

Oberlin College
Department of Politics

Politics 110: Revolution, Socialism and “Reform” in China

Fall 2023

Professor Marc Blecher

Office hours [by appointment](#) (I'm very flexible)

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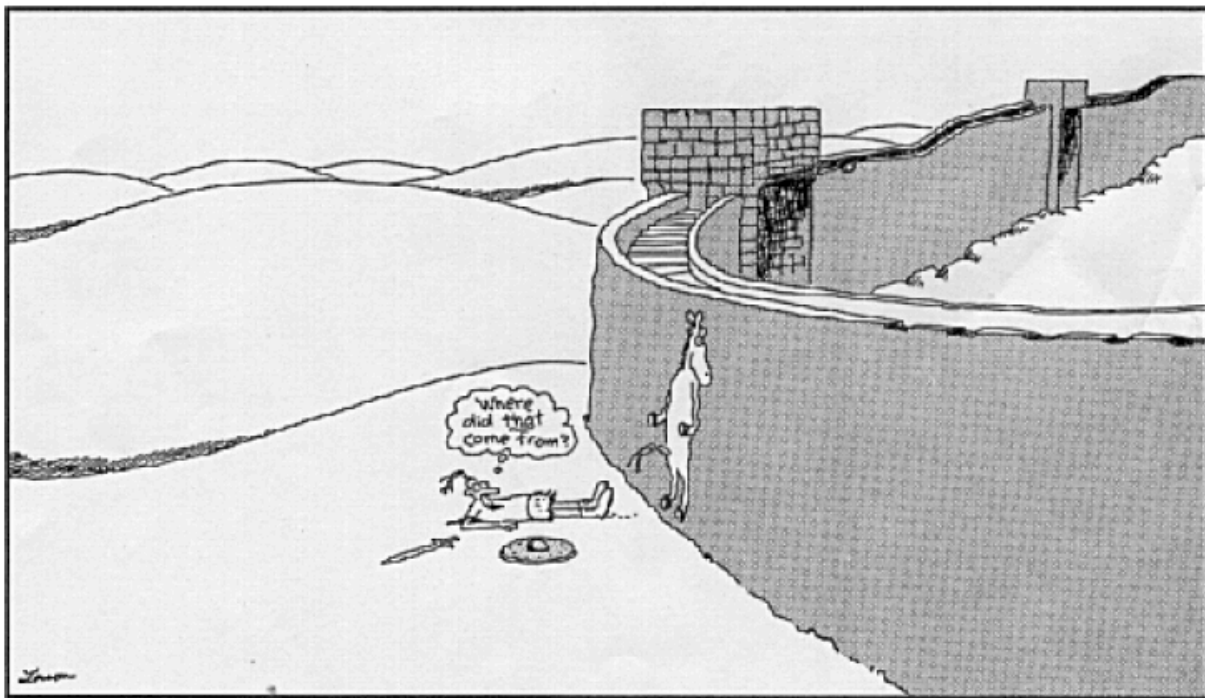
[My website](#)

[Course Blackboard site](#)

Mondays and Wednesdays,

8:35-9:50 AM

AJLC 201



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

We can forgive Larson's hapless equestrian. China has surprised so many — both its own leaders and people as well as foreign observers, including your humble professor — more often than most of them care to remember. So its recent history poses a profound set of puzzles. The Chinese Communist Party and its government, the People's Republic of China, comprise the largest surviving Communist Party-run state in the world, one of only a handful of any size. It is a rather unlikely survivor. Between 1949 and 1976, it presided over perhaps the most tempestuous of the world's state socialisms. Nowhere — not in Eastern Europe, the USSR, Cuba, Vietnam or North Korea — did anything occur like the Great Leap Forward, when the country tried to jump headlong into communism, or the

Cultural Revolution, when some leaders of the socialist state called on the people to rise up against the socialist state's own bureaucracy. Indeed, the Cultural Revolution brought China to the brink of civil war. The radical policies of the Maoist period were extremely innovative and iconoclastic, and they accomplished a great deal; but they also severely undermined the foundations of Chinese state socialism. Yet somehow it survived.

