

## POSC 326 America's China Policy

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### America's China Policy

The U.S.-China relationship has been marked by misperceptions, unfulfilled expectations and a high degree of emotionalism. This mix has produced dramatic swings in the way these nations have viewed and treated each other. Friendship has alternated with hostility, with resultant major and at time disastrous consequences for both peoples. China's increasing economic and political weight forecasts a more active and assertive Chinese role on the international scene. How China and the United States relate to each other under these changing circumstances will have a great bearing on the fate of both nations and on the global order.

The course will examine the interaction between China and America from the inception in the late 18th century to the present, with greater emphasis on more recent events. It will not dwell on description: the focus will be on discerning the underlying and persisting factors which have made Sino-U.S. relations so special and difficult. Though issues will be viewed largely through the eyes of American witnesses and commentators, a Chinese perspective will also be provided.

As you will quickly discover, the reading requirements are daunting. Your burden will be eased to some extent by the straightforward and stimulating nature of the selections.

#### Required Texts:

- Warren Cohen, *America's Response to China*
- Harry Harding, *A Fragile Relationship*
- Michael Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship*
- Patrick Tyler, *A Great Wall*
- Thomson, Stanley and Perry, *Sentimental Imperialists* (Reprint, available in PS office)
- Hastedt, Glenn, *American Foreign Policy* (4<sup>th</sup> edition)

#### Supplementary readings: (Marked with an \* )

- Articles and chapters, either handouts or on reserve in library, that compliment or add to the required texts.

#### Novels:

- Read the following by October 11 ♦ they will be used in your mid-term essay
  - Pearl Buck, *The Good Earth*
  - Richard McKenna, *The Sand Pebbles*

#### Grading:

Mid-Term Essay	30%
Final Paper	40%
Daily attendance, participation, assignments	30%

### Reading Assignments

#### Part I: The Broad Themes ♦ Looking at Two Emotional Conflicts

##### Tues Sept 11 **Introduction**

A brief overview of the course ♦ .where we will go, how we will approach the issues.

##### Thur Sept 13 **An Early Conflict: Selling Drugs to China**

The early American contacts with China came on the heels of a longer history of European interaction with Asia. These early contacts shaped misperceptions on both sides and set the stage for the

more formal diplomatic relationships that followed public opinion on both sides and created a series of . The tribute system, the opium wars and the unequal treaties shaped formal institutions that shaped public opinion in China and the United States. **Discussion.** How did these misperceptions shape Chinese and American views of each other? How did they shape the treaty system that followed? Was the American role in China in fact more benign than that of the Europeans? If a Chinese historical memory exists today, what impressions of the West probably shape Chinese outlooks about the United States?

Thomson, *Sentimental Imperialists*, prologue and chs. 1-3 ("East Asia in the American Mind", "East Asia as it Really Was", and "Commerce and Investment: The China Market")

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Fairbank, *Trade and Diplomacy on the China Coast*, ch. 1

Cohen, *America's Response to China*, prologue and ch. 1 ("Development of the Treaty System")

Hunt, *Making of a Special Relationship*, pp. 1-24

## Tues Sept 18 A Recent Conflict: The Taiwan Crisis

In this session we will focus on the Sino/USA relationship and link that relationship to broader questions of international stability. We will use the 1996 Taiwan Crisis as a limited case study and focus on the emotional and charged impact of this issue in both China and the United States. **Discussion:** How important is China to American foreign policy? Is China a "threat"? Why? How did we get here? What factors do we want to examine? How different today is the American attitude toward China than it was 200 years ago?

Tyler, *A Great Wall*, pp. 5-43 ("Prologue" and "The Taiwan Crisis")

Bernstein and Munro, "The Coming Conflict with America," and Ross, "Beijing as a Conservative Power" both in *Foreign Affairs*, (March/April 1997) pp. 19-44 (handout)

## Part II: The USA and China: Factors Shaping the Relationship

### Thur Sept. 20 The Missionary Movement and Sino-American Relations

The foreign missionary movement in China influenced generations of American attitudes. Church congregations across America saw China most often through missionary eyes and judged Chinese civilization in terms of its "heathen qualities." **Discussion:** What elements of the missionary message about China found their way into the American political dialogue? How did the missionary message differ from that of other important American groups, such as the business community and the foreign policy establishment?

