

## **The rise of Modern China.**

**Professor Alexey Maslov, PhD**

Language of instruction: English

The course covers a long period from the late-imperial China (middle of 19 c .) up to the present days and focuses on the China's "long modernization" growing from the semi-colonial country up to the leading power in the world that tries to reconstruct the modern global situation. Beside main historical events of this period we will analyze the main economic and political trends, theories and practices of the communism and nationalism in the China's history, as well post-totalitarian modernization of China and present day trends in leadership and socio-political structures. This course concentrates on the foundational knowledge of modern Chinese political culture, history, politics and society, international relations needed for understanding the future of Asia and the world. We also will discuss several critical issues for China's development such as social constrains, national contradictions, economic and political disbalances.

### **Rational**

This introduction to contemporary China focuses primarily on the PRC but also covers developments in Hong Kong and Taiwan in the late twentieth and early twenty- first centuries. The huge transformation of China has brought into sharp focus enduring questions about the nature of the Chinese state and Chinese society. China has one of the world's fastest-growing economies. Economic growth has substantially improved the standard of living for most, if not all, Chinese people.

The rising of the Modern China is a long-lasting process than took more than a century. It's not started from the beginning of Deng Xiaoping's «openness and reforms», neither from Mao's experiments in politics and economics. The great transformations are routed at the beginning of the self-identity processes that with the clash with foreign powers in the

middle of 19 c., followed by the total deconstruction of old imperial regime, overcoming of «soviet model for China» and realized in the reconstruction of national state with high level of ambitions, economic and military power. Today China put forward several important slogans, and the first one it is «China's dream» which is the implementation of the idea of national resurrection and making China a strong world leader.

One of the most important assumptions for this course is that contemporary China cannot be understood adequately without an appreciation of both its immediate historical past and how this past is perceived by Chinese people today as well as without deep understanding of national idea of China that was shaped in the 19 c. and first half of 20 c.

The perception that China should invest heavily in 'soft power' has generated a number of top-level policy initiatives, Today China invests a lot to the creation of new positive and attractive image of the country, trying to adopt more and more people to the global Chinese initiative «One belt One Road». In spite that more than 70 countries supported Chinese initiative and joined OBOR projects at the same time some EU countries as well as such a great Asian power as India express much concern about Chinese economic spreading. China still clearly fails to compete with Western media and soft power, and even with Asian neighbors such as Japan and India. Apart from generic failings, there have even been some specific complete international blunders, like long-lasting conflicts with USA, attempts to economically invade of EU, Latin America and Africa, to reconstruct relations with ASEAN and to build new block with Russia.

In spite of official Marxist ideology China today does not look or behave like a traditional Soviet-style Communist state and yet the CCP remains firmly in control. Neither is it anything approaching a liberal democratic system with a completely free-market economy. The economy remains mixed, and state-owned enterprises continue to dominate in the key sectors. Nevertheless, migration and changes in working and living patterns are fundamentally and rapidly altering the social structure of both towns and villages.

In the domestic policy China obviously tries to consolidate efforts for the new political and economic step forward and in this situation the role of Xi Jinping as a «core» of national idea and political power increase immensely. In spite of the great economic success there are still a lot of problems in domestic economy and China needs to rebalance financial and

fiscal mechanisms to prove its ability to improve the situation. «One belt One Road» («Belt and Road») initiative managed and sponsored by China is not just an infrastructural project but also the assumption that the world should be re-globalized in Chinese way.

We have to answer several important questions about China. Does traditional political culture that leded China to economic and territorial growth in the past will be realized in the next few decades under the name of «One belt One road» initiative and what is the link between the free market and political liberation? What are the principal problems confronting China today and what is the capacity of the Chinese political system to deal with these problems successfully.

### **Objectives and learning outcomes of the course**

By the end of the course students will:

- Obtain knowledge and understanding of contemporary Chinese politics, culture and identity issues and learn to these issues critically and creatively
- Have a grasp of the key issues and debates related to the study of modern Chinese society;
- Learn how to interpret and analyze Chinese history and society in detail;
- Develop skills to critically evaluate a range of social science methods that are relevant to the academic of China;
- Develop an understanding of interdisciplinary research and its potential

### **Course Requirements**

#### **Prerequisites**

This course does not assume any previous knowledge of China or the Chinese language. There are no formal prerequisites, although some prior knowledge of the history of China or Asia will be helpful.

