The *Washington Journal of Modern China* is a policy-oriented publication on modern Chinese culture, economics, history, politics, and United States-China relations. The views and opinions expressed in the journal are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Foundation. The publishers, editors, and committee assume no responsibility for the statements of fact or opinion expressed by the contributors. The journal welcomes the submission of manuscripts and book reviews from scholars, policymakers, government officials, and other professionals on all aspects of modern China, including those that deal with Taiwan and Hong Kong, and from all points of view. We regret we are unable to return any materials that are submitted.

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Publisher’s Note

This year is a very important one for the United States-China Policy Foundation. Besides recognizing the fortieth anniversary of President Nixon’s voyage to China, we are also proud to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Washington Journal of Modern China. When I began publishing the journal in 1992, I did not expect that it would still be going strong twenty years later. The journal has stood the test of time, perhaps because it is one of the few journals around the world that focus solely on contemporary Chinese affairs, and the only one published in America’s capital. I am proud to continue publishing the Washington Journal of Modern China, which provides an important platform for American and Chinese scholars to share their observations on contemporary China.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the many editors, guest editors, and contributors who have lent their talents to the Washington Journal of Modern China over the last twenty years. Our success would not have been possible without them. I am grateful to all the influential scholars and thinkers who have contributed their time and thoughts to the Journal, and in doing so helped educate scholars and students across the country.

This issue celebrates the fortieth anniversary of Nixon’s historic visit, and explores the many changes that have occurred in Chinese society since 1972. I provide my own reflections on how China has changed since my 1972 visit. Chas Freeman and Shen Dingli also provide nuanced overviews of U.S.-China relations, past, present, and future. I hope these articles provide perspective on President Nixon’s groundbreaking trip to China forty years ago. This issue also features two reviews of recent books on the life and accomplishments of Chinese Americans in the United States.

Even while paying well-deserved attention to this historical event, I could not let the Washington Journal’s own anniversary pass unnoticed. I hope this 20th anniversary edition of the Journal provides both illuminating observations and a motivation for further research, so that we may continue to play our part in advancing China studies.

Chi Wang, Publisher
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China's Rise and Transformation: Towards Pax Sinica?

Chas W. Freeman, Jr.

Forty years ago, China was ostracized by the world's great powers, large and small. It was openly admired only by tiny, idiosyncratically Communist Albania. Having rejected Soviet tutelage, China stood angrily outside the bipolar world order of the Cold War. Today China is a central participant in global governance. It has emerged as a formidable competitor of established powers like the United States, Europe, and Japan in many spheres, with expanding prestige and influence not only in Asia but well beyond it.

Many see the multiple effects of China’s rise as the primary challenge to American dominance of world affairs – the Pax Americana that succeeded the collapse of the Soviet Union – as well as to the liberal international order that America helped create and lead after World War II. If nothing else, the rapid growth of China’s economy and defense capabilities is proving to be a lucrative cure for post-Cold War enemy deprivation syndrome. As such, it has become a principal justification for increased funding for the U.S. military-industrial complex. But is China destined to supplant American global military supremacy, displace the worldwide ascendancy of Western values, replace the U.S.-crafted world order with a system “made in China,” or project its military power across the globe? Does it even aspire to do any of things? Could it if it wanted to?

China’s return to wealth and power is indeed one of several factors hastening the end of the Pax Americana by bringing into being a more complex and pluralistic global order. China is about to become both the world’s biggest economy and an immovable military object, if not an irresistible military force. But China lacks the ambition, the exportable ideology, the political appeal, and the geopolitical circumstances necessary to assume the global leadership roles that America played in the last century. China will participate in crafting an international order to succeed the crumbling status quo, but, for a wide variety of reasons, it is unlikely to lead this process or to become the global hegemon, the world’s supreme military power, or an economic model for others. It is entirely possible – even likely, if current trends continue – that the United States and China will stumble into various forms of
confrontation, including military confrontation. But this is far from inevitable. Let me explain.

From Strategic Cooperation to Ideological Contention

In 1972, President Richard Nixon boldly invoked the People’s Republic of China to balance the apparently growing strategic menace of Soviet Communism. The Soviet Union simultaneously challenged both the interests and values of the United States. Soviet-American rivalry had divided the world into two hostile camps from which only a few major powers were then aloof. China remained hostile to American values as it then understood them, but it was alarmed by Moscow’s willingness to invade neighbors (like Czechoslovakia) in the name of enforcing ideological discipline in the “socialist camp.” Battles between Soviet and Chinese forces had taken place at several points along the then undemarcated Sino-Soviet frontier.

Beijing thus shared U.S. concerns about rising Soviet power and assertiveness. Chairman Mao Zedong’s government did not share American views on much else, but it was prepared, like the Nixon administration, to set aside the “essential differences” in the “social systems and foreign policies” of the two countries in order to cooperate strategically against the non-ideological aspects of the Soviet threat.

1 President Nixon visited Beijing, Hangzhou, and Shanghai as a guest of Chinese Communist Party Chairman Mao Zedong (whose state and government the United States did not then recognize), February 21 - 28, 1972.
2 The legacy of this peculiar feature of the Cold War is continuing U.S. difficulty in distinguishing interests from values. Americans routinely see affronts to American values as challenges to U.S. interests and vice versa. American political leaders often misunderstand or misportray foreign objections to U.S. policies as assaults on U.S. beliefs. The confusion that this conflation of interests and values engenders accounts in no small measure for the erratic and often self-destructive course of U.S foreign policy in the post-Cold War era.
3 With Western Europe, Japan, and Brazil allied to the United States, among the world’s actual and potential great powers only China (after the Sino-Soviet split of 1960-62), India, and Indonesia could seriously claim to be “non-aligned” during the Cold War. Though estranged from the United States, China was openly at odds with the Soviet Union. India had made the USSR its principal politico-economic partner while striking a wary stance toward America. Indonesia attempted to keep its distance from both superpowers, which obliged it by slighting Indonesia’s geopolitical importance and potential.
4 The “Shanghai Communiqué” of February 28, 1972 is a diplomatic document that is remarkable for its candor. It opens with a lengthy recital of the very sharp differences between American and Chinese views of the global and regional orders and the opposing stands of the two governments on issues like the Second Indochina War, the unfinished war between South and North Korea, the propriety of Japanese rearmament, and the tense relations between India and Pakistan. After committing both sides to peaceful coexistence with each other and a measure of strategic cooperation, it records an interim agreement to disagree about the Taiwan issue.
Towards Pax Sinica?

