

Oberlin College  
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS

**POLITICS 212: POLITICAL ECONOMY  
OF DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA**

Spring 2011

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Class meets Monday, Wednesday  
and Friday,  
2:30-3:20, King 243



Politics 212 surveys and compares the relationships of politics and the economy in China, India, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan. Among the various analytical themes we will weave together are:

- § the role of historical, pre-capitalist structures of political economy and class relations in shaping subsequent development;
- § state socialism vs. capitalism;
- § the effect of country size;
- § import-substitution strategies (emphasizing national self-reliance and active roles for the state in the economy) vs. neoliberalism and export-led development (emphasizing markets and integration with the world economy);
- § the plight of labor;
- § the plight of women;
- § the nature of the state and politics (state capacity and autonomy, the representative vs. the authoritarian state, interest representation [corporatism vs. pluralism], popular political movements, and “democratization”); and
- § the “Washington consensus” (emphasizing market-based globalization, Western-style “democratization”, and US global hegemony) vs. the “Beijing consensus” (emphasizing active state regulation of marketization, diversity of national political forms, and opposition to any global hegemony).

The course does not require previous study of economics. I will introduce in a non-technical way the economic concepts and theories needed to get at the issues that concern us. One goal of the course is to help you understand that matters of economics and political economy, which may appear dry and can take highly technical forms, are comprehensible to ordinary mortals; and, moreover, that they are flesh-and-blood issues of the profoundest significance to real people.

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 class 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, at least once each week I expect you to write on Blackboard a short response to questions about the works we are confronting that I will have posed in advance. (*N.b.* Read the questions carefully before you start the reading; that will help you read thoughtfully and efficiently, and avoid becoming a slave to the author.) 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 me 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 crucial to 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, 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 using your blogs to prepare for class. In fact, 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. (The blogs are about a continuous process, not end-products.) 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.

§ Between 9:00 AM and class time on class days, prepare by taking a few moments to read what everyone has written. That too will help you grasp the material for the day.

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 papers do require you to demonstrate 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 [8](#) below 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, probably with some of the same or similar questions.

I will evaluate your work according to the following weightings:

Blog postings	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 major responsibilities for the course have been unpleasantly surprised at the end of the semester. ☹

A little-known but alarming indicator of the decadence of American civilization is that each year we spend five times as much on dog food as on college books. Politics 212 is doing its part to right our priorities. Please purchase:

Marc Blecher, *China Against the Tides* (third edition only)

Stuart Corbridge and John Harriss, *Reinventing India*

Thomas Gold, *State and Society in the Taiwan Miracle*

Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*

T. J. Pempel, *Régime Shift*

Elizabeth Perry, ed., *Putting Class in Its Place*

Lloyd and Susanne Rudolph, *In Pursuit of Lakshmi*

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

Jung-en Woo, *Race to the Swift*

Some of our reading is on Electronic Reserve (Eres); the password is Polt212 (case-specific). But all of those readings are also available on Blackboard.

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## **SCHEDULE OF CLASSES, TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

### February 7: Introduction

### February 9: Historical Roots of Indian Capitalism and Representative Politics

Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, chapter 6-7.

### February 11: Institutionalization and Import Substitution in Nehruvian India

Stuart Corbridge and John Harriss, *Reinventing India*, chapters 1-3.

Lloyd and Susanne Rudolph, *In Pursuit of Lakshmi*, chapter 1.

### February 14-16: Deinstitutionalization (Indira Gandhi and Sons) and Political Economy in India, 1966-91

Corbridge and Harriss, chapters 4-5.

Rudolphs, chapter 4 & 6-8.

### February 18: Economic "Reform" in India

Corbridge and Harriss, chapters 6-7.

### February 21: Labor Politics in India

Screen *Occupation: Millworker* on Blackboard.

Rudolphs, chapter 10.

Leela Fernandes, *Producing Workers: The Politics of Gender, Class and Culture in the Calcutta Jute Mills*, chapters 2 and 3 (chapters on Eres and Blackboard; book on reserve).