Thomson, *Sentimental Imperialists*, ch. 4, 6 ("Evangelism: the Search for Souls in China" and "Immigration: The Yellow Peril")

Hunt, *Making of a Special Relationship*, pp. 24-79

\* Fairbank, *Chinese-American Interaction*, pp. 31-54

## Tues Sept 25 **The Open Door Policy and American Expansionism**

The greater became western business, cultural, and religious influence in China, the greater also became the "nativist" nationalist response. Discussion: Can you trace the influence of "outside" values and business activity on the rise of nationalist feelings in China? Was America's "Open Door Policy" the only response to the developments of this period? Were the Chinese "nativist" responses such as the Boxer Uprising or the Self-Strengthening movement---compatible with one another? Or, did they represent competing responses to the Western challenge?

Thomson, *Sentimental Imperialists*, chs. 7, 9 ("The Roots of American Expansionism" and "The Open Door")

Hunt, *Making of a Special Relationship*, pp. 81-114, 143-226

Cohen, *America's Response to China*, ch. 2 ("The US as a Power in Asia")

\* Preston, *The Boxer Rebellion*, prologue and pp. 335-60

### **Evening Film: 7 p.m. Lei 402**

"*The Good Earth*" or "*55 Days at Peking*"

## Thur Sept 27 **The Rise of Chinese Nationalism and the Triumph of the KMT**

Note the rise of parallel revolutionary movements---the nationalist government under Chiang Kai-shek and the communist movements spreading across the countryside and many cities along the coast. Both movements played on deep currents in Chinese/foreign interaction. Yet, their response to this interaction was somewhat different. Discussion: Which movement---nationalist or communist---was a more "natural outgrowth" of Chinese history? How important was the role of the United States and the European powers in the development of each?

Thomson, *Sentimental Imperialists*, chs. 11-13 ("The Path to Catastrophe", "Americans and the Chinese Revolution", and "Americans and the Nanking Government")

Hunt, *Making of a Special Relationship*, pp. 258-313

Cohen, *America's Response to China*, ch. 3-4 ("In the Light of the Rising Sun" and "The Response to Chinese Nationalism")

## Tues Oct 2 **America's Response to Japanese Expansionism**

Historians often note the "see-saw" quality of America's policies in Asia---there were periods of "good China/bad Japan" that alternated with "bad China, good Japan". But at no time was this see-saw ambivalence more pronounced than during the 1930s and 1940s. Note how the Chiang Kai-shek government becomes a "democracy and a great power" in American eyes as tensions with Japan grow. Discussion: Note the political and economic legacy of Japan's expansion onto the Asian mainland after 1895. Could a different American policy---toward both China and Japan---have changed the course of Japanese expansion? Did American foreign policy create artificial expectations in China? Did American support set the stage for the later KMT/CCP denouement?

Thomson, *Sentimental Imperialists*, ch. 14 ("War in the Pacific")

Cohen, *America's Response to China*, ch. 5 ("The Conflict with Japan")

\* White, *In Search of History*, pp. 66-101

\* Harding and Yuan, *Sino-American Relations, 1945-1955*, pp. 3-60

### Part III: The USA and "Communist China": Confrontation and War

#### Thur Oct 4 The Chinese Civil War and the Recognition Controversy

As the war in the Pacific wound down, Nationalist and Communist forces squared off for their "duel to the death." Americans faced a dual question: Who best to support in this conflict and how deeply to get involved. The debate over both of these questions tore at American politics for the next three decades and remains an open question to this day. Discussion: Can you trace the debate between American groups over China and the changing nature of American foreign policy? Did Roosevelt's sudden death and the accession of Truman to the presidency make a difference? How did the actions of the Chinese communists affect American policy?