Then in 1979 the Chinese state switched course, pioneering broad-gauged structural reform way ahead of any other state socialist country. Economic forms that were inconsistent historically and theoretically with rule by a communist party and its government proliferated, taking mixed “market socialist” forms in the 1980s, the social reaction to which almost overcame the socialist state in the famous 1989 protests in Beijing’s Tiananmen Square and across the country. Indeed, the comparison with Russia and Eastern Europe was stunning: in China a huge phalanx of furious citizens engaged in massive demonstrations across the country lasting almost two months. Nothing like this occurred in Russia and Eastern Europe, where gradual political openings were being contemplated and embarked upon. Yet state socialism there would be brought down amidst popular movements that were minuscule in scope and duration compared with the Chinese. But again the People's Republic of China managed to survive, this time by moving more sternly, decisively and successfully against popular demands for reform than any other socialist state did at the time.

Starting in the 1990s, China began the transition to a capitalistic economy and society — interestingly and again paradoxically, without the massive outburst of protest seen in 1989 after a decade of much more tentative change. What can be called market Leninism — China's combination of one-Party state socialist politics and free-market economics — has not just lasted a good deal longer than most observers expected, but it seems unexpectedly resilient at least for the foreseeable future. This has defied the confident theories held by western liberals, modernization theorists, and most major western politicians — known as the “Washington Consensus” — that capitalism and markets go hand in hand with democracy (even as the individualism and the rise of a middle class, which are meant to stimulate democracy, have indeed occurred). Moreover, China's market Leninism has not just survived, but has chalked up significant successes. It has produced continuous spurts of economic growth that have often surprised even its own promoters. Market Leninism has also made China a more influential force on the world stage than ever before in its history. Many scholars, policy makers and politicians have been speaking of a “Beijing Consensus” replacing Washington’s.

Yet, today Chinese market Leninism is also shot through with contradictions. The country's overall quiescence does not necessarily indicate political stability or social peace; on the contrary, protests, strikes, riots and small insurrections have become a daily fact of life. Nor do China's palpable industriousness and economic dynamism necessarily reflect the happy equilibrium of an upward spiral of development. What powers the Chinese economy today? Will the country consolidate market Leninism or break with it? If it makes a break, will the process be smooth and gradual, or rough and sudden? And what would emerge

from such a break? Does China hold out the prospect of a "third way" — a hybrid combining in a new way features of state socialism and capitalism? China is too complex, its present situation too unprecedented, and social science too indeterminate to permit easy or sure answers. But to make educated guesses, we need to analyze the many contradictory economic, social and political forces at play.

Politics II0 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 then 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 film. As we gain a base of knowledge, we will venture to come to terms with it through conversations in class and exchanges of our questions, concerns and views in writing on our blog.

The same "reform" movement that is ruining primary and secondary education is now taking aim at us, requiring faculty to list "learning goals" for all courses. These are being used to measure what we're doing, all the better to encourage still further the growing hegemony of market forces in education. Thus, I am obliged to tell you that the goal of *Revolution, Socialism and "Reform" in China* is for you to learn about revolution, socialism and "reform" in China, and to get some practice reading, speaking, thinking and writing systematically. Duh.

Before each class I expect you to complete readings on the subject for the day. I will not always address all the readings in class, as there are so many other points to explore with you. That is, we need both the readings and class even just to begin to cover the material. But the readings will give you a head start on, and important background about, what will happen in class, and thus will enable you to get much more out of it. If you have not done the reading before class, you may well feel lost.

Blogging is essential to Politics II0.

- § 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 a short response to questions I will have posed in advance about the works we are confronting. You're also welcome 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. You can find the blog linked from Blackboard.
- § 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 simply whether you have done them seriously and regularly. If you do 13 of them (which is an average of one per week), you've got an "A" for 40% of the course. (See page 4 below on grading.)
- § I also use the blogs to fine-tune our classes. If you get them to me by 8:00 PM on the evening before class, I will plan to address your questions and concerns the next morning.

§ The blogs are a process, not a product; the whole point is to help you learn by doing them week-in, week-out, not at the end of the term in order to meet a requirement. That's why I close them each Saturday morning. Put differently, it defeats their purpose to make them up at the end of the term. So please keep current with them on a weekly basis. If you fall a bit behind, just double up in a subsequent week to catch up. But do not plan on making them up at the end of the term.