February 23: Indian Agriculture  
Rudolphs, chapters 12 and 13.

February 25: Gender in India  
Jean Drèze and Amartya Sen, *India: Economic Development and Social Opportunity*,  
chapter 7 (chapter on Eres and Blackboard; book on reserve).

February 28: Social and Political Movements in India  
Corbridge and Harriss, chapters 8-9 and conclusion.

March 2-4: Historical Roots of Chinese Socialism  
Moore, chapters 4 and 9.  
Marc Blecher, *China Against the Tides*, chapter 1.

March 7: Maoist Era Political Economy  
Blecher, chapter 2 and pp. 129-145.

March 9: Structural "Reform" in China  
Blecher, chapters 3 and pp. 145-165.  
**FIRST ESSAY TOPICS DISTRIBUTED.**

March 11: Labor Politics in China  
Ching-kwan Lee, "From the Specter of Mao to the Spirit of the Law: Labor  
Insurgency in China" (on Eres, Blackboard and reserve).  
Marc Blecher, "Hegemony and Workers' Politics in China" (on Eres, Blackboard and  
reserve; also in *China Quarterly Quarterly* 170 [June 2002]: 283-303).

March 14: Chinese Agriculture  
Tang Tsou, Marc Blecher and Mitch Meisner, "Organization, Growth and Equality in  
Xiyang County, Part I" (on Eres, Blackboard and reserve; also in *Modern China* V, 1  
[January 1979]).  
\_\_\_\_\_, "Organization, Growth and Equality in Xiyang County, Part II" (on Eres,  
Blackboard and reserve; also in *Modern China* V, 2 [April 1979]).  
Revisit Blecher, pages 147-148, 150-151, 152-153, 161-164.  
Screen *All Under Heaven* on Blackboard.

March 16: Gender in China  
Screen *Small Happiness* on Blackboard  
Blecher, pages 119-125.  
Gail Hershatter, "Chinese Sex Workers in the Reform Period", in Perry, ed., chapter 7.

March 18: Politics of Structural "Reform" in China  
Blecher, chapters 7 & 9.

**SATURDAY, MARCH 19, NOON: FIRST PAPER DUE**

March 21: Historical Roots of Japanese Political Economy  
Moore, chapters 5 & 8.

March 23: The Japanese Postwar Conservative Régime I  
T. J. Pempel, *Régime Shift: Comparative Dynamics of Japanese Political Economy*,  
pages 1-16 and chapter 2.

March 25: Class canceled, as no one would come anyway.

**MARCH 28-APRIL 1: SPRING BREAK**

April 4: The Japanese Postwar Conservative Régime II  
Pempel, chapter 3.

April 6: Japanese Crisis and Change in the 1990s, I  
Pempel, chapter 5.

April 8: Japanese Crisis and Change in the 1990s, II  
Pempel, chapter 6.

April 11: Labor Politics in Japan

Screen *The Pacific Century* on Blackboard.

Andrew Gordon, "Conditions for the Disappearance of the Japanese Working-Class Movement", in Perry, ed., chapter 1.

John Price, "The 1960 Miike Coal Mine Dispute: Turning Point for Adversarial Unionism in Japan?" (on Eres and Blackboard; also in Joe Moore, ed., *The Other Japan* [on reserve], chapter 2).

Satoshi Kamata, *Japan in the Passing Lane: An Insider's Account of Life in a Japanese Auto Factory*, chapter 8 (on Eres and Blackboard; book on reserve).

Knuth Dohse, Ulrich Jürgens and Thomas Malsch, "From 'Fordism' to 'Toyotism'? The Social Organization of the Labor Process in the Japanese Automobile Industry" (Eres, Blackboard and print reserve).

April 13: Political Economy in Taiwan from the Sixteenth Century through 1949  
Thomas B. Gold, *State and Society in the Taiwan Miracle*, chapters 2-4.

April 15: Political Economy in Modern Taiwan  
Gold, chapters 5-8.