Having declared ideological differences irrelevant to the development and conduct of their bilateral relations, China and America were able to cooperate militarily and otherwise for the next seventeen years, until the collapse of the Soviet empire in 1989 eliminated the strategic rationale for doing so. In that same year, the Chinese government’s violent suppression of student demonstrators in Beijing’s Tiananmen Square and elsewhere caused widespread indignation and disillusionment with China in the West, especially in the United States. Within months, ideological contention over democracy and human rights had replaced strategic cooperation as the dominant theme of U.S.-China policy.

From Triumphalism to the Eclipse of the Euro-American Model

This policy inversion began amidst American triumphalism, as the U.S.-led international order overwhelmed the collapsing Soviet sphere. At least in its own estimation, the United States became the ‘indispensable nation,’ an invincible superpower and unilateralist leader in the promotion of global governance, the spread of the American model of capitalism, and political change to replace autocracy with democracy around the world. But time, the rise of other powers (including but not limited to China), and experience soon challenged this ill-considered ideological certitude and national arrogance.

Campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq undertaken in part to show the futility of resistance to American military power resulted instead in demonstrating the limits of that power. U.S. intervention in Iraq failed to reshape either that country or the greater Middle East to American or Western advantage. None of the several approaches to the pacification of Afghanistan taken by America and its NATO allies yielded convincing progress. Deference to American leadership by U.S. allies visibly subsided as hostility to U.S. policies mounted around the world. The result has been the beginning of a realization by the United States of the futility of unilateralism and the pragmatic requirement to enlist others, including the so-called “BRIC” countries (Brazil, Russia, India, and

5 The Carter administration, which made the promotion of “human rights” a central element in U.S. foreign policy, normalized relations with Beijing without seeking concessions on Chinese domestic political practices. Ronald Reagan gave public voice to American democratic ideology but did not in fact push democratization or a human rights agenda with China.

6 “We are America; we are the indispensable nation. We stand tall and we see further than other countries into the future,” said Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, February 19, 1998.
China), in crafting solutions to global and regional problems, regardless of the nature of their domestic politics and legal practices.

Meanwhile, the costs of two large, unfunded wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have left the United States heavily in debt, fiscally hollow, and monetarily at risk. A global economic crisis brewed up by ingenious financial chicanery on Wall Street has discredited American financial leadership, institutions, and economic ideology. The air has gone out of the “Washington Consensus” balloon. Economies with industrial policies are outperforming those committed to doctrinaire laissez-faire economics. At the same time, it has became apparent that history has not after all “ended” in an irreversible victory of democracy over autocracy. In the second decade of the 21st Century, autocracies like China are widely seen to be outperforming democracies at the tasks of governance. Democratic India falters, and the United States and Europe have joined Japan in economic doldrums, political gridlock, and self-doubt, while China powers ahead.

Is China a Model? Can it be One?

In 2012, the military prowess of the U.S. armed forces remains globally acknowledged, but almost no one still sees the United States as a political or economic model to be emulated. Almost no one looks to China as a model either. China continues to advance, but its political economy is a work in progress that lacks both a doctrine and an operating manual. China’s success serves to power skepticism about American political values and economic doctrines that predict China's failure. China's example doesn’t present an adoptable alternative to the American model.

Unlike the United States, contemporary China shows no interest in altering, much less in overthrowing, the political economic systems of the nations with which it interacts internationally. It has embraced respect for diversity as a pragmatic

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7 Despite its oft-declared antipathy to “industrial policies,” the United States has an economy that is just as guided by government as others that extol the virtues of such policies. The socioeconomic outcomes favored by government in the U.S. are embodied not in bulletins of government economic departments but in tax codes, to which individuals and businesses refer closely when making economic decisions. But federal and state tax policies in the United States – the American version of industrial policy – are the product of a hundred years of responsiveness to special interests by many thousands of politicians. They represent so many contradictory choices that they are more often than not an impediment rather than a stimulus to the creative destruction that is the most admirable attribute of capitalism.
Towards Pax Sinica?

tool of statecraft. It does not even insist on constitutional or ideological uniformity in its own space, tolerating Hong Kong’s unsurpassed economic freedoms and Macau’s reliance on gambling, while offering Taiwan even greater autonomy within some sort of yet-to-be-crafted Greater China commonwealth. China’s performance calls into question American self-confidence, competitiveness, and self-regard, but not American values or ideology. This distinguishes it from all past challenges to the Euro-American model of political economy that has ruled the world for the past two centuries.

Fascism and communism repudiated and sought to replace Western forms of democracy and capitalism with alternative models of political economy based on authoritarianism and collectivism. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has voiced no objection to others practicing democracy, laissez-faire capitalism, or any other system -- provided they refrain from insisting that China follow their example. Like their forebears, today’s Chinese seem content to let foreigners be foreigners, while working at modernizing their own country in their own way.

