



THE SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT COLLOQUIUM PRESENTS:

Upgrading the Nation: Promise and Peril of Techno-Development in China



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Zoom: <https://bit.ly/3hd24Te>

In this talk, I will explain how a techno-developmental regime emerged and consolidated in China as a solution to the 2008 global financial crisis and has subsequently become a source of instability that must now be managed by the state. China's techno-developmental regime is characterized by the marginalization and stigmatization of the working class, and conversely, the fetishization of science and technology—a situation inherently at odds with the country's official socialist ideology, and precariously split between the promise and reality of technology. How did this happen? I argue that parochial political calculations and uncritical beliefs in science and technology gave rise to a local, embryonic techno-developmental regime structurally and ideologically biased against the working class. As the local regime "proved" its efficacy by turning the 2008 global financial crisis into advantage for China, thereby not only saving but strengthening the nation, its underlying sociotechnical imaginaries, institutions, and practices expanded across local jurisdictions and scaled up nationally.

Please contact Meredith Clason with questions or for assistance at mclason@uchicago.edu.