

Government of Russian Federation
Federal State Autonomous Educational Institution of High Professional Education

National Research University ‘Higher School of Economics’
School of Asian Studies

Master's Program
Socioeconomic and Political Development of Modern Asia

Syllabus for the course
“Post-Totalitarian China and Political Economy of Transition”

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Recommended by:

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Post-Totalitarian China and Political Economy of Transition

Aims of the Course:

The suggested course aims to give the students understanding of typology of the current socio-political and economic regime in the People's Republic of China. It also elaborates on the structure and dynamics of the Chinese transition to market economy since the late 1970-s against the background of market reforms in the former socialist countries of East-Central Europe and USSR. The course also has an aim of making students understand the Chinese transition in the context of systemic changes in the World "Socialist system" which took place in the last quarter of the XX century and the possible prospects of current Chinese development in the XXI century.

Annotation:

The course has its focus on the market reforms and socio-political restructuring in the People's Republic of China against the background of the history and outcomes of market reforms introduced in East-European former socialist countries and the USSR in the second part of the XX century. It is impossible to understand adequately the "Chinese reform miracle" outside the context of socialist systems' internal evolutions in other countries. The course elaborates on the common systemic features of Marxist-Leninist "state socialist system" as well as on the "Chinese characteristics" of its version in the PRC. Students will get the knowledge of World historiography of these subjects, the concepts of "reforms" in socialist systems, their scope, dynamics, structure, potential and outcomes. Special attention is devoted to substantial structural differences between "totalitarianism" and "authoritarianism" and the concept of "post-totalitarian society" as a genetic offspring of "classical totalitarianism" thus being different from "authoritarianism". Course elaborates on political economy of socio-economic and political change in "state socialist systems" with special focus on the constellation of pro-reform and counter-reform systemic players and the

differences of this constellation from that one in classical “authoritarian” models. Another special focus of the course – political economy of financial sector reforms in the “reforming” socialist countries (especially – today’s China) and systemic reasons for prolonged macroeconomic instability going hand in hand with the attempts to bring more market coordination into the state socialist economy.

Altogether the course aims to shape the students’ understanding and knowledge of the commonalities and peculiarities of the political economy of Chinese transition to market and democracy in the context of systemically analogous reforms in other countries which practiced Marxist-Leninist party-state socialism.

Students’ Knowledge:

Students must know what is “totalitarianism” and “authoritarianism”.

Students must know what Leninist one-party state is.

Students must know state socialist systems (countries) which introduced market reforms under communist party rule.

Students must know the basic facts about history, structure and dynamics of state-socialist market reforms in the former USSR and its satellites.

Students must know the basic facts about history, structure and dynamics of market reforms in the People’s Republic of China.

Students must know the difference between the concept of “reform” and “revolution”.

Students must know the structure of constellation of socio-political players and forces engaged in the processes of state-socialist market reforms.

Students must know the main schools of former Western Soviet studies (“Sovietology”) and current trend in World China studies with regard to market transition in PRC.

Students must understand the concept of “post-totalitarian” society and its differences from classical “authoritarian” models.

Students must understand the role and place of financial sector reforms in state socialist systems and its defining role in overall systemic transition to market and democracy.

Students' Professional Abilities:

Students must be able to understand main characteristic features of political economy of state socialism.

Students must be able to understand the reasons, logic, structure and dynamics of market reforms in state socialist systems and classical “authoritarian” systems.

Students must be able to understand key characteristics of “post-totalitarian” society and its differences from classical “authoritarian” models.

Students' Skills:

Students must get skills of independent analytical and research work with the English language literature on Soviet and China Studies.

Students must be skilled in making English language presentations on the issues of political economy of market transition in China and reforms in other state socialist countries.

Students must get skills in analyzing and forecasting the current state of affairs and possible tendencies of future development Chinese market oriented reforms.

