

Item 20.F: Additional activities and resources examining protests in China

Option 1: “Bookends”

For over two decades, *New York Times* journalist Nicholas Kristof has written about the change that has gripped modern China. Read one early and two more recent articles by Kristof and assess the pace of political reform during this time.

Early source: in *China Wakes* pp. 77-91, there is an account written in 1989 immediately after the Tiananmen Square protests. Upon reading, complete the following questions:

- What were the long and short term causes of the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests according to Kristof? (353-354)
- What were some of the major events that took place during the protests? (see photo)
- What apparently led to the decision by the government to use force?
- Was the government’s decision to use force prudent?

See the companion website for additional, more recent Kristof articles related to this activity. Discuss what, if anything, has changed from Kristof’s perspective.

Option 2: Protest and Progress

Read Jim Yardley’s “China Covers up Detention of AIDS Doctor” in the *New York Times*, February 16, 2007, and discuss possible reasons that China may be secretive about its AIDS problem. See the companion website for a link to this article.

Read Peter Hessler’s account of a village election on pp. 278-279 in *Oracle Bones*. Discuss whether small-scale village elections such as this can be useful in introducing a slow pace of political reform. Why would the authorities be so nervous about having Hessler witness the election?

Read the BBC account of the Wukan protests of 2011-12 on the companion website. Discuss why the Wukan protest and provincial government's response stood out. How representative are the Wukan events of protest or progress in rural China?

Additional related articles and books

Bradsher, Keith. "China Installs New Bishop, Angering Cardinal." *New York Times*. 1 December, 2006.

Provides insight into the standoff between China and the Vatican.

Chen Guidi and Wu Chuntao. *Will the Boat Sink the Water? The Life of China's Peasants*. New York: PublicAffairs, 2006.

On the plight of China's peasants.

Johnson, Ian, "Are China's Rulers Getting Religion?" *The New York Review of Books, NYR Blog*. October, 2011.

About awakening of religious belief in China, featuring Daoism as an example.

Kristof, Nicholas D. "Keeping Faith in China." *New York Times*. 25 June, 2006.

About the rapid spread of Christianity in China.

Li, Lianjiang. "Driven to Protest." *Current History*. September 2006.

A highly detailed article on organized protest and legal action among China's rural population.

Mishra, Pankaj. "China's New Leftist." *New York Times Magazine*. 15 October, 2006.

Describes the campaign to hold onto some of the vestiges of communism in an era of growing disparity between haves and have-nots.

“Religion and the Communist Party.” *The Economist*. 6 July, 2012.

<http://www.economist.com/node/21547287>

About the complicated state of religion in China, especially among the ranks of the Communist Party itself.

Tang Yuankai. “Keeping the Faith.” *Beijing Review*. 13 April, 2006.

About the growing appeal of Buddhism in China.