So far the Chinese system appears to be working well for the Chinese, even if they can’t explain to non-Chinese how it works. Meanwhile, all sorts of mistaken assumptions about the nature of the Chinese political economy have been attributed to contemporary China. China’s evolving socioeconomic order and the domestic and foreign implications of this order cannot be accurately analyzed by applying labels that impute Western characteristics to China. The role of the "state," in the sense of the central government and its instrumentalities pursuing national as opposed to special interests, is far less in China than most suppose. Contemporary China doesn’t fit the mould of past systems in other countries. It has come up with something new and different that can only be understood in its own terms.

"Cadre Capitalism"

Confucius once remarked despairingly that for most people “gluttony and lust are what life’s all about.” Officials in China’s

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8 Examples include terms that are either counterfactual or have misleading connotations like "planned economy," “non-market economy,” “centrally planned economy,” “mercantilism,” etc. Other terms, like "state enterprise" suggest something quite different to Western readers than the enterprises that operate within China’s remarkable diversity of ownership systems, levels of government involved in entrepreneurship, and so forth.

9 色食性也.
many political subdivisions often seem determined to prove him right. Deng Xiaoping’s “reform and opening” (especially the opening to Chinese investors and entrepreneurs from Hong Kong and Taiwan) grafted the capitalist notion of the legitimacy of greed onto physical appetites long acknowledged by Chinese culture. This has inspired a uniquely Chinese economic architecture of profit-seeking public-private partnerships at every level of government and enterprise. The result is a formidable alliance between political boosterism and entrepreneurship that is best described as “cadre capitalism.”

In this system, CCP members (the “cadres” who staff government and quasi-governmental functions in China from the village level up) play the economic role that fund managers and other investors do elsewhere but with a political twist -- they have the power of the layers of the government and party apparatuses they represent behind them. Cadres stimulate the growth of production, employment, and civic pride by embracing enterprises in which the fragments of China they manage have an ownership interest. They provide homegrown and overseas Chinese entrepreneurs with exemptions from government regulations and licensing regimes, cheap loans, free land, political protection, and security from labor unrest, among other benefits. Cadres gain in many ways from this. They create jobs for those for whose welfare they are accountable; elevate their own patronage power; boost their communities' reputations; and improve their prospects for promotion within the Party apparatus, while living the good life that revenue from the enterprises in which they have “invested” affords.

This form of cadre capitalism is something new to the world. It has delivered over three decades of relentlessly rapid economic growth to China. In the process, it has also administered affront after affront to longstanding Western assumptions about the dependency of innovative economic advance on freedom of information and the inevitability of political liberalization in prospering societies. Just as the fact that bees can fly was once thought to be scientifically impossible, China’s perverse success at economic modernization and growth appears to refute the canons of economic liberalism and laissez-faire ideology.
A Market Economy with Chinese Characteristics

In cadre capitalism, as in other forms of market economy, the profit motive rules. But in cadre capitalism, government behaves like the private sector, and many entrepreneurs are inseparable from the CCP, which runs the government entities with which businesses are partnered and which delivers the decisions they need to turn a profit. Economically, each political fragment of China is a cut-throat competitor of every other. Since China has a million villages, a couple of dozen provinces, and more than 120 cities with populations of a million or more people, that makes for a lot of very fierce competition. As an ironic result, Chinese markets for goods and services are much more fragmented and competitive – much more classically “capitalist” – than those in the contemporary West.\(^{10}\)

But China combines its nearly “perfect” national markets with a CCP apparatus that is able to enact and implement industrial policies, harnessing market forces to shape cadre capitalist decisions to the long-term advantage of the overall political economy. The Party, with its more than 80 million members,\(^{11}\) pervades the private sector as well as every level of government. The CCP requires its members to master policy-relevant disciplines, like economics, and to stay current with the rationales for its policies. It controls personnel selection and promotions in every area of the political economy. In China, the invisible hand is a Communist Party cadre. He or she is the policy-responsive herdsman of his part of a ferociously competitive political economy.

Chinese themselves are neither eager to analyze their own commercial culture nor inclined to provide a theoretical framework for explaining it, its strengths and weaknesses, or its probable future evolution. There are, however, plenty of Western political scientists and economists who make a good living by putting out predictions of Chinese collapse, which they update annually when China once again fails to fail as they think it should. Generally speaking, when something works in practice but not in theory,

\(^{10}\) With the notable exception of the German Mittelstand, Western economies are now mostly dominated by oligopolies and large corporate enterprises that are the product of decades of economic consolidation.

\(^{11}\) The CCP has inducted virtually everyone in China with aspirations to participate in politics into its ranks. Its membership is slightly less than 6 percent of the overall Chinese population, somewhat above the proportion of those who are politically active in most other political systems. (In the United States, for example, less than 5 percent of the population can be considered politically active, while no more than 1 - 2 percent habitually give time or money to politics.)
reality needs a closer look and theory needs a tune-up. That is the case with Western understanding of the Chinese political economy.

**The Chinese Ideology**

Chinese themselves describe their socioeconomic system as “socialism with Chinese characteristics.” Many in the West snicker at this, interpreting it as an ideological evasion by China’s ruling Communist Party that will allow it to endorse capitalism without having to say it’s sorry. There’s something to this interpretation, but it misses not only the incestuous relationships between government and enterprises that are at the heart of cadre capitalism but also two other key points.

The first is that, although China’s system is operationally capitalist in its emphasis on competition and reliance on market forces, it is doctrinally socialist in its recognition of the responsibility of government to promote equality and social justice and in its continuing aspirations to do so. Chinese socialism rejects the indifference to inequality of income distribution, private affluence, and public squalor that capitalism, at least in its extreme American form, sometimes exhibits. China regards these inequalities as social maladies that must be cured by state policies.

