October 20: Politics, III: The State and Society

Benewick and Donald, map 23
Blecher, pages 109-118, 172-184
Shue, *The Reach of the State*, chapters 2 and 3
White, chapter 7

October 22: Politics, IV: Political Participation and Resistance: Urban and Labor Protest

Blecher, pages 125-127
Joseph, chapter 9
Perry and Selden, eds., *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict and Resistance*, chapters 2-3
Screen first half of *China From the Inside, Part 4* online via Blackboard

November 1: Politics, IV: Political Participation and Resistance: Rural Protest

Joseph, chapter 8
Perry and Selden, chapters 4-5
Screen second half of *China From the Inside, Part 4* online via Blackboard

November 3: Politics, IV: Political Participation and Resistance: Protest Around Nationality and Religion

Benewick and Donald, maps 8 & 32
Blecher, pages 128-129
Joseph, chapters 14-15 (choose one chapter)
Perry and Selden, eds., chapters 9-11 (choose one or two chapters)
Screen second half of *China From the Inside, Part 4* online via Blackboard

NOVEMBER 4, 7:00-10:00 PM: Screening of *The Gate of Heavenly Peace*, King 323

November 5: Politics VI: Political Participation and Resistance – The 1989 Crisis

The Gate of Heavenly Peace web site: <http://tsquare.tv/>
Reread Blecher, pages 76-80
Tang Tsou, “The Tiananmen Tragedy: The State-Society Relationship, Choices and Mechanisms in Historical Perspective” (on reserve and Eres; also in chapter 6 of Jon Elster, ed., *The Round Table and the Breakdown of Communism*, [on reserve])

November 8: Political Economy, I: Overview

Blecher, pages 131-132
White, chapters 1-2
Joseph, chapter 7 (optional)
Benewick and Donald, maps 9-17

November 10: Political Economy, II: The Maoist Model in Agriculture

Blecher, pages 132-133, 137-138, 140-144

Tang Tsou, Marc Blecher and Mitch Meisner, "Organization, Growth and Equality in Xiyang County, Part I" (on reserve and Eres; also in *Modern China* V, 1 [January 1979])

Tang Tsou, Marc Blecher and Mitch Meisner, "Organization, Growth and Equality in Xiyang County, Part II" (on reserve and Eres; also in *Modern China* V, 2 [April 1979])

November 12: Political Economy, IV: Structural Reform and Agriculture (a)

Benewick and Donald, maps 12 (again)

Blecher, pages 147-148, 150-151, 152-153, 161-164

Screen *All Under Heaven* online via Blackboard

November 15: Political Economy, IV: Structural Reform and Agriculture (b)

White, chapter 3

Shue, *Reach of the State*, chapter 4

November 17: Political Economy, V: Maoist Period Industry and Commerce (a)

Blecher, pages 133-140, 144-145

November 19: Political Economy, VI: Industry and Commerce (b)

Benewick and Donald, map 13 (again)

Blecher, pages 145-147, 148-150, 151-161, 165

White, chapter 4

November 22: Gender and Family, I: The Maoist Period (a)

Blecher, pages 119-123

Entwisle and Henderson, eds., *Re-drawing Boundaries*, chapters 5-6

November 24: Gender and Family, II: The Structural Reform Period (b)

Benewick and Donald, map 7

Blecher, pages 123-125

Entwisle and Henderson, eds., chapters 7-8

Screen *Small Happiness* and *China From the Inside (Part 2)* online via Blackboard

November 29: Gender and Family, III: The Structural Reform Period (c)

Entwisle and Henderson, eds., chapter 9

Perry and Selden, chapter 6

December 1: Population

Benewick and Donald, maps 5-6

Joseph, chapter 13

Perry and Selden, chapter 7

SECOND ESSAY QUESTIONS DISTRIBUTED

December 3: The Environment

Benewick and Donald, maps 33-35

Joseph, chapter 11

Perry and Selden, chapter 9

Screen *China From the Inside, Part 3* online via Blackboard

December 6: The Arts (Especially Music) and Politics

Joseph, chapter 10

Richard Kraus, *Pianos and Politics in China*, chapters 1, 4, 7

December 8: Public Health

Benewick and Donald, map 28

Joseph, ed., chapter 12

Wang Shaoguang, "China's Health System: From Crisis to Opportunity" (on Eres)