April 18: Labor Politics in Taiwan

Nai-teh Wu, "Class Identity without Class Consciousness? Working-Class Orientations in Taiwan", in Perry, ed., chapter 3.

Hsin-Huang Michael Hsiao, "Changing Literary Images of Taiwan's Working Class", in Perry, ed., chapter 4.

April 20: Social Movements in Taiwan: A Case of Environmentalism

James Reardon-Anderson, *Pollution, Politics and Foreign Investment in Taiwan: The Lukang Rebellion* (on Eres, Blackboard and reserve).

April 22: Democratization in Taiwan

Stephan Haggard and Robert R. Kaufman, *The Political Economy of Democratic Transitions*, pp. 5-7, 267-282, 291-299 (on Eres, Blackboard and reserve).

April 25: South Korean Political Economy, I

Jung-en Woo, *Race to the Swift*, chapters 1-3.

April 27: South Korean Political Economy II

Woo, chapters 4-5.

April 29: South Korean Political Economy III:

Woo, chapters 6-7.

May 2: Labor Politics in South Korea

Hagen Koo, "Work, Culture, and Consciousness of the Korean Working Class," in Perry, ed., chapter 2.

**SECOND ESSAY TOPICS DISTRIBUTED.**

May 4: Democratization in South Korea

Charles K. Armstrong, "The Politics of Transition in North and South Korea", **N.B. READ ONLY PAGES 5-16** (on Eres and Blackboard; also in David R. McCann, ed., *Korea Briefing: Toward Reunification* [on reserve]).

Stephan Haggard and Robert R. Kaufman, *The Political Economy of Democratic Transitions*, pages 83-97, 232-239 (on Eres, Blackboard and reserve).

Dorothy J. Solinger, "Ending One-Party Dominance: Korea, Taiwan, Mexico" (on Eres, Blackboard, reserve, and online at: <http://journals.ohiolink.edu/cgi-bin/sciserv.pl?collection=journals&journal=10863214&issue=v12i0001> )

May 6: The 1997-98 Asian Financial Crisis: The Korean Case

Bruce Cumings, "The Korean Crisis and the End of 'Late' Development" (on Eres, Blackboard, and reserve; also in *New Left Review* 231 [September/October] and <http://www.newleftreview.org/?view=1965>).

May 9: South Korea in the New Century

Charles Armstrong, "Contesting the Peninsula" (on Eres, Blackboard and reserve; also in *New Left Review* 51 [May/June 2008] and <http://www.newleftreview.org/?view=2726>).

May 11: The "Beijing Consensus" vs. the "Washington Consensus"

Li Xin, Kjeld Erik Brødsgaard and Michael Jacobsen, "Redefining Beijing Consensus: Ten General Principles" (on Eres, Blackboard and print reserve)

May 13: Conclusion

**MAY 17, 4:30: SECOND ESSAYS DUE** (This deadline is firm, due to strict College rules.)

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## **ESSAY QUESTIONS FROM THE MOST RECENT OFFERING OF THE COURSE**

### **FIRST ESSAY TOPICS**

1. India experienced a peaceful transition to capitalism and parliamentary democracy, while China had a revolutionary transition to a state socialist economy. In what ways do the differences between the agrarian structures (*i.e.*, village-level economic, social and political structures, landlord-peasant relationships, the configuration of the agrarian state and its relations with landed élites) and structures of the state and state-society relations of pre-1947 India and pre-1949 China help explain the differences in their pathways of transformation since the middle of the twentieth century? In what ways is such a mode of explanation limited?
2. In the Nehru period there was some interest in adopting Chinese measures of economic organization and development (Rudolphs, pp. 315-318). Going beyond this small issue and the limited discussion of it on those pages, account for this interest, discuss the historical, political and political-sociological reasons why the state never got serious about them, and speculate on how feasible and effective such a set of policies would have been in India had the state tried to pursue them more seriously. Then compare with China, analyzing what it was about that country which India lacked that enabled it to undertake collectivization successfully.
3. The Rudolphs argue that successful economic development can be consistent with representative politics. Yet in China the decidedly illiberal state has been absolutely essential in mobilizing resources for and directing economic development. Discuss, paying equal attention to both cases.