The second point is that the “Chinese characteristics” the system integrates are not an ideology but a comprehensive hierarchy of values. These values are integral to Chinese culture and impart vigor, agility, and both adaptability and predictability to the Chinese political economy. They dictate that the social disciplines of propriety (礼) be the primary regulator of economic behavior in China, much as law is in the West. These disciplines aim at social harmony and fair outcomes rather than transactional justice. They are not enforced by lawyers and judges but by peers and social networks.

In brief, Chinese rank the emotional bonds (情) that animate guanxi (关系 or the reciprocal obligations of carefully cultivated human relationships) above the calculus (理) of selfishness that measures private gain (利) in transactions, which is what classical economic theory supposes drives human behavior. The Chinese think that one has an obligation to one’s partner and one’s peers to do what is right rather than what one has a right to do. They place both social comity and mutual rather than self-interest ahead of legal strictures (法).
This hierarchy of values demotes the rule of law but operates no less effectively than Western legal systems to enable contracts to be made and enforced -- at least among Chinese, if not between Chinese and foreigners. It engages “face” (面子 or self-respect that depends on constant reaffirmation of one’s status and perceived reliability by those to whom one is emotionally connected) in the enforcement of terms of cooperation that are mutually fair. The Chinese obsession with preserving “face” is at least as efficacious in this regard as the compulsion to adhere to legal obligations is in the West, and perhaps more so. (Risking the forfeit of moral standing in one’s social circle by demonstrating impropriety, disregard for the interests of friends, or unreliability is much more emotionally stressful than resorting to the impersonal processes and risks of litigation.) In China, social comity is business; the social is the economic.

"Chinese Characteristics"

A socioeconomic system with "Chinese characteristics" is thus a market economy in which social bonds are a stronger regulator of economic behavior than other forms of self-interest, and in which the logic of relationships trumps the rule of law in the conclusion and implementation of contracts. In such a system, conviviality -- drinking and dining together -- is not just a lubricator of business; it is a central affirmation and guarantor of contractual obligation. Gifts are expected to be traded for privileged information, competitive advantage, mentoring, and other favors. Hiring depends mostly on who rather than what one knows. Family members, classmates, and members of other important social networks have a duty to yield the keys to bank and corporate treasuries. Direct and indirect kickbacks are part of mutually beneficial transactions. Yesterday’s helpful gesture justifies tomorrow’s repayment of the favor. Transactions are not ends in themselves, but elements of relationships that all concerned wish to sustain into the future.

These "Chinese characteristics" dispense with lawyers; facilitate deals; emphasize cooperation to mutual benefit; position transactions within social networks that reinforce their underlying logic; assure that each party to a deal attends to the broad, not just the narrow interests of the other; closely relate expectations of future business to current demeanor and performance; and regulate dispute resolution. They are thus a major source of the
evident efficiencies of China’s cadre capitalist economy. They are also the source of most of its hidden costs, as well as frictions with foreign business partners. In an economy in which all levels of government and business are joined at the hip, these elements of business culture engender cronyism, bribery, nepotism, and other forms of corruption. These practices are contagious. They have a corrupting effect on those doing business with China and the Chinese. They also stimulate local disturbances as people object to their interests being injured by corrupt transactions, like “land snatching.” Above all, however, these practices are built into a culture that operates through social networks from which foreigners are mostly excluded.

China’s challenge to the supremacy of Euro-American economic doctrine derives from the relative success of China’s unique combination of cadre capitalism with Chinese values. It does not arise from China’s espousal of an exportable alternative doctrine. China has made intermittent efforts to come up with a comprehensive statement of guiding principles based on a fusion of Confucian notions of social harmony, Marxist dialectics, and the scientific method. Notwithstanding these efforts, China currently has no ideology it can explain to its own people, still less one to propose as an alternative to that of the United States or other Western countries.

Given the culture-specific characteristics of cadre capitalism, it is improbable that China could formulate a coherent or compelling statement of ideological principles for cadre capitalism. If it were to do so, the likelihood that its formulation would have much resonance in non-Chinese societies is negligible. Meanwhile, China faces problems of corruption and difficulties in cooperating

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12 Such corruption can pad costs in China as much or more than reliance in the West on lawyers and litigation to ensure clarity of contractual obligations or to resolve conflicting interpretations. When markets for goods and services are relatively “perfect” and thus characterized by intense price competition, as many currently are in China, competition effectively constrains corruption. But as markets become more “imperfect,” oligopolies emerge to dominate them, or they are reserved for central or regional monopolies, the costs of corruption under cadre capitalism can be very high indeed.

13 The CCP’s tolerance of small-scale disturbances focused on economic grievances enables it to correct particularly egregious abuses; to separate the question of its legitimacy from the misbehavior of local officials; to gauge popular discontent with specific policies and practices, and to try out adjustments to both, while purging its ranks of especially venal and politically insensitive cadres. The CCP does not seem much worried about specific protests; it has learned how to manage them. Resolving the controversies that generate disturbances is part of the process of precluding the emergence of patterns of protest that might go beyond particulars and coalesce into a broad challenge to CCP rule.
smoothly with foreign businesses that seem to be inherent in the essence of its cadre capitalist system.

**Political Legitimacy or the Lack of It**

The lack of a clearly articulated ideology to justify cadre capitalism or CCP rule poses no difficulty for the Chinese government, as long as things continue to go well. The CCP has earned -- and continues to earn -- the confidence and support of the Chinese people by delivering renewed wealth, power, and visible international respect in ever-larger quantities. If life is getting better and the prestige of the nation is rising, why question the right to rule of those delivering such socioeconomic and psychological advances? Polls show that ordinary Chinese have a lot of pride in their country and a great deal of confidence in the system under which they live. Of course, the system is not currently under severe stress, as it would be were China's economic advance to falter.