December 10: Toward the Future

Blecher, chapter 9

White, chapter 8

December 13: Conclusion

DECEMBER 14, 4:30 PM: SECOND ESSAY DUE

SCHEMATIC CHRONOLOGY OF CHINESE POLITICS

c. 500 B.C.E.	Confucius (and other Zhou thinkers, including Daoists & Legalists)
c. 220 B.C.E.	First Emperor of Qin unifies China, makes virtual revolution
c. 200 B.C.E. - 200 C.E.	Han Dynasty founded (and Buddhism from India)
c. 600 C.E.	Turkic ruling houses regenerate the empire in Sui and Tang
c. 750	Mid-Tang revolution (capita taxes to land, migration north to south)
c. 1000-1300	Song (policy-making traditions; culture stronger than army)
1368	Ming expels the Mongols' harsh and short Yuan Dynasty
1644	Manchus come to power after the Ming falls in a peasant rebellion
1840	Opium War (unequal Treaty of Nanjing in 1842)
1850-64	Taiping Rebellion (Han gentry/proto-warlord armies save the Qing)
1895	Sino-Japanese War ends with China's loss
1898	Hundred Days of Emperor's reform ended by Empress Dowager & friends
1905	Confucian exams abolished for posts: Sun Yatsen founds proto-Guomindang
1911	Fall of the empire; Republican Revolution
1915	21 Demands (Japan wants China as protectorate); Yuan Shikai attempts to restore the monarchy and make himself emperor
1919	May 4 Movement protests Versailles gift of Shandong enclaves to Japan
1921	Chinese Communist Party founded (then a minor event, in Shanghai)
1923	First United Front of Guomindang and Communist Party (Sun-Joffe Agreement)
1925	Sun Yatsen dies
1926	Beginning of Northern Expedition of Jiang Kaishek to unify warlords under Guomindang
1927	Jiang attacks Communist Party in "White Terror", forces it to countryside, begins "Nanjing Decade"
1929-34	Jiangxi Soviet (land reforms); Jiang's "encirclement campaigns"
1931	Japan seizes Manchuria (N.E. China), later installs Qing emperor there
1934-35	Long March ("go north to resist Japan"), Mao becomes head of Communist Party
1936	Xi'an Incident (anti-Japanese Guomindang generals kidnap Jiang temporarily)
1937	World War II begins: Japan invades N. China Plain & coasts; Guomindang-Communist Party "Second United Front"
1941	Pearl Harbor (U.S. enters war); Guomindang-Communist Party military conflict in Anhui
1945	Japanese surrender; cities given to Jiang's Army: civil war resumes

- 1948 People's Liberation Army attacks in North and Central China; US aids Jiang
- 1949 "Liberation": October 1 founding of People's Republic of China
- 1950 Korean War (June 25; China enters, October 25); land, labor, & marriage laws
- 1951 Main land reform; patriotic bourgeois support for CCP in war; truce talks
- 1952 "Three-anti/five-anti" campaigns to purify & scare bureaucrats and businessmen in cities
- 1953 Stalin dies; Korea truce
- 1954 Constitution, centralization; rations; Gao & Rao (regional leaders) purged for being pro-Soviet; lower-stage agricultural coöps
- 1955 Higher-stage agricultural coöps; First Five Year Plan (1953-57) announced
- 1956 Hundred Flowers campaign
- 1957 Antirightist Campaign; intellectuals and critics "sent down"
- 1958 Great Leap Forward (oversized communes, new factory capital, mobilization)
- 1959 Defense Minister Peng Dehuai purged for criticizing Mao; revolt in Tibet
- 1960 Famine in post-Leap economic depression; Soviet technicians leave China
- 1961 Retrenchment to smaller communes, last of "3 bad years"
- 1962 Border war with India
- 1963 Socialist Education Campaign: workers & peasants advantaged in jobs, education
- 1964 Atom bomb successfully tested; army organizes movements for proletarian pride
- 1965 "On Dismissal of Hai Rui"/"People's War" (pre-Cultural Revolution radical tracts, Yao/Lin)
- 1966 Red guards from cadres' families, then among ex-bourgeois & contract labor; Liu Shaoqi purged
- 1967 Cultural Revolution at height: red guard factional coalitions, civil wars
- 1968 Clean class ranks: soldier-worker-cadre teams force order; USSR invades Prague
- 1969 Lin Biao named "Mao's successor"; May 7 cadre schools; Ussuri River fighting between China and USSR
- 1970 Zhou Enlai-Mao Zedong political coöperation: Mao supports "Gang of 4" too
- 1971 Lin Biao's fall; Kissinger's secret flight to Peking; China takes UN seat
- 1972 People's Liberation Army budget cut; official violence ebbs a bit; Shanghai Communiqué between China and US

