

SUPERPOWER: CHINA ERPB-NETASZKSZVEN01N				
SZUPERHATALOM: KÍNA				
Responsible unit (institute/department): Department of International Studies	Number of lessons per week/semester: Full-time: 2/24	Credit value: 6	Prerequisites:	Prerequisite for exam: attendance requirements
Lecturer in charge of the subject: Dr. habil. Ágota Révész	Type of course: Erasmus course	Recommended semester:	Semester in which the course is offered:	Language of instruction: English
Lecturer(s): Dr. habil. Agota Révész				Type of evaluation: exam (colloquium)
Description of professional content and purpose of the course:				
The course provides an insight into the social dynamics, as well as political, cultural and intellectual trends in China in the recent decades. It is designed for those who wish to navigate their studies and future careers with a possible inclusion of China. It also supports a way of thinking and talking about China without a “Western” bias.				
Short outline, description of acquired knowledge, skills and competences:				
As much as the 20 th century was an “American century”, the 21 st century has already been designated as the “Chinese century”. Although the unipolar moment will most probably not be repeated the same way as with US domination, China has certainly become one of the superpowers of a currently forming multipolar order. How has it achieved this status? What are its leading visions? And what internal challenges does it face? The country is experiencing rapid changes not only on the social and economic level, but necessarily in the political and cultural domain, as well. The course focuses on the massive shifts in all these domains created by China’s rise, and provides contextual understanding about their complexities.				
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Introduction: China and the West 2) China since the 1978 opening 3) China’s economic and political governance 4) Urbanization and healthcare 5) Education, upward social mobility 6) Confucianism reformed, the China Dream 7) China’s AI revolution 8) Political mobility, media, censorship 9) The Belt and Road Initiative 10) China – Europe – Russia – US 11) China’s global initiatives 12) Summary and further questions 				
The course will provide students with a historical background of China’s rise, its political and economic governance and social challenges. It will also make students understand China’s role in the emerging multipolar world. Students will be able to analyse political, economic, social, and cultural transformations within China, and identify links between domestic changes and global outcomes. They will acquire skills in comparative assessment: how to compare China’s governance and societal model with Western systems and other world regions – without applying a normative view.				
Requirements during the semester and teaching methods:				
No former knowledge is required, but the course relies heavily on the students’ active engagement. The lecturer’s presentations will be accompanied by discussions or even debates, and in each class students will be given at least one small-group task, where they need to approach a question from different perspectives.				

Compulsory sources/reading, bibliography, available sources for the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences:

Ali, Cyrille Nait. (2025). Hukou: The System That Shapes Internal Migration in China. *Econogyproject*. <https://econogyproject.org/hukou-the-system-that-shapes-internal-migrations-in-china/>

Brown, Kerry and Una Aleksandra Bērziņa-Čerenkova. (2018). Ideology in the Era of Xi Jinping. *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, Feb. 2018. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11366-018-9541-z>

Campbell, Alastair. (2015). Defining China's 'Civilization State'. Where is it heading? *University of Sidney Policy Paper Series*.

Creemers, Rogier. (2020). Party Ideology and Chinese Law. In Creemers, Rogier and Susan Treviskes (eds.). *Law and the Party in China*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 31-63.

Dessein, B. (2025). The Weight of History: Competing Narratives in the Context of a Rising China. In Révész, Á., Freeman, D., Feldmann, M. & Langendonk, S. (eds.). *Narrating China and Europe in Uncertain Times*. Bristol University Press. pp. 244-263.

Ferdinand, Peter. (2016). Westward ho – the China dream and 'one belt, one road': Chinese foreign policy under Xi Jinping. *International Affairs* 92.4, pp. 941-957. doi: 10.1111/1468-2346.12660

Kuo, Kaiser. (2025). Why China's AI breakthroughs should come as no surprise. *Geographies in Depth, World Economic Forum*. <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2025/06/china-ai-breakthroughs-no-surprise/>

National Security Strategy of the United States of America. (2025). The White House.

Naughton, Barry (2017). Is China Socialist? *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, vol. 31, no. 1, Winter 2017, pp. 3-24. <https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.31.1.3>

Waltraut, Urban. (2025). *China's Belt and Road Initiative revisited*. Policy Brief No. 66, March 2025. Federal Ministry Republic of Austria, FIW Research Centre International Economics.