Unlike ethnic separatist causes, local grievances about property takings, tax levies, wages and working conditions, environmental damage, police activities, and the like are easily reduced to their negotiable particulars. They do not easily morph into broad protest movements. The Chinese learned the hard way in the Cultural Revolution that someone must be in charge. They fear the chaos that results from the lack of authority on the part of the state. The Chinese authorities are now well practiced in the arts of managing public disturbances about such matters. There is no apparent alternative to CCP rule, and the CCP is determined to ensure that none emerges. Only a few in China currently question the legitimacy of the CCP's leadership of the nation's affairs.

**Foreign Putdowns**

The CCP enjoys no such legitimacy abroad. As a matter of principle, liberal democrats do not recognize the legitimacy of governments whose authority derives from anything other than free expression of political preferences at the ballot box. Anticommunists judge that it is impossible for any Communist party to enjoy popular support. Human rights advocates seek to convert the world to the gospel of the Eighteenth-Century Euro-American Enlightenment and are outraged by the not-infrequent deviations from this standard at every layer of the Chinese establishment.

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American politicians exemplify all these beliefs, and the less they know about China, the more firmly they espouse them. They do not conceal their essential disbelief in the legitimacy of China's Communist government. Despite their interest in cultivating profitable ties for themselves and their constituents with a prospering China, they frequently bear witness to their hope that Communist rule there will in time be overthrown, as it was in the USSR and Eastern Europe. For some, this stance is cynically calculated to ingratiate themselves with their constituents and not a matter of conviction, but for most, it is both.

American disdain for China's political system complicates cooperation between the United States and China. On the U.S. side, beneath both the self-interested pursuit of cooperation and disputes with China, there is invariably a tinge of ideological antipathy alloyed with envy, apprehension, and denial of the likely implications of China's rapidly growing wealth and power in relation to the United States. Chinese, in turn, are quick to judge that America is trying to put China down or hold it back. The message they hear from the U.S. commentary suggests that Americans are more likely to delight in Chinese difficulties than to sympathize with them.

**China's Unattractive Politics and their Consequences**

In the meantime, China's Communist-run government has a real rather than just an imagined legitimacy problem to solve. The CCP's authority once rested firmly on widespread admiration for its heroic role in creating a new China and its cadres' reputation for moral rectitude and probity. This is no longer the case. Today, the CCP's hold on power depends on sustaining economic progress and safeguarding China's newly revived international prestige.

China's leaders know how very vulnerable they could be to a withdrawal of popular support were a major economic setback or foreign humiliation to cut confidence in their ability to keep living standards rising and national pride intact. Hence their unwillingness—even in the face of intense pressure from foreign trading partners—to compromise policies (like those affecting exchange rates) that underpin continuing rapid growth in employment at home. Hence, too, their hypersensitivity to any reminder of their still-limited ability to defend China's interests and honor abroad.
Towards Pax Sinica?

Until the CCP can find credible substitutes for past sources of moral support, it will remain fearful of the possibly inflammatory effects of foreign influences and unpredictable events on domestic restlessness and opposition to its rule. Managing the domestic politics of foreign relations is difficult when a policy stumble could call into question not just the competence of particular leaders but the reasonableness of the constitutional order they administer. Awareness of the brittleness of their popular mandate has made China's leaders simultaneously edgily cautious, harshly repressive of activities they see as attempts to organize political opposition to their rule, and quick to take offense at anything they perceive as a foreign putdown.

Despite its impressive ability to deliver economic results, these features of the Chinese system make it singularly unattractive to outsiders. They complicate the cause of national reunification by alienating many in democratic Taiwan. They disqualify China as a political model for other nations, and limit Chinese influence abroad. Lack of a mandate to rule that is independent of sustaining an unbroken record of upward mobility for China and the Chinese people is therefore a serious political problem. This is recognized by the CCP, which is realistic about its and China's many weaknesses and deficiencies.

Despite the urgency of the issues this problem presents, it nonetheless remains unresolved. As long as the sustainable authority of the Chinese political system is not put on a firmer footing, there is no prospect that China could assume global political leadership like that which the United States has exercised in the last century. There is also no evidence that China aspires to such a role. It remains absorbed in the difficult tasks inherent in maintaining order and progress in a society of nearly 1.4 billion people. Self-doubt adds further to the natural caution of Chinese leaders who come to power in a system in which the scale of governance is unprecedented, the margin for error is narrow, and misjudgments can result in unforgivable catastrophe.

The Imperatives behind China's Conservatism

Chinese leaders justly consider it a minor miracle that the country for whose well-being they are responsible has so far managed to feed 20 percent of the world's people on less than 10
percent of its arable land with only 7 percent of its fresh water.\textsuperscript{15} Memories of starvation and civil strife disturb their sleep as well as that of China's elderly. To them, China seems ever poised between a famine and a fracas.

Moreover, unlike the United States, which has no hostile or great-power neighbors, China is surrounded by both. Some of them -- Japan and Russia, for example -- have recent histories of invading China and annexing its territory. Behind an unsettled border on which Chinese and Indian forces confront each other, India dreams of besting China and countering its influence in Asia. U.S. and Indian Cold War covert action programs directed at destabilizing Tibet and Xinjiang have long since ended, but the ethnic resistance to Chinese rule they exploited has not ceased. In both Korea and Vietnam, which have long traditions of combat with China, U.S. and Chinese forces have fought each other both directly and indirectly. The U.S. Navy and Air Force continue to probe China's defenses along its coasts. Over the past hundred years, China has fought bloody battles with all of these forces, most of which it failed to win.

