Russia and China: From Revolution to Reform to...?

Offered by
Dr. Keith John Lepak. rsu Department of Political Science
Moser H312350, M-W-F, 12:00 to 12:50 PM

Course Description:
This course offers a comparative analysis of recent political and economic changes in Russia and China. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the establishment of the Russian Federation along with the shift to a "socialist market economy" in the People's Republic of China are arguably the most significant series of events in Eurasian and world politics in the last twenty years. This profound transformation of "Communism", as a set of ideals and as an operative ruling system, would have been unthinkable to many observers just a dozen years ago. Russia, the main successor state to the USSR, and China together represent the bulk of the Eurasian landmass and contain the destinies of nearly a quarter of the world's population, the future of which carries much weight for the prospects of a "global" economy.

How and why did the political elites of the two most powerful Communist states of the twentieth century come to the decisions that have radically transformed the character of their national, regional, and international politics? What is the character of contemporary Russian and Chinese domestic politics like, and how do these countries see each other in the unfolding twentieth-first century Eurasian political economy? Given intensive U.S. diplomatic and security activities in the central Asian theater since the fall of 2001, these two countries figure strongly in the American "war against terrorism". What are the implications for the United States and its regional allies of the qualitatively different political and economic outcomes in Russia and China, and is it possible for the U.S. (and its allies) to influence such outcomes and their effects? These are some of the questions that this course will consider and try to answer. It is a course that crosses the boundaries of comparative and international politics, and that challenges students to think dynamically about regional issues of development in what is perhaps the most crucial area of the world. Students should exit the course with an enhanced understanding of Russian and Chinese politics, and with a deepened appreciation of the reciprocal effects that these two massive countries exercise upon each other, and upon other players who seek to influence them.

The course operates in a lecture/discussion format, and relies on students to read their assignments closely and be ready to participate in class discussion. Students are required to complete two writing assignments: an extensive book review, and a research essay that will also be presented in class. A take-home final exam completes the class work requirements.

Instructor's Office, Hours, and Phone/Email Numbers:
Office: 429 DeBartolo Hall (Sociology & Anthro Suite; Political Science Department across the hall)
Hours: 11:00 to 11:50 AM on MWF; 1:00 to 1:50 PM on MW only; 12:30 to 1:30 PM on T/Th; all other times by appointment. Please leave messages with Mrs., Babinec, on my voicemail, or via email if I happen to be out; I'll get back in touch with you.
Lepak Office Phone: 330-941-3437; Political Science Office Phone: 330-941-3436; Lepak Office Email: kilepak@ysu.edu; Lepak Home Phone: 724-346-5409

ReQuirell Books [YSU Bookstore or Campus Book and Supply]:
You must purchase and read all of the above. There are other books on Russia and China available in the Department Reading Room (428 DeBartolo Hall) which may be helpful for your research essay. Your own readings online, or from other print sources may be useful, so don't hesitate to bring them to our attention. I will also be introducing short readings in the classroom, or referring you to them, and you are responsible for any such assignments. The best American news sources on Russia and China are the online services of *The Los Angeles Times*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Economist* (UK) is also recommended. There is an excellent descriptive travel series on China available via National Public Radio at [www.npr.org/](http://www.npr.org/). You should be examining other online sources as time and interest dictate. I will be preparing a separate list of journals and online sources for your reading and research purposes.

**Grades:**
Grades are based on the following:
1) 12 to 15 page review of Minxin Pei (due October 14): 25%
2) 15 page research essay and presentation: 35%
3) take-home final exam (due in by Thursday December 9, noon): 25%
4) attendance and participation: 15%

Additional writing guidelines for the book review and the research essay will be made available to you shortly. The take-home final is cumulative, but you will be allowed access to all books, notes, and articles. You learn best, and so do I, when you are in the classroom on a regular basis; make sure that you inform me when you cannot be here.

