

MA program, proposal, first draft

Political Development in a Comparative Perspective

Erik Ringmar, NCTU, June 12, 2008.

This is a first draft of a proposal for a Master's degree to be set up at NCTU. The program will be geared to students from the mainland who want to gain a comparative perspective on the economic, historical and political development of China. Taiwanese students will also be admitted (but kept under 50% of total admissions).

The program will offer courses in economics, political science/sociology, and history. The main language of tuition will be Chinese but some courses will be offered in English.

The program will aim to compete with the best MA programs in the US, but at a far lower cost to students. Teaching staff should primarily be from NCTU, but staff from the mainland should also be invited. Additional recruitment should emphasize the importance of international PhDs (US, Europe).

The program will take two years to complete. 12 courses are required to graduate, meaning the students have to take three courses per semester. An MA thesis of 10,000 words is required. In parallel with the courses, a number of activities will be arranged which will acquaint students with the political, economic and cultural life of Taiwan. Maybe an internship program could be organized with Taiwanese institutions such as the parliament.

This is a tentative list of courses:

economics

- *Economic History of Communist China.* Overview of the economic development of China from 1949 to today. Five-year plans and large-scale projects. The Great Leap forwards. Industrialization and transformation of the country side. The post-Mao reforms.
- *Economic Modernization.* Issues of economic development from a comparative perspective. Traditional developmental models. The economic success of Japan and the role of MITI. The "East Asian economic model." The economic success of South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore. The role of international institutions.
- *International Political Economy.* Contemporary issues in international political economy. Trade, finance and direct foreign investments. The creation of a new "international division of labor." The WTO and free trade. China's role in the world economy.

- *Welfare and reform.* Contemporary issues of economic welfare as they pertain to post-reform China. Questions of income distribution: new poverty and new wealth. Regional issues; gender and generational gaps.

political science/ sociology

- *Liberal Political Thought.* The history of liberal political thought. Classical thinkers. Contemporary debates in liberal thought. Comparisons between liberalism and conservatism, and liberalism and socialism.
- *Democratization.* Democratization from a comparative perspective. Experiences of democratization in Latin America, Southern Europe and East Asia. Particular attention will be paid to the democratization of South Korea and Taiwan. Attempts at democratic reform in contemporary China.
- *Contemporary Issues in Chinese Politics.* Contemporary transformations of the Chinese political system. The political consequences of modernization. Issues of income distribution, social unrest, environmental problems. Democratization and the role of the Communist Party.
- *Ethnic Conflict.* Contemporary issues of ethnic and national conflict from a comparative perspective. Strategies for ethnic conflict resolution. European cases. Issues of imperialism and nationalist anti-imperialism. The question of national self-determination. Case studies from Northern Ireland, Cyprus, the Indian sub-continent, Taiwan, Xianjiang, Tibet.

history

- *History of the Cultural Revolution.* The origin and development of the Cultural Revolution in China. Official Chinese accounts from the period. Official Chinese accounts from today. Analyses of the Cultural Revolution from the rest of world.
- *Chinese History from Revolution to Revolution.* Overview of the history of China from 1911 to 1949. Rival interpretations of 1911 Revolution; the May 4th Movement; the rise of KMT and the Chinese Communist Party and the rivalries between them. The Japanese invasion and the Civil War. How CCP came to power. KMT's flight to Taiwan.
- *European Imperialism in East Asia.* Overview of European imperialism in China in the nineteenth-century. The Opium Wars and the unequal treaties. Chinese attempts at reform. The Boxer Rebellion, Chinese nationalism, Sun Yat-Sen, and the end of the Empire. The humiliation of China.
- *Contemporary History of East Asia.* Contemporary international politics

of East Asia from a comparative perspective. World War II and its aftermath. The end of European colonialism and the Vietnam War. The rise of Japan. China and the United States, in the UN and elsewhere. Contemporary military threats and sources of conflict.