## **Learning & Teaching Modes**

The lectures introduce critical aspects of particular identity issues in contemporary China, themed around the broad topics of history, culture politics, and contemporary society of China. Lectures will include audio-visual materials relevant to the theme when appropriate. You have to watch some documentaries which is mandatory for topics 2-5.

## **Structure of the final grade**

You should have completed the reading assigned for each class meeting and be prepared to discuss the material in class. This is an advanced level course; therefore, the requirements include **two discussions, two sudden oral quizzes** which should demonstrate the scholarly ability of a student.

### ***Class attendance and participation:***

Students are expected to attend class regularly, know the content of all class discussions and be aware of the announcements made in class. Not only formal knowledge of the required reading but also an original opinion is strongly encouraged. Discussions are particularly important; every student must participate in the discussions in a prepared and intelligent manner. The discussions are regarded as oral examination; all students must be ready to discuss the required reading and lectures completed by the date of the discussion.

Remember, you receive an overall grade for discussions. Although attendance will not be formally checked, it will be noticed and will reflect on the general assessment of your performance. Moreover, one simply cannot pass the course without diligent attention to the sequence of the ideas presented in each class.

### ***Discussions:***

We will have at least two formal discussions and students should read all materials prior to the discussions. You have to demonstrate the ability to analyze materials critically and thoroughly and to express your opinion based on the in academic manner.

Discussions earn 30% on the grade scale.

***Surprise textbook quizzes.*** During the course there will be two textbook quizzes to check your knowledge of the reading assignments. No prior notice of the quizzes will be provided.

The students will be required to answer one key question, which would explore the essence of the chapters assigned. Each quiz earns 15% on the grade scale.

**Required reading:** Mastery of the required reading material is essential to the successful completion of the course. Each member of the class should possess a copy of the books listed below. It is required reading and should be read in its entirety. Anyone may be called upon at any time, at any class.

You have to read at least two main books to follow the content of this course

- Fenby J. *The Penguin History of Modern China: The Fall and Rise of a Great Power, 1850 to the Present*. Penguin UK. 2013
- Dillon, Michael. *Contemporary China - An Introduction*. Routledge, 2008. (partially)

Today's China develops tremendously fast and transformations are usually move ahead of any academic publications, so please follow my advices about most contemporary materials and publications especially for themes 6 and 7.

So far, I can recommend the following publication as additional reading for the classes and discussions

1. Abrami, Regina M., William C. Kirby, and F. Warren Mcfarlan. *Can China Lead?: Reaching the Limits of Power and Growth*. Harvard Business Review Press, 2014.
2. Bell, Daniel A. *The China Model: Political Meritocracy and the Limits of Democracy*. Princeton University Press, 2015.
3. Cavolo, Mario. *China: The Big Lie?: The Truth of Trillions in a Culture of Cash*. Long River Press, 2014.
4. Jong-wha, Lee. *Is This The Asian Century?*. World Scientific, 2017.
5. Mitter, Rana. *Modern China: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2016.
6. Mingfu, Liu. *The China Dream: Great Power Thinking and Strategic Posture in the Post-American Era*. CN Times Books, 2015.
7. Shih, Toh Han. *Is China an Empire*. World Scientific Publishing Co.2017

## Grading

### Requirements for obtaining credits (assessment structure)

Attendance and Class Participation	30 %
Sudden Quiz	30 %
Group Discussion and readings	40 %

### Academic Honesty

Academic Honesty is taken very seriously in this course. Plagiarism or academic dishonesty in any form will result in a failed grade for the project, and possibly for the course. In order to avoid the sanctions applied to cases of academic dishonesty, please make sure that you properly cite all sources that you utilize in your writing, including works that are directly quoted or paraphrased, as well as works used as a source of information. This includes both print and online sources. Your paper submissions must consist of your own writing, and any direct quotations or paraphrasing from other works must be properly cited.

