

## **The Politics of China**

New York University  
Graduate Program in Politics  
Fall 2006, Thursday, 2-4pm

Bruce Gilley  
bgilley@princeton.edu  
Tel: 732-668-3469

### **Course Introduction**

China is the world's most populous country (1.3 billion people) and a state that encompasses one of the world's oldest continuous civilizations (approximately 2,800 years). It is the last major communist state, the world's fastest growing economy, and its most closely-watched emerging international power. In addition to its importance for the world, China is also important for political science. The mixture of Marxist ideology, Chinese culture, and economic boom have created a rich laboratory for the study of politics, one in which theories of economic and political development are being fundamentally recast. If these are not reasons enough to study the politics of China, one can offer another: it is fun. China's politics are tumultuous, unpredictable, and Baroque in their own way. Within the scope of a single day, the current general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, Hu Jintao, will appear in a finely-tailored business suit to meet with foreign investors, and then don a drab-green military tunic for a meeting on thought unification. It is a country that, despite its image of timelessness, saw five forceful regime changes in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (in 1911, 1928, 1949, 1976, and 1989) and is almost certain to see another this century. The aim of this course is to encourage and stimulate an interest in the politics of China. By the end of this course, you should be able to offer an intelligent assessment of the politics of China. You should be able to compare and contrast China's political experience with that of other countries.

### **Course Outline**

This course is designed to cover the most pressing and recurrent issues in the politics of China. We begin by considering competing theories of China's politics that will animate our discussions throughout. That is followed by four weeks on the basic historical, social, institutional, and ideological settings of China's politics. After that, there are seven weeks of looking at particular issue areas. The penultimate week considers the evolutionary future of China's politics. In the concluding class we will summarize the course and consider China's politics in a comparative setting.

- Week 1: Theories of China's Politics
- Week 2: Political History and the Politics of History
- Week 3: Society and Social Change
- Week 4: Ideology and the Party
- Week 5: Institutions
- Week 6: Elite Politics
- Week 7: Popular Politics and Legitimacy
- Week 8: Economic Policy and Political Economy
- Week 9: Social Policy
- Week 10: Human Rights
- Week 11: Hong Kong, Taiwan, Tibet, and Xinjiang
- Week 12: Foreign Policy
- Week 13: Political Reform and China's Future

## Week 14: Conclusions

### Course Requirements and Grading

- Class attendance (15%)
- Class participation (15%)
- Class presentation (10%)
- Two Review Papers (30% each)

The grading of this course is designed to encourage students to be regular, active participants in the class and diligent readers of the course materials. Regular attendance is mandatory. Participation is marked subjectively, based on the quantity and quality of student interventions in class discussions throughout the course. Students will present a five to ten-minute summary and critique of one of the readings in one of the weeks, which they will be able to choose. Finally, students will write two critical review articles of 10 to 15 pages each based on any selected readings from the course, essays that reflect both the readings themselves as well as the discussion and critical comments of our class. The first will be due at mid-term and the second at the end of term. The grading of these papers will follow the following definitions.

A+	Exceptional; significantly exceeds the highest expectations.
A	Outstanding; meets the highest standards.
A-	Excellent; meets very high standards.
B+	Very good; meets high standards.
B	Good; meets most of the standards.
B-	More than adequate; shows reasonable command of the material.
C+	Acceptable; meets basic standards.
C	Acceptable; meets some of the basic standards.
C-	Acceptable, while falling short of basic standards in several ways.
D	Minimally acceptable; lowest passing grade.

### Background Readings and Films

It is helpful to approach the study of China having immersed oneself in some of the many examples of great writing and film-making from China. Here are a few suggestions.