Thomson, *Sentimental Imperialists*, ch. 16 ("Americans and the Loss of China")

Cohen, *America's Response to China*, ch. 6 ("Communism in China")

\* Tucker, *Patterns in the Dust*, ch. 5 and 6

\* Borg and Heinrichs, *Uncertain Years*, pp. 131-71

\* *U.S. Relations with China*, pp. 901-904, 917-19, 923-38

#### Tues Oct 9 China, the United States, and the Korean War

The North Korean invasion of the south set in motion a complex set of events that saw the American military become directly involved on the Asia mainland. As Chinese and American troops squared off against one another, a complex series of consequences spread across both Americana and Chinese politics. **Discussion:** Could a different set of American policy choices have preempted the war in Korea? Did American actions precipitate Chinese military involvement? How did the war change the Sino-American relationship? How did the Korean War affect the domestic debate in the United States about China?

Thomson, *Sentimental Imperialists*, ch. 17 ("The Korean War")

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Goncharov, Lewis, Xue, *Uncertain Partners*, ch. 7

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Chen Jien, *China's Road to the Korean War*, pp. 158-223

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Hao and Zhai, "China's Decision to Enter the Korean War," *China Quarterly*, March, 1990, pp. 94-116

#### Thur Oct 11 **The 1950s: Years of Tension and Deadlock**

The years following the Korean war were among the most difficult for both the debate over China in the United States and for the Sino-American relationship in general. American politicians such as Richard Nixon, Joseph McCarthy, Walter Judd and Ronald Reagan used the "China issue" with devastating results and this debate set the stage for subsequent American involvement in Asia. **Discussion:** Why was the "loss of China" argument so powerful? Were the critics of earlier American policy toward China correct? How did the domestic debate in the United States affect America's China policy?

Cohen, *America's Response to China*, ch. 7 ("The Great Aberration")

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Harding and Yuan, *Sino-American Relations, 1945-1955*, pp. 184-212; 238-57; 267-83; 289-307; 311-27

#### **Mid-Term Essay Assigned**

Mon Oct 15 Mid-Term Break

Tues Oct 16 (No Class)

#### Thur Oct 18 **The Changing Scene: Vietnam and the Sino-Soviet Split**

Two sets of events set in motion a fundamental rethinking of the Sino/American relationship in Beijing and Washington. The first was the emotional Sino-Soviet conflict that altered priorities in Moscow, Beijing and Washington. The second was the deepening American involvement in SE Asia that brought the Great Powers to the edge of

war. **Discussion:** Why did it take so long for Americans to understand that there was, indeed, a "split" between China and the Soviet Union? How did this growing Sino-Soviet tension change thinking in Beijing? In Washington? How did the deepening American involvement in Vietnam play off this changed thinking about "world communism"?

Hastedt, Glenn, *American Foreign Policy*, Ch. 11, 12

Allison, Graham, "Conceptual Models of the Cuban Missile Crisis," *American Political Science Review*

Thomson, *Sentimental Imperialists*, ch. 20 ("China Regained")

Tyler, *A Great Wall*, pp. 47-103 ("The Sino-Soviet Border")

\* Gordon Chang, *Friends and Enemies*, pp. 203-294

## Mid-Term Essay Due

### Part IV: The Maturing Relationship

#### Tues Oct 23 **Rapprochement**

It has been said that one of history's great ironies was that it was Richard Nixon, an American political figure so identified with Sino-American tensions, who made the first real steps toward rapprochement. **Discussion:** How did the Sino-Soviet conflict and America's role in Vietnam affect the unfolding policy of the Nixon administration? Can you outline the debate within the administration? In China? Who was more important to the unfolding American policy: Nixon or Kissinger?

Tyler, *A Great Wall*, pp. 107-225 ("Nixon: The Opening" and "Ford: Estrangement")

Harding, *Fragile Relationship*, pp. 23-47

\* Kissinger, *White House Years*, Vol. 1, pp. 163-94; 684-787, 1049-96

#### Thur Oct 25 **Normalization**

After almost thirty years of official American quarantine of the Chinese mainland, the Carter administration re-established formal diplomatic relations. Immense changes had taken place in both polities. In China, the death of Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai saw the beginnings of a political shift that resulted in the emergence of the Reform Movement. In the United States, the impact of both the Watergate scandals and the devastation of the Vietnam war has changed a great deal of the logic of foreign policy. **Discussion:** How

did the changes in Beijing and Washington politics affect the larger Sino-American relationship? What issues remained unresolved?