Wei, Xiaolong et al. (2025). The transformation of China's education system: between Confucian traditions and global modernization. *International Journal of Education and Social Science Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2: 42-60.

Recommended additional sources/reading:

Barbalet, Jack. (2017). *Confucianism and the Chinese Self*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Bell, Daniel A. (2009). *Beyond Liberal Democracy: Political Thinking for an East Asian Context*. Princeton University Press.

Callahan, William A. (2016). China's Belt and Road Initiative and the New Eurasian Order. *Policy Brief* 22. Norwegian Institute of International Affairs.

Chang, Jung. (1991). *Wild Swans*. Harper Collins.

Cheng, Tiejun and Mark Selden. (1994). The Origins and Social Consequences of China's Hukou System. *The China Quarterly*, no. 139, Sep. 1994, pp. 644-66.

Dallmayr, Fred and Zhao Tingyang (eds.). (2012). *Contemporary Chinese Political Thought: Debates and Perspectives*. University Press of Kentucky.

Elman, Benjamin A. (2013). *Civil Examinations and Meritocracy in Late Imperial China*, Harvard University Press.

Hammond, Kenneth J. and Jeffrey L. Richey (eds.) (2015). *The Sage Returns, Confucian Revival in Contemporary China*, SUNY Press, Albany.

Li Zehou. (1999). The Western Is the Substance, and the Chinese Is for Application" (Excerpts) In: *Contemporary Chinese Thought*, 1999, 31:2, pp. 32-39. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2753/CSP1097-1467310232>

Li, Yaojun, et al. (2015). Social mobility in China and Britain: a comparative study. *International Review of Social Research*, vol. 5, no. 1, 2015. 20–34, DOI 10.1515/irsr-2015-0003.

Nordin, Astrid H.M. (2016). *China's International Relations and Harmonious World: Time, Space and Multiplicity in World Politics*. Routledge.

Painter, E. (2025). Reorganizing space: A critical bordering perspective on hukou reform. *Transactions in Planning and Urban Research*, 4(2), 193-206. <https://doi.org/10.1177/27541223251338997>

Peerenboom, Randall P. (2002). *China's Long March Toward a Rule of Law*. Cambridge University Press.

Vukovich, Daniel F. (2012). *China and Orientalism: Western Knowledge Production and the P.R.C*. Routledge, Abingdon and New York.

Wu, Xiaokang and Donald J. Treiman. (2002). The Household Registration System and Social Stratification in China: 1955-1996". *PSC Research Report*, no. 02-499, Apr. 2002, Population Studies Center at the Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan.

Xu, Zilu. (2023). PISA's Impact on China's education policy -- by analyzing the reports of the ministry of the Republic of China. *Journal of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences*, 8, 1804–1809. <https://doi.org/10.54097/ehss.v8i.4588>.

Zhang, Tongbin. (2024). The Contemporary Issues in Chinese Education. *International Journal of Education and Humanities*, Vol. 12, No. 3: 116-118.

Zhang, Yongjin and Teng-Chi Chang. (2016). *Constructing a Chinese School of International Relations: Ongoing debates and sociological realities*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge.

Exam topics and/or questions:

At the end of the course students will have a written exam based on three short essay questions. A list of twelve questions will be given to them beforehand for preparation, three of which will be picked by the lecturer for the in-person exam (no use of laptop or mobile phone).

A list of the required professional competences, competence elements (knowledge, skills, etc.), based on point 7 (bachelor) or 8 (master) of the programme and outcome requirements, to which the course typically and substantially contributes:

- a) Knowledge:
 - gains knowledge about current Chinese domestic issues
 - can place Chinese social and political developments into the global context
 - can connect current Chinese processes to their historic and cultural (Confucian) roots

- b) Skills
 - acquires critical thinking skills
 - develops analytical abilities
 - adapts to unfamiliar cultural contexts

- c) attitude
 - cultivates a questioning and reflexive attitude towards normative developmental models
 - understands the importance of cross-cultural competence
 - develops a nuanced attitude that challenges stereotypes

- d) autonomy and responsibility
 - can independently discuss and debate comparisons of socio-political systems of different cultures
 - develops his/her arguments and take responsibility for them
 - is willing to work independently or in a team, adapts to roles as needed, fosters positive relationships, builds trust, and contributes constructively to group tasks

Notes (e.g. special device, student number limits):

*Explanations