§ In the evening or early morning before class, please prepare by taking a few moments to read what everyone has written. Students have found that this really helps them grasp the material (and feel more secure about their own grasp of it).

In short:

- ♦ average one per week;
- ♦ use subsequent weeks to make up for weeks you may have missed;
- ♦ try to get them done by 8 PM the evening before class;
- ♦ be sure to get them done by Saturday morning each week.

You will also write two open-book, take-home essays of approximately 1,250 words (\approx 5 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 10 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. 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 object to grading on principle, since it is just one more pernicious, hidden way to commodify human beings in bourgeois society — *i.e.*, grades are just a price tag to indicate what you are worth on the graduate school or labor markets. I wish everyone would take all their courses pass/fail. But since we are all stuck with capitalism for the foreseeable future, I will hold my nose and evaluate your work according to the following weightings:

Blogs	40%
Papers	30% each
Active listening and quality (not quantity) of participation in class	A “fudge factor”

Please take careful note of these proportions. The heavy weighting of the blogs reflects my conviction that the weekly 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. 😞

- You should keep up with the news from China. There are many resources.¹
- ♦ Western journalism:
 - ♦ *The Guardian*, *The Financial Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, and *The Washington Post*.
 - ♦ The BBC provides comprehensive, accurate reporting at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world/asia/china/>
 - ♦ State organs
 - ♦ Chinese White Papers (those the State Council Information Office don't care if English speakers read): <http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/>
 - ♦ Central Committee's Qiushi Journal (good place to read about post-Plenum work): <http://english.qstheory.cn/>
 - ♦ Ministry of Foreign Affairs statements and updates: <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/>
 - ♦ Ministry of National Defense: <http://eng.mod.gov.cn/>
 - ♦ Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST): <http://www.most.gov.cn/eng/>
 - ♦ State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council (SASAC): <http://www.sasac.gov.cn/n2963340/index.html>
 - ♦ National Bureau of Corruption Prevention: <http://www.nbc.gov.cn/article/English/>
 - ♦ State Oceanic Administration (Chinese only, but anybody looking at maritime issues needs to at least read a Google translation): <http://www.soa.gov.cn/>
 - ♦ Chinese government think tanks
 - ♦ Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS): <http://english.cssn.cn/>
 - ♦ Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS): <http://english.cas.cn/>
 - ♦ China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR): <http://www.cicir.ac.cn/english/>
 - ♦ Shanghai Institutes for International Studies (SIIS): <http://en.siis.org.cn/>
 - ♦ Chinese state media
 - ♦ Xinhua: <http://www.news.cn/english/>
 - ♦ People's Daily: <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/>
 - ♦ Global Times: <http://www.globaltimes.cn/index.html>
 - ♦ PLA Daily: <http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/>
 - ♦ Private Chinese media
 - ♦ Caixin: <http://english.caixin.com/>
 - ♦ South China Morning Post (has a paywall, but available through OBIS): <http://www.scmp.com/frontpage/international>
 - ♦ English language blogs, websites, and reports
 - ♦ SupChina: <https://supchina.com> Broad-scale, lively coverage of news, society, economy, politics and culture.
 - ♦ The Wire China: <https://www.thewirechina.com> Weekly coverage of China's economic rise, and its influence on global business, finance, trade, labor and the environment, run by Pulitzer Prizewinner David Barboza

¹Thanks to Jason Weinberg, '04, a veteran of our course, for invaluable help compiling this list. This list requires constant updating, so please let me have your suggestions for additions or deletions.