#### *Novels*

Lao She (1999 (orig. 1926-1966)). Blades of Grass: The Stories of Lao She. Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press. – persecuted to death in the Cultural Revolution, Lao wrote some of China's most earthy and elegiac prose

Gao Xingjian (2000 (orig. 1990)). Soul Mountain (Ling Shan). New York, HarperCollins Publishers. – winner of the 2000 Nobel Prize for Literature, Gao is exiled in France

Wei Hui (2001). Shanghai Baby (Shanghai Beibei). New York, Pocket Books. – a look at crass life in the big city

#### *Memoirs*

Dai Qing (2005). Tiananmen Follies: Prison Memoirs and Other Writings. Norwalk, CT, EastBridge. – female journalist and gadfly of the regime recalls her days in prison

Wei Jingsheng (1997). The Courage to Stand Alone: Letters from Prison and Other Writings. New York, Viking. – acerbic prose by the man imprisoned by Deng and then exiled

Ruan Ming (1994). Deng Xiaoping: Chronicle of an Empire (*Deng Xiaoping Diguo*). Boulder, Westview Press. – elite politics and ideological machinations in the Deng court

#### *Reportage*

Liu Binyan (2006 (orig. 1955-1995)). Two Kinds of Truth: Stories and Reportage from China (*Di Er Zhong Zhongcheng*). Bloomington, Indiana University Press. –writings of China's most famous investigative journalist

Hessler, Peter (2006). Oracle Bones: A Journey Between China's Past and Present. New York, HarperCollins. -- funny and perceptive book by *The New Yorker's* correspondent in Beijing

Johnson, Ian (2004). Wild Grass: Three Stories of Change in Modern China. New York, Pantheon Books. – includes the *Wall Street Journal* writer's Pulitzer-winning writings on the Falun Gong religious group

#### *History*

Cohen, Paul A. (2003). China Unbound: Evolving Perspectives on the Chinese Past. New York, Routledge. –the man who overturned the prevailing Western view of China

Spence, Jonathan D. (1999). The Search for Modern China. New York, W.W. Norton. – the best survey of modern China

Jenner, W. J. F. (1994). The Tyranny of History: The Roots of China's Crisis. London ; New York, Penguin Books.– pessimistic but insightful view of a China hampered by its own rich historical tradition

#### *Documentary Films*

Carma Hinton and Richard Gordon (1995). The Gate of Heavenly Peace. – documentary record of the 1989 Tiananmen movement and massacre

Carma Hinton and Richard Gordon (2003). Morning Sun. – documentary record of the 1966-1976 Cultural Revolution

Antony Thomas (2006). The Tank Man. – China in an age of economic openness and political repression

#### *Feature Films*

Chen Kaige (1993). Farewell My Concubine (*Ba Wang Bie Ji*). – historical sweep of China's bloody 20<sup>th</sup> century

Zhang Yang (1999). Shower (*Xi Zao*). – the stresses of modernity on family and friends at one of Beijing's last great bathhouses

Zhang Yimou (1999). Not One Less (*Yi Ge Dou Bu Neng Shao*). – rural poverty mixed with guerilla filming techniques

#### Required Readings

##### *Course Texts (all in paperback)*

Saich, Tony (2004). Governance and Politics of China. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. New York, Palgrave.

Gries, Peter Hays and Stanley Rosen (2004). State and Society in 21st Century China: Crisis, Contention, and Legitimation. New York, Routledge.

Gilley, Bruce (2004). China's Democratic Future: How It Will Happen and Where It Will Lead. New York, Columbia University Press.

##### *Course Reader*

A course reader will be available containing the readings marked [r].

### Weekly Readings

#### Week 1: Theories of China's Politics

[r] Dreyer, June Teufel (2005). Theories of Analysis of Chinese Politics. China's Political System: Modernization and Tradition. New York, Longman: 7-21.

[r] Perry, Elizabeth J. (1994). "Trends in the Study of Chinese Politics: State-Society Relations." China Quarterly 139(3): 704-713.

[r] Christiansen, Flemming and Shirin Rai (1996). Approaches to the Study of Chinese Politics. Chinese Politics and Society: An Introduction. Hemel Hempstead, Britain, Prentice Hall Europe: 1-24.

[r] Shue, Vivienne (1988). Theory and Irony in the Study of Contemporary China. The Reach of the State: Sketches of the Chinese Body Politic. Stanford, Stanford University Press: 11-29.

[r] Howell, Jude (2006). "Reflections on the Chinese State." Development & Change 37(2): 273-297.