- 1973 Commanders shifted among military regions: Deng reappears after being purged in 1966
- 1974 "Criticize Confucius" (an allegory: radicals criticize Zhou); leaders ill
- 1975 Deng Xiaoping quasi-premier for Zhou's Four Modernizations (removed, 1/76)
- 1976 Zhou, Mao die (January & September); Hua Guofeng Premier (February), Party Chair (September); "Gang" jailed (October)
- 1977 Four Modernizations new line, but under old-style leader Hua; admission exams for colleges
- 1978 Deng in charge at Third Plenum; "democracy wall"; Carter-Hua Communique (US-China relations)
- 1979 "Rightists" exonerated: rural reforms extend; Vietnam invasion
- 1980 "Gang of Four" tried: some communes become townships; Zhao Ziyang becomes Premier
- 1981 Rural incomes up, amid urban shortages: Hu Yaobang replaces Hua as Party Chair
- 1982 US defense weapons to Taiwan, but US-China agreement on fewer future sales
- 1983 Spiritual Pollution Campaign stirs doubts in Communist Party about reform, but campaign ends soon
- 1984 Industrial reforms announced; Hong Kong accord
- 1985 Old cadres retired at autumn congress; Gorbachev heads USSR
- 1986 Students protest delay of political reforms, but Communist Party is slow to accommodate them.
- 1987 Dismissal of Party General Secretary Hu Yaobang; movement against "bourgeois liberalization"
- 1988 Abortive price reform; inflation; beginning of economic austerity
- 1989 Broad popular protests followed by repression and martial law; rise of hard-line leadership
- 1990 Hard-liners in power
- 1991 Consolidation of post-1989 leadership; economic austerity
- 1992 Deng's "Southern Tour": economic austerity ends; debate on appropriate pace of growth
- 1993 Some releases from prison of 1989 protesters; economic overheating; rural discontent erupts
- 1994 High inflation; continuing expressions of discontent
- 1995 Corruption a major issue; death of Chen Yun; economic soft landing; Taiwan Straits heat up
- 1996 Economy stabilizes; Taiwan Straits conflict heats up; US-China relations difficult
- 1997 Death of Deng Xiaoping; return of Hong Kong; 15th Party Congress: Jiang Zemin consolidates leadership and state enterprise reform; Jiang visits US
- 1998 At National People's Congress, Premier Li Peng is the first top Chinese leader in history to vacate his position in accordance with the Constitution; President Clinton visits China; hard-liners rise at end of the year

- 1999 China tense in face of political demonstrations by workers and *Falungong* spiritual practitioners; US bombs Chinese embassy in Belgrade, provoking popular patriotic outrage and state-approved popular demonstrations.
- 2000 hard-liners remain in control, keeping political atmosphere repressive
- 2001 Tensions in US-China relations; China joins WTO
- 2002 16th Party Congress chooses younger, Hu/Wen leadership; China joins WTO
- 2003 SARS rocks China; Three Gorges Dam begins operation; Chinese in space
- 2004 Continued economic growth and tight political control
- 2005 Hu promotes “harmonious society”; serious chemical spill covered up but then revealed
- 2006-7 Continuing economic growth and political authoritarianism; new labor laws passed
- 2008 China hosts the Olympics; huge Sichuan earthquake
- 2009 Broad political stability amid slowed economic growth and key anniversaries; massive ethnic riot in Xinjiang
- 2010 Resurgent economic growth; Politics 110 struggles yet again to understand all this

GUIDE TO CHINESE ROMANIZATIONS

As students of Chinese politics, it is both respectful and incumbent on us to try to pronounce Chinese names, places and phrases correctly.

There are three major systems of romanization used in the general literature. The first can be called the “post office system”, though it is totally unsystematic. It is mainly used for place names, examples include Peking, Canton, and Amoy.

The other two are Wade-Giles, which was commonly used through the 1970s, and pinyin, which is the official system of the People’s Republic, and has completely replaced Wade-Giles in current writing. You will have to discern which one your source is using by inspection. (Most of our readings will use pinyin.) The pinyin system is distinguishable by any of the following: x, q, z, zh, r, g, d, b, ong. By contrast, the Wade-Giles system contains apostrophes and hyphens.

The left side of each equation is the romanization, as you might see it on a page; the right is a usual and approximate English equivalent sound.

PINYIN

x = sy z = dz zh = j c = ts ong = ung ian = ien ui = way

i is variable: “-ee” after most initials; “-r” after ch, r, sh, zh; or a deep “-uh” or no sound after c, s, & z.

WADE-GILES

When not followed by apostrophes: k = g p = b t = d ts = dz ch = j. When followed by apostrophes, these all have English sounds.