- ♦ ChinaScope: <http://chinascope.org/main/index.php> Excellent translations of a wide range of key Chinese sources. The authors have excellent taste, and this is a good first stop for news items.
- ♦ Global Voices: <http://globalvoicesonline.org/-/world/east-asia/china/> Global Voices translates social media, so this is a good place to go for understanding what Chinese people are talking about through those platforms.
- ♦ Sinocism: <https://sinocism.com> Really excellent news compendium with terrific analysis.
- ♦ GreatFire: <https://en.greatfire.org/> Online censorship reports and tracking data. Best place to find out what is being censored through the Great Firewall.
- ♦ China Digital Times/Ministry of Truth: <http://chinadigitaltimes.net/china/ministry-of-truth/> CDT is a great blog for popular issues in China, and the MoT is an excellent subsection for social issues and regulations.
- ♦ The Diplomat: <http://thediplomat.com/> The Diplomat has exploded to be one of the best blogs on Asia Pacific regional issues. There isn't much domestic China content, but this is a good place to get perspectives on China's position in the region.
- ♦ China Media Project: <http://cmp.hku.hk/> Run out of the University of Hong Kong, it offers an excellent primer on Chinese political discourse.
- ♦ China Dialogue: <https://www.chinadialogue.net/> Good bilingual source for opinions on environmental issues.
- ♦ Wall Street Journal China Real Time Blog: <http://blogs.wsj.com/chinarealtime/> Good coverage of all the key issues, but very much focuses on issues of interest to WSJ editors/readers. Can overlook some of the fundamental issues covered in places like ChinaScope.

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 Bookstore has stocked:

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

Leta Hong Fincher, *Betraying Big Brother*

William Hinton, *Fanshen* (a cumbersome e-edition is also available through OBIS)

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

Please consult our schematic chronology (page 13) and guide to the rudiments of Chinese pronunciation (page 18). 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.

CRUCIAL ADVICE: 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 beginning or end of each section or chapter. This isn't a detective novel, so it's better to know the conclusion before you set out.

§ 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. And if there's material you can't apprehend after a serious try, jot down your question to ask in class or on the blog — or send me an e-mail — and then move on.

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Schedule of Classes, Topics, Readings and Assignments

I. Revolution

September 6-11: 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 Blackboard)

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

Screen the first ten minutes of *China in Revolution* (on Blackboard)

September 13: The Republic of China

Blecher, pages 7-9

Moore, pages 187-201, 433-452

Skocpol, pages 147-154, 236-251

Screen the remainder of *China in Revolution* (on Blackboard)

September 18-20: The Communist-Led Revolution

Blecher, pages 9-32

Hinton, *Fanshen*, chapters 10, 15-19, 22, 23, 35-37, 46-53

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

Moore, pages 201-227

Skocpol, pages 112-117, 252-262

II. Radicalism: The Maoist Decades, 1949-78

September 27-October 9: The Socialist Transition, 1949-57

A: September 27: Consolidation and Socialist Beginnings

Blecher, pages 27, 32-34

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

Vivienne Shue, "Mutual Aid" (on Blackboard)

B: October 2: Accelerated Socialist Transformation in Urban Areas, 1953-57

Blecher, pages 34-38

Selden, ed., pages 290-314 (on Blackboard)

Stephen Andors, "From Reconstruction to the Great Leap Forward" (on Blackboard)

C: October 4: Accelerated Socialist Transformation in the Rural Areas, 1955-56

Blecher, pages 38-43

Shue, "Collectivization" (on Blackboard)

Selden, ed., pages 350-358, 364-373 (on Blackboard)

D: October 9: Nascent Political Conflict, 1956-57

Blecher, pages 43-middle of 47

Selden, ed., pages 314-330 (on Blackboard)

October 11: The Great Leap Forward: Radical Communist Experimentation, 1958-61

Blecher, pages middle of 47-50

Hinton, *Shenfan*, chapters 29-34 (*N.b.* This is NOT *Fanshen*) (on Blackboard)

Selden, ed., pages 467-482 (on Blackboard)

FIRST PAPER TOPICS DISTRIBUTED

October 16-18: Fall break

October 23 (on Zoom): Readjustment and Emergent Two-Line Struggle, 1962-65

Blecher, pages 50-54

Jack Gray, "The Two Roads" (on Blackboard)

Selden, ed., pages 530-541 (on Blackboard)

October 25 (on Zoom)-30 (back in person): The Cultural Revolution

A: Narrative and Political Sociology

Blecher, 54-62

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

B: Radical Critique of Political Economy and Its Critics

Peer Møller Christensen, "The Shanghai School and Its Rejection" (on Blackboard)

Mark Selden, ed., pages 651-662 (on Blackboard)

November I: Summary of Maoist Period
Blecher, 143-145

November 4, 8:00 AM: FIRST PAPER DUE BY E-MAIL

III. Structural Reform, 1978-present

November 6: Politics, I: Theory and Ideology

Blecher, pages 63-65, 167-169

Gordon White, *Riding the Tiger*, chapter 5 (on Blackboard)