#### Week 2: Political History and the Politics of History

Saich: Ch.2, Ch.3

Gilley: 15-26, 219-226

[r] Chen, Yung-fa (1995). The Blooming Poppy Under the Red Sun: The Yan'an Way and the Opium Trade. New Perspectives on the Chinese Communist Revolution. T. Saich and H. J. v. d. Ven. Armonk, NY, M.E. Sharpe: 263-298.

[r] Cohen, Paul (2003). Ambiguities of a Watershed Date: The 1949 Divide in Chinese History. China Unbound: Evolving Perspectives on the Chinese Past. London, RoutledgeCurzon: 131-147.

#### Week 3: Society and Social Change

Saich: 1-11

Gilley: 43-50, 68-77, 216-219

Rosen, Stanley. The State of Youth/ Youth and the State in Early 21<sup>st</sup> Century China: The Triumph of the Urban Rich?. Gries/Rosen: 159-179.

Gries, Peter Hays. Popular Nationalism and State Legitimation in China. Gries/Rosen: 180-194.

[r] Blum, Susan (2000). China's Many Faces: Ethnic, Cultural, and Religious Pluralism. China Beyond the Headlines. T. Weston and L. Jensen. Lanham, MD, Rowman & Littlefield: 69-95.

[r] Peter Hessler (2006). "Hutong Karma". The New Yorker. 13 February 2006.

#### Week 4: Ideology and the Party

Saich: Ch. 4

Dickson, Bruce. Dilemmas of Party Adaptation: The CCP's Strategies for Survival. Gries/Rosen: 141-158

[r] Bakken, Borge (2004). Norms, Values, and Cynical Games with Party Ideology. Bringing the Party Back In: How China is Governed. K. E. Brodsgaard and Y. Zheng. Singapore, East Asian Institute Eastern Universities Press: 22-56.

[r] Guo, Sujian (2000). Ideological Faith Crisis: Does the Communist Ideology Matter? Post-Mao China: From Totalitarianism to Authoritarianism? Westport, CT, Praeger: 33-68.

[r] Constitution of the Communist Party of China, General Program (excerpts)

#### Week 5: Institutions

Saich: 121-145, Ch.6, 180-202

Gilley: 86-94, 158-169

[r] Yang Dali (2003). "State Capacity on the Rebound." Journal of Democracy 14(1): 43-50.

[r] McCormick, Barrett (1996). China's Leninist Parliament and Public Sphere: A Comparative Analysis. China After Socialism: In the Footsteps of Eastern Europe or East Asia? B. McCormick and J. Unger. Armonk, NY, M.E. Sharpe: 29-53.

[r] Paler, Laura (2005). "China's Legislation Law and the Making of a More Orderly and Representative Legislative System." China Quarterly 182(2): 301-318.

#### Week 6: Elite Politics

Saich: 145-154, 206-212, 329-337

Gilley: 55-59

[r] Pye, Lucian (1992). The Dynamics of Chinese Politics. The Spirit of Chinese Politics. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press: 197-232.

[r] Huang, Jing (2000). Conclusion. Factionalism in Chinese Communist Politics. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 411-428.

[r] Nathan, Andrew and Bruce Gilley (2003). A Restrained Struggle for Power. China's New Rulers: The Secret Files. New York, New York Review Books: 39-76.

#### Week 7: Popular Politics and Legitimacy

Saich: 202-213, Ch. 8

Gilley: 194-198

Shue, Vivienne. Legitimacy Crisis in China?. Gries/Rosen: 24-49

O'Brien, Kevin. Neither Transgressive Nor Contained: Boundary-Spanning Contention in China. Gries/Rosen: 105-122.

Thornton, Patricia. Comrades and Collectives in Arms: Tax Resistance, Evasion, and Avoidance Strategies in Post-Mao China. Gries/Rosen: 87-104.

Weston, Timothy. The Iron Man Weeps: Joblessness and Political Legitimacy in the Chinese Rust Belt. Gries/Rosen: 67-86.

[r] Wang, Zhengxu (2005). "Before the Emergence of Critical Citizens: Economic Development and Political Trust in China." International Review of Sociology 15(1): 155-171.

