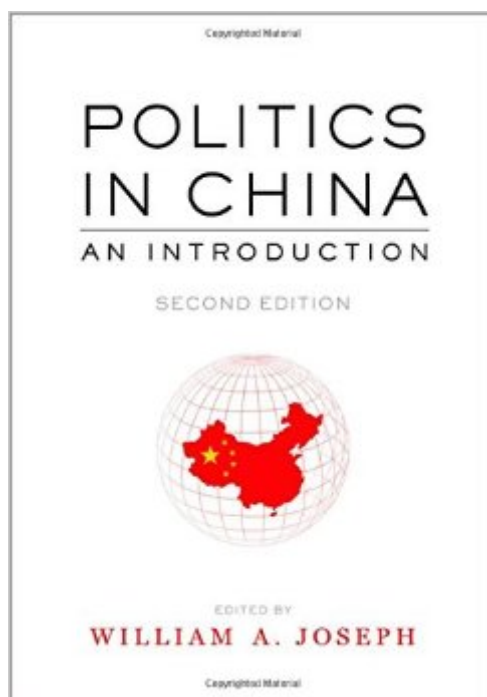


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Synopsis

On October 1, 2009, the People's Republic of China (PRC) celebrated the 60th anniversary of its founding. And what an eventful and tumultuous six decades it had been. During that time, under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), China was transformed from one of the world's poorest countries into the world's fastest growing major economy, and from a weak state barely able to govern or protect its own territory to a rising power that is challenging the United States for global influence. Over those same years, the PRC also experienced the most deadly famine in human history, caused largely by the actions and inactions of its political leaders. Not long after, there was a collapse of government authority that pushed the country to the brink of (and in some places actually into) civil war and anarchy. Today, China is, for the most part, peaceful, prospering, and proud. This is the China that was on display for the world to see during the Beijing Olympics in 2008. The CCP maintains a firm grip on power through a combination of popular support largely based on its recent record of promoting rapid economic growth and harsh repression of political opposition. Yet, the party and country face serious challenges on many fronts, including a slowing economy, environmental desecration, pervasive corruption, extreme inequalities, and a rising tide of social protest. Politics in China is an authoritative introduction to how the world's most populous nation and rapidly rising global power is governed today. Written by leading China scholars, the book's chapters offers accessible overviews of major periods in China's modern political history from the mid-nineteenth century to the present, key topics in contemporary Chinese politics, and developments in four important areas located on China's geographic periphery: Tibet, Xinjiang, Hong Kong, and Taiwan.

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