

# COLLOQUIUM BY DAVID S. G. GOODMAN

## MIDDLE CLASS CHINA: DREAMS AND ASPIRATIONS

TIME: 5-6PM, WEDNESDAY 9 MARCH 2016

VENUE: AB 1079

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### ABSTRACT:

Since 2002 the Chinese Communist Party has promoted the growth of the country's middle class. For China's urban population the prospect of an expanding middle class is the promise of increasing prosperity. For the Chinese Communist Party an expanding middle class is seen as delivering legitimacy through that economic prosperity, and in the process establishing a new foundation for social harmony. The rest of the world sees China's growing middle class as a driver for greater democracy, with which it believes it will feel more comfortable; and an indicator of the PRC's greater global integration. The problem with this analysis is that while the middle classes have certainly grown in numbers with economic growth since 1978, that expansion has been both limited and not independent of the Party-state. About 12 per cent of

the population can be identified as middle class: a well-established middle class that is closely associated with the Party-state and a not-so-well established entrepreneurial middle class. These middle classes show no evidence of wanting regime change, though there is evidence of critical views of the state of social justice and a desire for social change.

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**BIO:**

Prof David S G Goodman is Head of the Department of China Studies at Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University. A graduate of the University of Manchester, Peking University, and the London School of Oriental and African Studies, his research concentrates on social and political change in China, especially at the local level. He is currently involved in research on China's new economic elites. Recent publications include *Class in Contemporary China* (Polity 2014) and *The Handbook of Politics of China* (Edward Elgar, 2015).

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