#### Week 8: Economic Policy and Political Economy

Saich: Ch. 9

Gilley, 37-43, 60-68, 201-209

[r] Gallagher, Mary (2002). "Reform and Openness': Why China's Economic Reforms Have Delayed Democracy." World Politics 54: 338-372.

[r] Pei Minxin (2006). Conclusion. China's Trapped Transition: The Limits of Developmental Autocracy. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press: 206-215.

[r] Yang, Dali (2006). "Economic Transformation and its Political Discontents in China: Authoritarianism, Unequal Growth, and the Dilemmas of Political Development." Annual Review of Political Science 9: 143-164.

#### Week 9: Social Policy

Saich: 12-24, Ch. 10

[r] Blumenthal, David and William Hsiao (2005). "Privatization and its Discontents: The Evolving Chinese Health Care System." New England Journal of Medicine 353(11): 1165-1170.

[r] Barmé, Geremie (1999). "CCP™ and Adcult PRC." China Journal 41(1): 1-23.

[r] Howell, Jude (2003). "Women's Organizations and Civil Society in China: Making a Difference." International Feminist Journal of Politics 5(2): 191-215. -- HowellWomen

[r] White, Tyrene (2000). Domination, Resistance, and Accomodation in China's One-Child Campaign. Chinese Society: Change, Conflict, and Resistance. E. Perry and M. Selden. New York, Routledge: 102-119.

## Week 10: Human Rights

[r] Ian Johnson (2000). Death Trap: How One Chinese City Resorted to Atrocities To Control Falun Dafa. Wall Street Journal. 26 December 2000.

[r] Ann Condi Changing the Subject: The "Invisible" Control Mechanism in Chinese Media.

[r] Thelle, Hatla (2005). "Social Rights Protection Under Socialism: A Chinese Case." Human Rights Review 6(2): 64-79.

[r] Monthly, Jeremy (1998). "Internal Perspectives on Chinese Human Rights Reform: The Death Penalty in the PRC." Texas International Law Journal 33(1): 189-226.

[r] Munro, Robin (2000). "Judicial Psychiatry in China and Its Political Abuses." Columbia Journal of Asian Law 14(1): 1-128. Only 1-15, 45-49, 120-128.

## Week 11: Hong Kong, Taiwan, Tibet, and Xinjiang

Gilley: 52-53, 169-172, 198-200, 237-241

Colin Mackerras, "What is China? Who is Chinese? Han-Minority Relations, Legitimacy, and the State" in Gries/ Rosen 216-234

[r] Goldstein, Melvyn (2004). Tibet and China in the Twentieth Century. Governing China's Multiethnic Frontiers. M. Rossabi. Seattle, University of Washington Press: 186-229.

[r] Bulag, Uradyn (2000). Ethnic Resistance with Socialist Characteristics. Chinese Society: Change, Conflict, and Resistance. E. Perry and M. Selden. New York, Routledge: 178-197.

[r] Zhu, Yuchao and Dongyan Blachford (2006). "China's Fate as a Multinational State: A Preliminary Assessment." Journal of Contemporary China 15(47): 329-348.

## Week 12: Foreign Policy

Saich: Ch. 11

Gilley: 50-55, 77-82, 227-237

[r] Wang, Fei-ling (2005). "Preservation, Prosperity and Power: What Motivates China's Foreign Policy?" Journal of Contemporary China 14(45): 669-694.

[r] Johnston, Alastair Iain (2003). "Is China a Status Quo Power?" International Security 27(4): 5-56.

## Week 13: Political Reform and China's Future

Saich: 342-347

Gilley: Ch. 1, 151-158, 172-194, 243-248

[r] Pan, Wei (2003). "Toward a Consultative Rule of Law Regime in China." Journal of Contemporary China 12(34): 3-43.

[r] Diamond, Larry (2003). "The Rule of Law as Transition to Democracy in China." Journal of Contemporary China 12(35): 319-331.

[r] Angle, Stephen C. (2005). "Decent Democratic Centralism." Political Theory 33(4): 518-546.

#### Week 14: Conclusion

(no readings)