4. Compare the processes, outcomes, and political aspects (including prerequisites and/or effects) of import-substitution industrialization in India and China.
  5. The Rudolphs speak of political deinstitutionalization and the rise of demand politics. In China the state too has become increasingly self-serving and cut off from society, and popular political movements have captured the world's attention. In each country, what do these political processes have to do with economics? Conclude with a comparison of India and China in these terms.
  6. "A high capacity state requires a high level of autonomy from society. In turn, it is necessary for economic development." — Kurt  
Comment, comparing India and China.
  7. In both India and China, industrial labor is politically weak. Compare the reasons why this is so, relating the issue to relevant wider aspects of each country's political and economic system and policies.
  8. Corbridge and Harriss speak of "passive revolution" as both a description and a prescription for political change in India. Compare it with Mao's notion of "uninterrupted revolution" and/or with the kinds of political change that have occurred in China since 1978. Ground these political forms in the economic systems of each country at the time you are discussing.
  9. Why has India been so much more hesitant about economic reform than China? What, if anything, might this have to do with the way each country undertook ISI? With their political systems (including, perhaps, régime types, mixes of demand and command politics, state capacity, state autonomy)?
  10. Women and men have benefited and suffered differently from economic development in both India and China. Compare the two cases, showing in each case how the outcomes result from aspects of the wider political economy.
- II. Write out your own question, discuss it with me, and then respond to it in writing.

## SECOND ESSAY TOPICS

1. In what ways do the similarities and differences between the pre-capitalist agrarian and political structures of Japan and either pre-1947 India or pre-1949 China help explain some of the salient similarities or differences in their subsequent pathways of transformation? In what ways is such a mode of explanation limited?
2. Discuss the effects of imperialism on economic development in China and/or India on the one hand and Taiwan and/or South Korea on the other.

3. Japan, Taiwan and South Korea have all possessed states with high capacity. They have differed somewhat with respect to the autonomy of the state from social forces, though all have excluded workers politically (albeit in different ways), and their relations with their bourgeoisies and farmers have differed. Choose one or at most two cases, and compare the origins and nature of the state and state-society relations with that in India or China. Then analyze the effects of all this on some important aspects of economic development.
4. The Rudolphs argue that successful economic development can be consistent with representative politics. Yet in Taiwan and South Korea decidedly illiberal states have been absolutely essential in mobilizing resources for and directing economic development. Discuss, paying equal attention to both cases and making reference to the Indian case.
5. Compare the conditions of possibility, political rationales, and specific means of implementation of import substitution industrialization in India or China on the one hand and Taiwan and/or South Korea on the other. What's at stake here?
6. Evaluate the processes, problems and political implications of export led-development in a large country like India and/or China on the basis of your studies of Japan and/or Taiwan and/or South Korea.
7. Discuss the process and economic implications of democratization in Taiwan and/or South Korea, and compare with India and Japan.
8. Discuss the prospects for democratization in China, based on your knowledge of Taiwan and South Korea both historically and in more recent years.
9. Discuss the mechanisms that have subordinated labor in India or China on the one hand and Japan and/or Taiwan and/or South Korea on the other. Then address one or more of the following questions: Do different strategies of labor subordination have different effects on workers? On economic development? Do they have different implications for political change?
10. What are the underlying reasons why China and Taiwan were less affected than was Korea by the 1997 Asian financial crisis?
11. All the countries we studied this semester received foreign aid at certain key stages in their development. Evaluate its effect on shaping the political economy of India and/or China on the one hand and Japan and/or Taiwan and/or Korea on the other. Pay attention to just what was affected (institutions, policies or both), how significant the effect was, and, if it fits with your approach, how it interacted political nationalism (at the elite or mass levels or both). Place your response in the context of the other important factors shaping development that we have studied.
12. Write out your own question, discuss it with me, and then respond to it in writing.