Not surprisingly, as a reflection of these many internal and external challenges, China's leaders are notably risk averse. In their own view, they have much less margin for error than the leaders of any other great power. A misjudgment in economic policy could result in mass unemployment, the starvation of tens of millions, and popular uprisings that could prove fatal to the regime. Mismanagement of relations with the powerful nations on China's periphery could catalyze war and risk military humiliation, culminating in regime overthrow. The mishandling of ethnic minorities could turn a relatively minor annoyance into a real challenge to the territorial integrity of the Chinese state. There are ample precedents in recent Chinese history for all these things.\textsuperscript{16} Well-founded concerns about internal and external factors bearing on continuing prosperity and domestic tranquility combine to make

\textsuperscript{15} The United States, by contrast, with only 4.6 percent of the world's population, disposes of 29.5 percent of its arable land and about 23 percent of its water. If the U.S. had population-to-arable-land-and-water-supply ratios similar to China's, it would have about 4 billion inhabitants and very different attitudes toward a wide variety of public policy issues than it does at present.

\textsuperscript{16} Some estimates of the number of Chinese deaths from the Japanese rampage through China (1931 - 1945) are as high as 35 million. Even larger numbers of Chinese may have perished in the domestic disturbances that attended the European subordination of China to Western influence in the Nineteenth Century and in the turmoil that resulted from Chairman Mao Zedong's failed attempts to accelerate China's economic growth and transform its political culture from 1958 through 1976.
China an inherently cautious, conservative power, famed for its defensiveness and patience rather than its aggressive pursuit of short-term advantage.

**China's Politico-Military Posture**

China expanded over millennia to its present geographically natural mountain, desert, and maritime limits mainly by assimilating rather than annihilating neighboring peoples. It claims no land beyond its historic borders; indeed, it has abandoned claims to much of the territory it could claim historically (especially in what is now the Russian Far East). In China's uniquely long history, it was several times overwhelmed by neighbors with more militaristic societies. The stalwart independence of Korea, Mongolia, and Vietnam -- some of which invaded China but all of which China repeatedly failed to conquer -- underscores the reality of China's basically defensive orientation, with rare exceptions, over the last two millennia.

Early in its uniquely long history as a society, China built a "Great Wall" to exclude foreign invaders. In 1433, it voluntarily abandoned its naval supremacy in the Indo-Pacific region by burning and scuttling its fleet. Those who cite European precedents to predict aggressive behavior from a newly prosperous and powerful China strangely choose to treat this history as irrelevant. China is certainly not a pacifist power. But China's traditionally defensive posture is deeply rooted in the geopolitics, geography, and political traditions of East Asia. It is unclear why academic theories drawn almost entirely from European history should prove more predictive of East Asia's future than realistic extrapolations from its present or past might do.

Despite the multiple internal and external challenges to its national security and territorial integrity, since the beginning of China's "opening and reform" in 1979, the CCP has given priority to the modernization of agriculture, industry, and science and technology. It has held defense spending to two percent or less of GDP and less than ten percent of the central government's budget. Its strategic forces remain modest in size and configured

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17 As rapidly as Chinese defense spending has been rising, it has been doing so at a rate below growth in central government budget outlays. In 2011, China's defense budget had fallen to less than 1.5 percent of GDP or slightly less than 7 percent of the central government budget. Military-related expenditures outside the defense budget could add as much as another 40 percent or more to total defense spending, bringing it to something over 2 percent of GDP. (This is not unusual. In the United States, the defense budget
to deter and respond to a nuclear attack, not to initiate one.

China's economy has, of course, been growing very fast, and its central government budget has grown even faster. In recent years, this has permitted a very rapid rise in Chinese military spending and much progress in closing the gap between China's military capabilities and those of the United States and other developed countries. (Still, with a few exceptions, China's military disposes of weaponry that is a generation or more behind that of the United States, Japan, and most NATO members.) China is now able to defend itself and could overwhelm Taiwan, if need be. It could prevail in battle with rival claimants to islands in its near seas like the Philippines or Vietnam, but not Japan. Over the past two centuries, China was repeatedly invaded from the sea. However, despite its desire to be able to defend itself from seaborne attack by a major naval power like the United States, China cannot yet project its power much beyond its immediate periphery.

China's Self-Perceived Weakness and Some of its Consequences

China sees itself as having had a history of weakness and vulnerability to foreign invasion. For over a third of the last millennium, it was under foreign occupation and rule. In the 19th and 20th Centuries, China was variously invaded or garrisoned by forces from Russia, British India, Western European countries, the United States, and Japan. China remains the only great power with borders still actively contested by neighbors and territory separated from it by ongoing foreign intervention. Having been bullied itself, it has repeatedly expressed determination not to bully others or to be seen as doing so.

amounts to 4.8 percent of GDP but military-related expenditures outside it raise total defense spending to as much as 6.6 percent of GDP.)

18 From 1979 to 1989, China's defense budget fell at an average annual rate of about 6 percent. Over the ten years since 2001, it nearly tripled. (Over the same period, U.S. defense spending, starting from a much higher base, almost doubled.)

19 The Mongols (Yuan Dynasty) ruled 1271 - 1368. The Manchus (Qing Dynasty) ruled 1644 - 1912.

20 Japan annexed Taiwan, 1895 - 1945. U.S. intervention following the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950 froze the two sides of the Chinese civil war in place, separating Taiwan from the rest of China. To this day, Taiwan remains both politically separate from the rest of China and under U.S. military protection.

21 China has repeatedly stressed that it will not pursue or practice hegemony.
Towards Pax Sinica?

China has fought wars on its borders in modern times. But, despite its rising power, it has not pressed a single territorial dispute to resolution through the use of force. China's maritime borders remain unresolved, but all but one of its land frontiers -- that with India -- have been demarcated through peaceful negotiations. (The prolonged failure to settle the Sino-Indian border seems to have as much or more to do with India as it does with China.)