		Lectures	Discussions
1	China in the threshold of modern time	1	
2	The rise of nationalism and communism in China	1	
3	War and Chinese Society	1	
4	The struggle for «Red China»	1	

5	China between authoritarianism and democracy.	1	
6	National Modernization of China in the age of Globalization	1	1
7	International and national issue of Contemporary China	0	1

## 1. China in the threshold of modern time

1.1. Late imperial China: power and society

1.2. Western challenge, 1839-1860 and anti-foreign movement

1.3. Crisis within: local elites, rebellions, non-conformism

1.4. Reforms, Self-strengthening movement and reaction. Two paradigms of social progress: Kang Youwei's Reformism and Sun Yat-sen's Revolutionary Program. Hundred days of reform, 1898

1.5. The rise of nationalism and the end of Empire

### *Reading*

Fenby, part 1. «End of Empire»

## 2. The rise of nationalism and communism in China

2.1. Warlord rule and years of turbulence

2.2. Idea of Nationalism and establishing of Guomindang party

2.3. The Comintern and the birth of CCP

2.4. Communist Idea for China; perception, adaptation and realization

2.5. United fronts and mis-alliances. The Soviet Union and the Origin of the First United Front in China: Communist-Nationalists alliance

2.6. The National Revolution of 1925-27. National party Guomindang in Nanking decennium (1927-1937)

### *Reading*

Fenby, part 2. «Revolution and Republic»

*Watching*

Documentary China - A Century of Revolution, part 1 «Battle for survival»

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5cl0GjPjy4>

### **3. War and Chinese Society**

3.1. The Soviet Movement in China. Mao Zedong and the struggle for power in CCP in 30'.

The Origin of the Second United Front

3.2. Anti-Japanese war. (1937-45)

3.3. The triumph of Red Army (1945-49). The Neo-Democratic Revolution and the Emergence of the People's Republic of China

*Reading*

Fenby, part 3. «War without End»

*Watching*

Documentary China - A Century of Revolution, part 1 «Fighting for the future» (from 57's min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5cl0GjPjy4>

### **4. The struggle for «Red China»**

4.1. The Society of “New Democracy”. Mass campaigns and practice of CCP

4.2. Struggle for socialist transformation and the movement of “hundred flowers”

4.3. The Great Leap forward and communes (1958- 1959) The Sino-Soviet Rift

4.4. The Causes and Consequences of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976)

*Reading*

Fenby, part 4. «The Rule of Mao»

*Watching*

Documentary: China - A Century of Revolution, part 2 « The Mao Years»



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GgpKv-xXgf8>

## **5. China between authoritarianism and democracy.**

- 5.1. The era of Deng Xiaoping. Returns of the pragmatics to power: readjustment and recover
- 5.2. Deng Xiaoping's reforms and openness. First decade of reforms (1979-1989)  
Protests and new wave of reforms in 1989-2000'
- 5.3 «Socialism with Chinese characteristics»  
Land reform. Urban and Industrial economy
- 5.4. China's post-totalitarian transformation
- 5.5. The structure and workings of China's party-state.
- 5.6. System of government and politics

### *Reading*

Fenby, part 5. «The Age of Deng»

Dillon. Part II, chapters 17-20, 24; Part IV, chapter 15

### *Watching*

Documentary: China - A Century of Revolution, part 3 «The New Generation»

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lZLYKnQ8c4Q>

## **6. National Modernization of China in the age of Globalization**

- 6.1 . Political structure of Contemporary China. System of leadership in China
- 6.2. Economic growth and the changing economy in 2000's. From planned economy to mixed economy.
- 6.3. Modernization, Globalization, and Social Stratification  
China . Social changes in rural and urban societies
- 6.4. Centre and periphery in China's history. Migration and Urbanization.
- 6.5. Local decision-making powers and fiscal decentralization
- 6.6. Banking, finance reforms and foreign trade
- 6.7. «Socialism with Chinese characteristics for the new age»

*Reading*

Dillon. Part II, chapters 3, 5, 6 ; Part III, chapter 8

**7. International and national issue of Contemporary China**

7.1. «China dream» and new politics of Xi Jinping. China values and Asian values

7.2. China in the world. China's soft power and international relations The Drivers of China's Foreign Policy in 90's and 2000's

7.3. «One Belt - one Road» initiative»: new worldview or new challenge?

7.4. China's National Minorities. Xinjiang and Tibet issues

7.5. Historical legacy and territorial disputes today. Taiwan. Hong Kong and Macao issues

7.6 Society and freedom

Beliefs and religious communities

Human rights and justice

Education, information and censorship

7.7. Law and human rights

*Reading*

Dillon. Part III, chapters 10, 13; Part IV, chapters 17-20, 24

TOH H.S.. *Is China an Empire*. World Scientific Publishing Co.2017, Chapters 2 and 9

Question for Discussion

What was the nature of Chinese Revolution?

Could China be called a modern empire?

How territorial dispute around China can be explained?

What is the multi-party system under the CCP umbrella?

What is the main target for «One Belt One road» initiative and how it can change the world?