November 8: Politics II: The State

Blecher, chapter 4

White, chapter 6 (on Blackboard)

Screen *China from the Inside, Part I* (link on Blackboard)

November 13: Politics III: The State and Society, I

Blecher, pages 109-118, 172-184

White, chapter 7 (on Blackboard)

Ching-kwan Lee, "State and Social Protest" (on Blackboard)

Screen *China From the Inside, Part 4* (link on Blackboard)

November 15-20: Politics IV: The State and Society, 2

Urban and Labor Protest

Screen both parts of *The Gate of Heavenly Peace* (link on Blackboard). **N.b.**

This stunning film is three hours long, and well worth it.

Blecher, *Tides*, pages 76-80 (re-read), 125-127

Mary Gallagher, "China's Workers Movement & the End of the Rapid-Growth Era" (on Blackboard)

Tang Tsou, "The Tiananmen Tragedy" (on Blackboard)

Rural Protest

David Zweig, "To the Courts or to the Barricades: Can New Political Institutions Manage Rural Conflict?" (on Blackboard)

November 22-29: Political Economy

A: November 22-27 Rural Political Economy

November 22: The Maoist Model

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

November 27: Structural Reform

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

White, chapter 3 (on Blackboard)

Screen *All Under Heaven* (link on Blackboard)

B: November 29: Urban Political Economy

The Maoist Model

Blecher, pages 133-140, 144-145

Structural Reform

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

White, chapter 4 (on Blackboard)

December 4: Gender

Blecher, 119-124.

Leta Hong Fincher, *Betraying Big Brother: The Feminist Awakening in China*, chapters 2, 4-7 and Conclusion

Screen *China From the Inside (Part 2)* (link on Blackboard)

Screen *Small Happiness* (link on Blackboard)

December 6: The Environment

Elizabeth Economy, "Environmental Governance in China: State Control to Crisis Management" (on Blackboard)

Screen *China From the Inside, Part 3* (link on Blackboard)

SECOND PAPER TOPICS DISTRIBUTED

December 11: Politics of Music and Art; Conclusion

Richard Kraus, "The Arts" (on Blackboard)

Terry Hsieh, *Jazz Meets East* (on Blackboard)

Jane Perlez, "[Where the Wild Things Are: China's Art Dreamers at the Guggenheim](#)" (on Blackboard)

December 17, 4 PM: SECOND PAPER DUE

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ESSAY QUESTIONS FROM THE
MOST RECENT OFFERING OF THE COURSE

First Essay Topics

I. Discuss some significant ways in which legacies from China's history before 1949 affected the course of its socialist development in the Maoist period. In doing so, you should try to deploy — critically or agreeably — some of the structural concepts and arguments advanced by Moore, Skocpol and me while also combining them with points about "agency" (*i.e.*, political actions chosen by real people [leaders and "masses"]) and even "contingency" (accidents). 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. Why do your findings matter?

2. Discuss some significant ways in which the nature of the Chinese revolution — including, perhaps, its rural base, its populism, its protracted character, its approach to class struggle, its nationalism, among many other factors — shape Chinese politics in the Maoist period? In what ways, if any, did Maoist-era politics reflect an effort to break with the revolutionary past? What's at stake here?
3. What does the Chinese case teach us about class structure and class struggle under state socialism? What are the implications?
4. The Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution were both radical 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 criteria you may wish to bring to bear). Account for the similarities or differences you have discovered. So what?
5. Compare the “open-door rectification” of the land reform period (what Hinton called “the gate”) 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*.) Reflect on the significance here.
6. 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? Why should we care?
7. 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 the people played no significant role because China is not a Western-style democracy. 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. What's at stake in this question?
8. “Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past.” (Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*). Yet revolutions are precisely about breaking down and transforming preexisting structures (“circumstances”, in Marx's terms). As Mao wrote, “The people and the people alone are the motive force in the making of world history.” (“On Coalition Government”) Choose one or more key moments we have studied, and analyze the relationship of structure, agency and contingency in shaping the problem and the outcome. Why does any of this matter?
9. There are two general approaches to making allocative decisions in any economy: markets and planning. Most of the Party leadership disliked markets; Mao disliked both. Discuss an one or more aspects or examples of the conflicts and the implications.

