

Call for Papers, December 2018

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China's political economy under Xi

Special Issue Editors: Daniel Fuchs, Frido Wenten

Over the last decade, China's political economy underwent two significant caesuras. The world economic crisis of 2008 inaugurated a period of slower growth rates and a renewed governmental effort to 'rebalance' the economy. Shortly thereafter, the new Xi/Li administration began to consolidate its power, tightening domestic control over civil society, while framing its interests abroad in terms of a free market agenda. This special issue of the Austrian Journal of Development Studies aims to explore the coherence and contradictions, challenges and opportunities of this new stage in China's capitalist development.

Existing studies have stressed the inflation of financial and real estate bubbles after the governmental stimulus package, as well as the limits of a domestic market-oriented model imposed by slower growth and rising social inequality. The ambitious move towards higher value products under the label "Made in China 2025" accentuates fault lines between powerful state-owned conglomerates and an emerging industrial policy focus on private actors. Additionally, the US-China trade war, as well as the hesitant responses to the "Belt and Road Initiative" are challenging the strategy of an outward orientation as a remedy for persistent overcapacity problems.

Politically, the governing approach employed by Xi Jinping has shifted towards a more coercive variant of authoritarianism, if compared to the previous administration. Dissident voices – labour activists, feminists, ethnic minorities and others – are faced with intensified surveillance and repression. Censorship has become more extensive, further reducing the on- and offline space for public as well as academic debates. The Communist Party has been subject to purges under the umbrella of an anti-corruption campaign, but formal institution building continues on an extended scale. At the same time, the potential and reality of social conflict remains acute.

Is China's political economy under Xi characterised by a new combination of capitalist market relations and authoritarian rule? Are we witnessing the emergence of a coherent growth model? What contradictions, limits and challenges have become visible? How do we best conceptualise and explain them? What does this imply domestically for labour, capital and civil society in China – as well as for political economic dynamics in the region and on a global scale?

We welcome both macro-level/systemic and sectoral/case study approaches to analyses of China's developmental trajectory during the last decade, in particular in, but not limited to, the following areas:

Domestic issues:

- Regime resilience and internal transformation
- Geographically uneven development and industrial relocation within China
- Finance, banking and financial stability
- Industrial policy and innovation
- The transformation of manufacturing systems: digitalisation, automation, industrial upgrading, “Made in China 2025”
- China’s changing social stratification; inequality and class divisions
- Social conflict and its authoritarian governance
- The political economy of environmental protection (strategies and challenges of environmental policy)

International issues:

- The “Belt and Road Initiative”
- Implications of international relations for China’s political economy (US-China in particular)
- China’s developmental trajectory in comparison to that of other BRICS countries
- China’s South-South cooperation and development finance
- China and global political economic governance

Deadlines: Abstracts of no more than 300 words should be sent to daniel_fuchs@soas.ac.uk by **January 28, 2019**. Authors of selected abstracts will receive a notification by **February 12, 2019**.

The deadline for submitting the full paper (6,000 words/40,000 characters) is **May 22, 2019**.

The **Austrian Journal of Development Studies** is one of the leading journals in its field in the German speaking area. The journal provides a forum for a broad critical debate and reflection on different dimensions of societal transformation and on North-South relations. Specifically, the relationship between cutting edge theoretical advances in the field of development studies and contemporary development policies is addressed. Politically relevant knowledge about issues of development is provided in an accessible, interdisciplinary way. All articles are reviewed anonymously (double-blind, peer-reviewed), and published in German or English.

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