In a misguided attempt to avoid irritating other claimants, China early on decided to postpone efforts to settle its more than half-century-old claims to islands and reefs in the South and East China Seas that others dispute. These claims, now imbued with nationalist passion and competition for access to seabed oil and gas resources, pit other claimants against China. Southeast Asians fear that China, for the first time in more than a century, is rapidly acquiring the military strength necessary to impose solutions in their disputes. In response, these countries have become much more active in asserting their own claims, as has China.

Sino-American Military Dynamics

The growth in China’s economic power and military capabilities is inexorably shifting the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific region. This dynamic naturally concerns China's neighbors, especially those with unsettled borders with China, like India, or maritime boundary disputes with China, like Malaysia, the Philippines, and Vietnam. Perceiving an increasingly formidable potential threat from China, these countries have embarked on

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22 These include a war in 1950 - 54 to prevent the defeat of the pro-Chinese North Korean regime and the presence of U.S. forces on the Sino-Korean border; border skirmishes with India in 1962; a 1964 - 73 proxy war to support north Vietnam in its battle for a unified Vietnam against U.S. opposition; border skirmishes with Soviet forces at several points along the Sino-Soviet frontier beginning in 1969, the affirmation of a claim to the Paracel Islands against south Vietnam in 1974; a 1979 - 1982 war to persuade a newly united Vietnam that consolidation of its control of Indochina in association with China's Soviet enemies could not succeed; and minor skirmishes with Vietnam over South China Sea claims in recent years.

23 Notably, China negotiated the return of Hong Kong and Macau to its sovereignty in 1997 and 1999 respectively, rather than settling these issues by force, as it could readily have done. The Sino-Indian border remains the subject of active, if desultory negotiations between China and India.

24 The best account of China’s policies on border disputes is to be found in M. Taylor Fravel, Strong Borders, Secure Nation: Cooperation and Conflict in China's Territorial Disputes, Princeton University Press, 2008.

25 Dictated by Deng Xiaoping as part of his admonition that China should “avoid the limelight while focusing on self-improvement,” a more accurate translation of the phrase, 锋头要避，which has been tendentiously mistranslated to sound sinister: "hide one's capabilities and bide one's time.”
major efforts to modernize their naval and other forces. At the same time, they are trying to buttress their territorial claims by populating formerly uninhabited islets and actively exploring for oil and gas in partnership with foreign companies. These countries do not want to alienate China by taking sides with America against it, but have nonetheless sought to enlist American support for their continuing rejection of China's claims. This effort has met with increasing success as America itself reacts to rising Chinese power in the region.

Much of these Asian nations' interest in U.S. military posturing on their behalf (as opposed to American expressions of interest in their continuing independence and freedom from coercion) would likely disappear if the territorial disputes that now inflame their relations with China were to be resolved. Neither they nor China have seriously pursued resolution of their differences. But instead, increased American backing emboldens nationalists in claimant countries and hardens their positions on territorial disputes, while also riling nationalist sentiment in China. It thus adds to each side's domestic political difficulties in pursuing compromise.

The U.S. sees its intervention in territorial disputes between China and other Southeast Asian countries as assuring peaceful outcomes without prejudice to the positions of the parties. Ironically, however, it actually reduces the likelihood that negotiations will take place or succeed. It also increases the danger of U.S. military clashes with Chinese forces over issues that are of passionate concern to China and other claimants but not to the United States.

The United States' concerns about China's rising military power have centered on two issues: (1) its effects on U.S. deterrence of the possible use of force by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to coerce Taiwan's political reunification with the rest of China; and (2) the extent to which China may be establishing a defensive perimeter in which it can inhibit or exclude the ability of U.S. naval and air forces to attack it. The two issues have traditionally been related, as the only contingencies that anyone could imagine for armed conflict between Chinese and American forces were related to Taiwan. As tensions between Taiwan and the China mainland and the danger of war between them have
diminished, however, American concern about China's ability to keep U.S. forces at bay has had to find other justifications.

The United States has now attributed to China strategies of "anti-access" and "area denial" directed at U.S. forces. These terms represent an American assessment of the possible effects of greater Chinese military competence on U.S. forces; they are not strategic concepts or terms used by Chinese military planners. American concerns reflect the post-Cold War U.S. determination to sustain the ability to dominate the global commons and to prevail in battle against any and all foreign opponents, including China. China's rising military power threatens to erode this absolute U.S. superiority even if it does not threaten the U.S. homeland.

For its part, China sees itself as acquiring the ability to defend itself against attack from its near seas and the land masses within them, not seeking to impede U.S. non-hostile access to these areas or to deny U.S. forces passage through them. China has a greater stake in freedom of navigation in the South China Sea than any other country, with sixty percent of its imports and exports passing through its waters.

U.S. force structure and forward deployments are configured to interrupt this trade and to exert overwhelming military power on China's borders. Current and planned U.S. capabilities vastly exceed the requirements of deterrence (which does not demand absolute assurance of the ability to crush enemy defenses to be successful). This slights the defensive capabilities of U.S. allies and security partners in the Indo-Pacific region. It also complicates rather than accords with their desire for cordial, if wary, relations with a rising China. U.S. deployments and operations embody a fundamentally confrontational policy. This is inconsistent with the oft-stated U.S. willingness to accommodate China's rise or to deal with its consequences in ways that minimize the risk of conflict.

An ambitiously aggressive U.S. military posture designed to preserve the capability to attack China at will precludes less expensive and risky American strategies aimed at buttressing

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26 Other sections of my upcoming book contain extensive discussion of this and other aspects of the Taiwan issue, which remains the core politico-military problem between the United States and China.