Tyler, *A Great Wall*, pp. 229-285 ("Carter: Fulfillment")

Harding, *Fragile Relationship*, pp. 47-106

Cohen, *America's Response to China*, pp. 195-204

## Tues Oct 30 **Reagan Years**

The Reagan administration came to Washington with a new set of priorities. Focusing especially on the "evil empire" Soviet Union, President Reagan embarked on a massive shift in military spending in order to "catch up" with the Soviet Union and then began a major re-evaluation of America's Pacific policies. **Discussion:** Can you trace the debate and bureaucratic infighting in the Reagan administration over these policies? How did the debate play out in China and Moscow, and re-shape the foreign policy priorities in both polities?

Tyler, *A Great Wall*, pp. 289-339 ("Reagan and Taiwan")

Harding, *Fragile Relationship*, chs. 4-6

\* Haig, *Caveat*, pp. 194-217

### **Evening Film: 7 p.m. Lei 304**

Carma Hinton's "The Gate of Heavenly Peace"

## Thur Nov 1 **Tiananmen**

1989 was one of those "watershed years" that re-direct world events in fundamental ways. The seventy-year old Soviet empire came apart at the seams and communist regimes began to fall like dominos. In China, a series of social and political changes came to a head in Beijing and culminated in the emotional events in Tiananmen Square. **Discussion:** Why did the American public focus so much on Beijing when equally important events were occurring in Moscow, East Europe and SE Asia? How well did the American public understand the events in China? How did this understanding (or lack thereof) affect foreign policy? Ought the United States have acted more energetically in supporting the various movements in Europe and China?

Tyler, *A Great Wall*, pp. 343-379 ("Bush and Tiananmen")

Harding, *Fragile Relationship*, ch. 7

\* Kristof/Wudunn, *China Wakes*, pp. 77-91

## Tues Nov 6 **The Aftermath: Clinton and the Politics of Inattention**

By the early 1990s, new political regimes had emerged all across Europe and Asia and the heralded "new world order" indeed seemed attainable. Yet the Clinton administration campaigned in 1992 with an emotional critique of the Reagan/Bush foreign policy, both the direction of this earlier policy and the emphasis these past administrations had placed on foreign policy as opposed to domestic issues. The 1990s saw the United States pull back more and more from foreign policy and become absorbed in domestic and economic issues. **Discussion:** How well did the Clinton administration handle the problems in this new world order? Were opportunities lost?

Tyler, *A Great Wall*, pp. 384-416 ("Clinton: The Butcher of Beijing")

Harding, *Fragile Relationship*, ch. 8

\* Freeman, "Preventing War in the Taiwan Strait" in *Foreign Affairs*, (July/August, 1998) pp. 6-11

\* Kristof/Wudunn, *China Wakes*, pp. 424-40

## Thur Nov 8 **At the Millennium (1): Embassy Bombings, Spy Planes and Taiwan**

\* Roberts, Manningand, and Monteperto, "China: the Forgotten Nuclear Power" in *Foreign Affairs*, (July/August 2000), pp. 53-63

\* Cambell and Mitchell, "Crisis in the Taiwan Strait?" in *Foreign Affairs* (July/August, 2001) pp. 14-25

\* Gerald Segal, "Does China Matter?" in *Foreign Affairs* (Sept. October, 1999) pp. 24-36

\* Vogel, ed., *Living with China*, pp. 17-35

## Tues Nov 13 **At the Millennium (2): Thoughts About the Future**

Tyler, *A Great Wall*, pp. 417-430 ("Thoughts About the Future")

\* Shambaugh, "Facing Reality in China Policy" in *Foreign Affairs*, (January/February 2001) pp. 50-64

\* Gill, "Limited Engagement" in *Foreign Affairs*, (July/August, 1999) pp. 65-76

\* Gilroy and Higenbothem, "China's Coming Transformation" in *Foreign Affairs*, (July/August 2001) PP. 26-39

\* Vogel, ed., *Living with China*, pp. 254-275

Wed Nov 14 **Classes End**

Mon Nov 19 **Final Paper Due**