NOTE: Incompletes become F's after a year. You may request an incomplete only if you have previously completed one graded piece of work. Just get your work done, as Is are very inconvenient. Any student with special needs in regard to classroom work, as determined by the office of Disability Services, should consult promptly with the instructor.

**Classroom Rules and Etiquette:**
There is no eating or informal conversing allowed during the classroom period. Please turn all cell phones and beepers off. These behaviors and gadgets can be distracting to your fellow students, not to mention irritating to your instructor. Any snacks should be finished and garbage disposed of prior to the start of class. You may bring something to drink as long as you do so quietly and are considerate of others. These rules are for everyone's benefit, and most importantly are ordained to make sure that all of us are giving our complete attention to the classroom session: Thanks.

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**COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS [TBA AND DELIVERED LATER THIS WEEK]**

**MAP ASSIGNMENTS TO BE DISTRIBUTED: RUSSIA AND CHINA [return by next Monday]**

READ: for weeks 1-3 (23 August to 10 September)
Pei: Intro, Chapter 1 and Chapter 2
Starr: Intro, Chapter I and Chapter II

Other reading assignments and schedule TBA
On the map provided write in the names of the following Chinese provinces (main administrative districts) and cities:

Provinces:
- Xinjiang
- Tibet
- Qinghai
- Gansu
- Tibet
- Jilin
- Hunan
- Qinghai
- Liaoning
- Guangxi
- Gansu
- Beijing Municipality
- Hainan
- Sichuan
- Hebei
- Macau
- Yunnan
- Tianjin Municipality
- Hong Kong
- Guizhou
- Shanxi
- Guangdong Chongqing
- Municipality
- Shandong
- Jiangxi
- Shaanxi
- Jiangsu
- Fujian
- Ningxia
- Anhui
- Shanghai Municipality
- Inner Mongolia
- Henan
- Zhejiang

Cities (identify by number):
1) Beijing  6) Lanzhou  11) Kashi
2) Harbin  7) Chongqing  12) Urumqi
3) Tianjin  8) Fuzhou  13) Qingdao
4) Nanjing  9) Lhasa
5) Wuhan  10) Kunming [and locate TAIWAN]

Pronunciation:
The Romanization of Chinese names has been accomplished through two systems: the Wade-Giles system which is older, and the pinyin system which is the current official system. The names cited above are all in pinyin. The following is a citation from J.A.G. Roberts' *A Concise History of China* (p. vii-viii):

"For the most part, pinyin spelling approximates to the phonetic values of English, with the following notable exceptions:

- c is pronounced 'ts' as in Tsar
- l is pronounced 'ee', except when it follows c, ch, r, s, sh, z and zh, in which case it is pronounced approximately 'er' is pronounced
- ian is pronounced 'ch' as in cheap
- q is similar to the English 'r', but is pronounced with the tongue behind the front teeth
- x is pronounced 'sh' as in sham
- z is pronounced 'ds' as in hands
- zh is pronounced 'j' as in jasmine."
Using credible reference sources, locate the following state borders, country names, and cities on the map provided. You may use the letter (e.g. A, B, C) or number to indicate state or city locations where it is impossible or inconvenient to write complete names:

PART 1) boundaries and names of the following states (formerly union republics of the USSR):

A. Russia    B. Ukraine    C. Belarus (Byelorussia)    D. Moldova    E. Estonia
F. Latvia    G. Lithuania    H. Georgia    I. Armenia    J. Azerbaijan
K. Kazakhstan    L. Uzbekistan    M. Turkmenistan    N. Tajikistan    O. Kyrgyzstan (Kirghizia)

PART 2) the location of the following cities:

31. Bishkek (Frunze)    32. Rostov-na-Donu (on the Don)    33. Magnitogorsk

PART 3) the names of the countries bordering on the "Commonwealth of Independent States"/CIS (or those states that are peripheral to the area of the former USSR).

If you experience any difficulty in completing this assignment, please consult with me. You should hand in this project by Monday, the 18th of September, and after checking for accuracy I will return it to you for your use in the rest of the course. This is a non-graded exercise.