SciencesPo
CAMPUS DU HAVRE

THE GAFAM OF CHINA ? : BATX AS GLOBAL ECONOMIC AND STRATEGIC ACTORS

Year 2022/2023
Spring semester

Jean LANGLOIS-BERTHELOT & JAN STORMANN

Dr. Langlois-Berthelot has worked for 10 years in the fields of security and defence with a growing focus on technology and the financing of technology. He is currently the head of *Société de Recherche et d'Applications Techniques* and he is pursuing a comparative research (EU/China/USA) at the Freeman Spogli Institute (Stanford University) as part of the project ASIE (Anticipation, Strategy, Innovation, Emulation) of Defense Innovation Agency and Ecole Polytechnique. He has notably taught for SciencesPo, ESSEC, EMSST, IHEDN and INSP.

Jan Stormann is an alumni of SciencesPo, LSE, INSP and Sorbonne-CELSA. He has taught at SciencesPo (Nancy Campus) with Dr. Langlois-Berthelot and he is currently advising the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on geopolitical issues after several years of work with the start-up Storyzy.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Describe here your course:

BATX is an acronym for Xiaomi, Baidu, Alibaba, and Tencent. They are the four largest tech companies in China. Each of the four has long dominated the Chinese market and is now also going global.

The Chinese government has mostly supported the BATX enterprises while erecting barriers for their western competitors, GAFAM, and other tech companies so that BATX can expand securely and become significant as quickly as feasible.

By playing their cards well and avoiding competition from foreign companies, the BATX were able to thrive and grow internationally.

If BATX are often compared to GAFAM (Google/Alphabet, Apple, Facebook/Meta, Amazon, and Microsoft), they are actually very different and have developed their own (very) efficient strategies to conquer more and more market and play a growing geopolitical role.

BATX are becoming more than just firms and have a growing global geostrategic and economic power.

Type of course

O Lecture course with seminars (either with methodological seminars or reading seminars)

■ **Lecture course**

O Seminar course : reading seminar / exploratory seminar

O Workshop : major workshop / artistic workshop

Language of instruction

O French

■ **English**

PEDAGOGICAL OBJECTIVES

In this section, please specify the objectives of your class.

In the end of the course the student will be able to:

1°) Develop an advanced understanding of the domain of new technologies in China

2°) Apprehend China cutting-edge technologies advances in a comparative perspective

3°) Understand the relations between BATX and the Chinese government

4°) Develop methods in international political economy

Please specify the differents exercises and pedagogical formats you want to improve student's learning (lecture, debate, group work, workshop…):

Lectures, Debate, Group Work

COURSE GRADE SYSTEM

To validate the course, the student is expected to pass the following assignments:

1°) Oral evaluation: a 2 or 3 student team selects a subject from a defined list and presents it for 20 minutes.

2°) Reading report: the student selects a book in a list and then explains the main topic of the book in a 5-6 pages report.

3°) Mid-term group work : During week 8, Groups of 5-8 students have to prepare a note together on a subject related to th course. They use the methodology learned in the previous courses and show their ability to write a strategic note in the right fashion and under limited time. The groups present their notes during the second hour of the course.

4°) **Final Exam** : Individual oral examination on a subject studied during the course. Open-books/courses is allowed. 15 minutes preparation, 15 minutes restitution.

All grades have the same coefficient.

DETAILED OUTLINE

What are the BATX ?

Session 1: Apprehending Baidu, Alibaba, Tencent and Xiaomi positionings in the Chinese and international markets (Langlois-Berthelot)

Historical background of the BATX

Session 2: The Golden Shield Project and the Great Firewall : Rapid development without foreign competition (Langlois-Berthelot)

Session 3 : Post-2010: BATX conquering the world (Langlois-Berthelot)

BATX and GAFAM /GAMAM: Comparisons and the limits of comparisons

Session 4: Jiang Zemin's strategy to take the best out of GAFAM … (Langlois-Berthelot)

Session 5: … and adapt to the Chinese market specificities (Stormann)

Session 6: When BATX is taking the leadership on major innovations (Stormann & Langlois-Berthelot)

BATX as global economic and strategic actors

Session 7: BATX : proxies of the CCP ? (Stormann)

Session 8: BATX challenging GAFAM in emerging countries and more and more developed countries/ Group Work (Stormann)

Session 9: When BATX are getting into security and defense (Stormann)

Session 10: The new BATX ? : Huwei, Didi, DJI, ByteDance (Stormann)

Conclusion and future perspectives

Session 11: Conclusion and future perspectives (Stormann)

Session 12 : Final Exam (Langlois-Berthelo t& Stormann)

REQUIRED READING

- Zhong, H., Winton, L., & Krosinsky, C. (2020). China and Innovation. In Modern China (pp. 29-53), Palgrave Macmillan

- Ma, A. (2019, June). Artificial Intelligence in China: Strategies, Dynamics and Perspectives. In 17th Annual International Conference on Politics.

(A longer list could be provided to the students during the first class)