Syllabus:

Week	Topic	Total class hours			Self-study
		Lectures	Seminars	Practical classes	
1	Totalitarian and Authoritarian Systems. The Concept of Leninist One-party State.	2	4	0	12
2	Soviet Studies and China Studies on Establishment, Evolution and Reform in	2	2	0	10

	State Socialist Systems. The Concept of “Post-Totalitarian Society”.				
3	Attempts of Market Transitions in the Countries of the “Soviet Block”	2	2	0	10
4	Historical Dynamics of Market Reforms in the People’s Republic of China	2	2	0	10
5	Market Reforms in Totalitarian and Authoritarian Systems: What is Common, What is Different?	2	4	0	10
6	The Role of Financial Reforms in Market Transitions of Totalitarian and Authoritarian Systems.	2	4	0	10
7	Constellation of Systemic Actors in Totalitarian and Authoritarian Market Reforms Models. Reasons for Chronic Macro Economic Problems in Reformed State Socialism.	2	4		10
8	Deng Xiaoping and Gorbachev. Could USSR Follow the Chinese Transition Path?	2	4		10
9	What is in Store for China? Competing Scenarios of “Greatness” and “Collapse”.	2	2		10
10	Conclusion and summary.	2	2		10
	TOTAL HOURS 152	20	30	0	102

Prerequisites:

Marks of the students are based on participation in discussions on readings, lectures and individual presentations. The final mark comes as a result of the oral examination. Oral examination envisages student’s professional elaboration on the one of the following topics accompanied by answers to additional questions related

to the course material asked by the tutor.

Grading.

Cumulative grade :

Attendance and Class Participation - 30%

Presentation - 40%

Group Discussion and readings – 30%

Final mark=0.3 cumulative grade+0.7 grade for exam.

Topics for elaboration at the oral examination:

1. What are the main types of “non-democratic” regimes and what are main systemic differences between them?
2. What is the structural systemic arrangement of the Leninist one-party state and what are the fundaments of its political economy?
3. Why do state socialist countries need market reforms and in which state socialist countries were these reforms introduced?
4. Could USSR follow the Chinese path of market transition? What are the basic similarities and differences between these two cases of socialist market reforms?
5. What is “self-exploitation”, “self-disintegration” and “self-withdrawal” according to M. Csanadi’s scenarios of state socialist market reforms?
6. What is J. Kornai’s approach to market reforms in state socialist systems?
7. Soviet studies and China studies on the possible evolution of the state socialist systems. What are the main approaches and schools of thought?
8. What are the sequence and structure of Chinese market oriented reforms? Why price reform is so important, not only for China but for other state socialist market transitions?
9. How would you characterize the basic constellation of systemic players in the processes of totalitarian and authoritarian market oriented transitions?

Why reformed socialist systems cannot get rid of permanent inflation and other macroeconomic misbalances?

10. What is “post-totalitarian” system? What are its differences from classical totalitarianism and authoritarianism?

Main Literature on the Course:

1. J. Kornai, The Socialist System. Political Economy of Communism. Oxford University Press, 1992
2. J. Linz, Authoritarian and Totalitarian Regimes. Cambridge, Mass., 1996
3. K. Mueller, Neo-Totalitarian Theory and Social Science. Berlin: WZB, 1997
4. G. Chang, The Coming Collapse of China. London: Penguin Books, 2001
5. J. Studwell, The China Dream. Ashgate, 2002
6. Pei Minxin, China’s Trapped Transition. Cambridge, Mass., 2006
7. M. Karpov, Was Dang Xiaoping Cleverer than Mikhail Gorbachev? // Asia and Africa Today, 1999 № 10
8. M. Karpov, Understanding Political Economy of the Chinese Transition to Market: Multiple-Track Model // Annual of Asian and African Studies, 2014 (manuscript)
9. M. Karpov, Democratic Opposition and Mass Mobilization: The Problem of Control. The Cases of China and Hungary in 1999 // East-Central Europe, 1999, vol. 1
10. M. Karpov, Could Mainland China Follow the Path of Taiwan’s Financial Liberalization? (manuscript)
11. M. Csanadi, Self-Consuming Evolutions. Budapest: Akademiai Kiado, 2006