10. What does the Hundred Flowers Movement and its subsequent Anti-Rightist Campaign reveal about Chinese state socialism? What's at stake here?
11. Write out your own question, discuss it with me (a necessary step), and then respond to it in writing, reflecting in the end on the significance of your issue.

Second Essay Topics

1. Discuss some significant ways in which particular legacies from China's history before 1949 and/or the Maoist period affected the structural reforms after 1978. If you wrote on this topic last time, take this opportunity to reevaluate your ideas. What are the implications?
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, including on why this matters.
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. What's at stake here? Possible explananda (differences to explain) and explanans (factors that do the explaining) among which you can choose might be: ownership forms; constituencies (*i.e.*, farmers/workers); incentives; economic coordination (plan/market); distributive effects (equality/inequality); effect on economic performance; pace; 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. "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, and on why this matters.
5. 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, economy and/or culture. So what?
6. 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 or even influencing the Maoist state at various moments and in various ways. 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, and reflect on the significance of the issue.
7. Compare some of the kinds of political resistance seen in the Maoist period (*e.g.*, the 100 Flowers, the Cultural Revolution) with those we have studied for the structural reform period. What does this tell us of wider significance?

8. Compare two kinds of political resistance under the structural reforms, choosing them by their focal issue (e.g., labor, rural land grabs, abuses of local cadre power, the environment) and relevant constituencies. Account for similarities and/or differences in terms of wider aspects of the structural reforms and of the political system. What does this tell us of wider significance?
9. Does the Chinese Party/state consider itself accountable to the Chinese people? What's the evidence that it does or doesn't? And what are the implications for understanding the politics of autocracy "with Chinese characteristics"?
10. Compare one or more significant aspects of gender relations in the Maoist and structural reform periods. Be sure to locate the matter 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 the realities of China today.
11. Has China "gone capitalist" since 1978? Why might this question matter?
12. Using music and/or art as a case, discuss China's encounters during the Maoist and structural reform periods with its own historical culture and with foreign cultural forms, relating the issue to relevant aspects of politics, society and/or economy. What are the big takeaways from your analysis? It may help to remember that China had a "cultural" revolution. Or the concept of hegemony may prove relevant. These are just suggestions, though; how you shape this question is entirely your call — and, in fact, your job!
13. "In contrast to Maoist policies, which explicitly focused on the arts, Deng's economic reforms affected the arts indirectly, yet profoundly." — Richard Kraus Discuss, conceptualizing "the arts" as including painting, conceptual art, and/or music, and offering your own thoughts. What does your analysis tell us about Chinese politics more generally?
14. Write your own question, clear it with me (an essential step), and then answer it.

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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 Anti-rightist 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 Wenyuan/Lin Biao)
- 1966 Cultural Revolution begins with 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	16 th 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; strikes win wage increases
2011	Worsening inflation; major rail crash highlights problems of high-speed development
2012	Major political blowout around Bo Xilai and the “Chongqing model” in the run-up to the major, decennial change of the top leadership, in which Xi Jinping and Li Keqiang take charge.
2013	Hard line continues. New leadership tackles corruption. Lurid trial, no longer stage managed, in which Bo Xilai actually defends himself vigorously.
2014	Anti-corruption campaign targets many top élites. Pollution so bad that it's starting to drive foreigners and some Chinese out of the country. Politics 110 strives yet again to understand all this.
2015	Deepened hardline politics, with tough restrictions and crackdowns on NGOs and intellectual work.
2016	Economic growth falls under 7%, which had been the government’s “red line” for preventing social unrest due to unemployment.
2017	Nineteenth Party Congress reaffirms Xi’s leadership.
2018	Abolition of term limits for top leaders; trade war with US; growth slows.
2019	US-China relations continue to deteriorate; Hong Kong demonstrations.
2020	COVID crisis; Hong Kong crackdown
2021	Triumphalism over hundredth anniversary of the Communist Party
2022	Economy in decline; major protests about COVID lockdown; 180° reversal on the lockdown
2023	Economy in serious decline; Politics 110 tries yet again to grasp China’s century of revolution, radicalism and “reform”

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. (Our readings 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 z = dz

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