Also: j = r ih = r ui = way yu = yo yü = yü hs = sy

ESSAY QUESTIONS FROM THE MOST RECENT OFFERING OF THE COURSE

First Essay Topics

1. Discuss some significant ways in which legacies from China's history before 1949 affected the course of its socialist development. In doing so, you should try to deploy – critically or agreeably – some of the structural concepts and arguments advanced by Moore and/or Skocpol. Be sure to be specific not just about the pre-1949 period but also about what in the post-1949 period you are explaining by reference to elements of the past.
2. What does the Chinese case teach us about class structure and struggle under state socialism?
3. The Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution were both in part efforts to resolve some basic problems of Chinese socialism. Compare them along one or more of the following dimensions: the problems they were attempting to address; the specific policies they involved; the kind of politics they involved, within the state and between the state and society; their successes and failures (in terms of their own avowed goals and/or in terms of other evaluative criteria you may wish to bring to bear). Account for the similarities or differences you have discovered.
4. Compare the “open-door rectification” of the land reform period with the Cultural Revolution. Discuss their respective goals, methods and outcomes. Account for the similarities or differences that you find. (Hint: a good way to do this question is to re-read the relevant portions of *Fanshen* and *Micropolitics in Contemporary China*.)
5. How can the marked swings of the 1950s – from the moderate policies of the reconstruction period to the First Five Year Plan to the Great Leap Forward – be explained? Is there any underlying logic at work here? If so, does it reflect political intentions of the leadership or just their efforts to cope?
6. Choose one or more key moments in China from the revolutionary period up to the end of the Maoist period. Assess the relative role of the top leadership, middle- and/or lower level officials, and ordinary Chinese citizens in accounting for what occurred. Be careful not to assume that because China is not a Western-style democracy the people played no significant role. They often constrained the top- and middle-level leadership in various ways, and they always provided the context within which the leadership made its choices. Think hard about all this as you formulate your response.
7. Write out your own question, discuss it with me (a necessary step), and then respond to it in writing.

Second Essay Topics

Choose one:

1. Discuss some significant ways in which particular legacies from China's history before 1949 affected the course of its project of structural reform after 1978. If you wrote on this topic last time, take this opportunity to reevaluate your ideas.

2. "The rural structural reforms were based in significant ways upon the achievements of the socialist transformation of the countryside that preceded them, even as they also undid many of those achievements.

– A. Nonimus

Comment.

3. Choose a major difference between the urban and rural structural reforms that you want to explain, and identify some factors that do the explaining. Possible *explananda* (things explained) and *explanans* (things that do the explaining) among which you can choose might be: ownership forms; constituencies (*i.e.*, peasants/workers); incentives; economic coordination (plan/market); distributive effects (equality/inequality); effect on economic performance; the pace of reform; the preexisting structures and problems in each sphere; politics (*e.g.*, support and opposition, controversiality, the roles of state and society). These are just suggestions; you may well think of others to bring into either side of the analysis.

4. When compared with other "developing" or "third world" countries, China is often regarded as having achieved a particularly distinguished record in social policy. Evaluate and account for China's population control policy in both the Maoist and structural reform periods, and relate it to wider questions about China's politics and state. For example, do the various successes and failures reflect some basic features of the state and politics? Does the imperative of population control demand or promote a particular kind of state and politics, or limit the possible forms that the state and politics can or should take?

5. "The spring 1989 popular demonstrations appeared to be about democracy, but at their bottom lay something else."

– Kurt Remarque

Comment, reflecting also on the movement's social composition.

6. Account for the leadership's response to the spring 1989 popular demonstrations, both before and after the infamous night of June 4, in light of what you have learned about Chinese history, politics, society and economy.

7. The structural reform period is considered by some to be the first time since 1949 in which society began to emerge as a political actor and have some impact upon the state. Others think it was there all along, constraining the Maoist state. Still others believe it is not yet a significant factor in Chinese politics. Discuss some aspects of state-society relations in the Maoist and structural reform periods.

8. Compare some of the kinds of political resistance seen in the Maoist period (e.g., the 100 Flowers, the Cultural Revolution, the “localism” described by Shue) with those we have studied for the structural reform period.

9. Compare political resistance under the structural reforms in China’s rural and urban areas. Account for similarities and/or differences in terms of wider aspects of the structural reforms and of the political system.

10. Discuss gender relations in the structural reform period, comparing with the Maoist period. Be sure to locate the gender question within the wider constellations of political and economic forces operating in China. Reflect upon the possible routes to increased gender equality, grounding your prognostications and possible proposals squarely in your understanding of China today.

11. Has China “gone capitalist”?

12. Using music as an example, discuss China’s encounters since 1949 with its own historical culture and with foreign cultural forms, relating the issue to relevant aspects of politics, society and/or economy.

13. China faces myriad pressing social and economic problems, including a burgeoning population, the need to produce adequate supplies of food, and environmental degradation. Does it require high state capacity to solve them? If so, what are the implications of arrogating such capacity to the state for other issues, such as gender equality or better labor conditions, which may require a more democratic approach? In responding to this question, be sure to make specific reference to the material we have studied. (That is, it will not do just to ruminate about your political preferences.)

14. Write your own question, clear it with me, and then answer it.