27 Once indelicately called "full spectrum dominance," the objective of sustained military supremacy underlies the new U.S. doctrine of "air-sea battle." The inclusion of Iran (which the United States has repeatedly threatened to attack) alongside China as a prime target of this doctrine removes any doubt about its purpose.
regional balances and sustaining deterrence without appearing to threaten attacks on the Chinese homeland. The evolving U.S. battle plan presupposes that, from the outset, any war that occurred would involve U.S. strikes on forces and facilities on Chinese territory or immediately adjacent to it. This does not address the obvious difficulties of escalation control in these circumstances. Given China's possession of nuclear weapons, this plan is simply unrealistic.

Sino-American Mistrust

The major source of distrust between the Chinese and American armed forces has long been the possibility of war over Taiwan. Taiwan has now been joined as a cause of mistrust by the contradiction between the stated U.S. ambition to be able to overpower the defenses of any and all potential foreign adversaries, including China, and China's attempts to develop credible defenses against foreign attack, including from the United States. This contradiction is at the root of an emerging arms race between China and the United States. America is striving to sustain its past and present overwhelming military superiority in the Indo-Pacific region. China is attempting to offset America's massive advantages in conventional military strength through innovative, asymmetric, and relatively inexpensive means.28

Military rivalry and mistrust imbue American backing of China's neighbors with a polarizing sense of strategic hostility to China that these neighbors do not wish to convey. It tinges other aspects of Sino-American relations with mutual suspicion verging on hostility. It reduces the prospects for bilateral cooperation on key areas of overlapping common interest. The earnest protestations of American diplomats to the effect that the United States "seeks to develop a positive, cooperative, and comprehensive relationship with China," not to counter it, ring hollow in China and the region alike. They detract from, rather than add to American credibility.

Given the current fiscal and monetary difficulties that the

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28 To counter the power projection capabilities of U.S. aircraft carrier battle groups, China has developed ballistic missiles designed to disrupt their missions. To counter U.S. space-based command, control, and intelligence systems, it has developed anti-satellite capabilities. It matches intelligence collection by U.S. naval and air operations just off its coasts with intrusive cybernetic operations. It may have developed the capability to conduct a cyber attack on U.S. economic infrastructure in response to a U.S. kinetic attack on its military and industrial facilities.
Towards Pax Sinica?

United States faces, it is unclear how long America will be able to afford the pursuit of global military predominance of this extremely expensive kind in East Asia or anywhere else. Sooner or later, the United States will be driven to less resource-intensive and risky approaches to sustaining the regional stability that its interests demand. These will involve enhanced rather than diminished cooperation with American allies and security partners. Such policies will also require more honest and effective communication between the American and Chinese military establishments than at present. In the meantime, thoughtful Chinese strategists seem prepared to wait America out.

Few performances are as self-righteously unpersuasive as those of American political and military leaders who profess to be mystified by the purpose of Chinese defense modernization. With awesome indifference to irony, they have sometimes done so right after having proclaimed their resolve to maintain an inherently threatening military presence on China's borders, sold advanced weaponry to Taiwan, bombed a Chinese embassy abroad, stridently sided with China's neighbors against it, or argued for some form of regime change in China. Chinese officials who mouth euphemistic platitudes to describe the purposes of China's defense build-up or who espouse conspiracy theories about the United States do equal damage to China's credibility. Of such hypocrisy and self-deception are accidental wars concocted. The avoidance of potentially catastrophic conflict between great powers deserves more effective diplomacy than this.

Immediate Prospects

China and the United States are both in the midst of uncertain political, economic, and military transitions. As 2012 merges into 2013, a new generation of leadership will come to

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29 On May 7, 1999, a US Air Force B-2 bomber dropped five JDAM bombs on China's embassy at Belgrade, killing three Chinese citizens and destroying the embassy's communications center. The United States insisted that this was an accident and apologized for it. Despite this, China remains convinced that the bombing was deliberate.

30 Perhaps the most egregious instance of this was Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's speech to the Shangri-la Dialogue at Singapore, June 5, 2005. In it, Rumsfeld (ignoring a century and a half of Asian history, the huge increases in the U.S. defense budget then in progress, and his own attention earlier in his remarks to the formidable power projection capabilities of the U.S. Navy) exclaimed: “Since no nation threatens China, one must wonder: Why this growing investment? Why these continuing large and expanding arms purchases? Why these continuing robust deployments?” He then advocated fundamental political change in China, toward “some form of a more open and representative government....”
power in China. At the same time, a new team (either a reelected Obama administration or a new, Republican-led administration) will be organizing itself to govern in Washington, DC. American politics are mired in gridlock, a debilitating condition that is unsustainable and must eventually be overthrown by political change. Chinese politics have experienced more reform than many are prepared to admit, but no one in China or anywhere else believes that the Chinese political system has achieved a mature and stable form. China has yet to find a way to deal with a citizenry that is no longer prepared to let officials do its thinking for it. As the second decade of the 20th Century unfolds, political upheavals of one sort or another seem more likely than not in both countries, though no one knows when or how they might occur.  

Meanwhile, China’s generous investments in human and physical infrastructure, intelligent uses of industrial policy, and rising competency in science and technology are beginning to pay off. They contrast with the United States’ tolerance of mediocrity and disinvestment in education, abandonment of efforts to maintain -- still less upgrade -- transportation systems, special-interest-tax-code-directed economic decision-making, and avid interest in high tech products of all kinds but not the science and mathematics that result in them. China is now in the early stages of building effective social safety nets and public-health systems for its aging population. These systems are now under increasing economic and political stress in America. The qualitative gaps between the two economies are closing even as the gross balance between them shifts in favor of China, which will soon displace the United States as the largest economy in the world.

Even as this happens, however, the export-oriented, high-investment, low-consumption, low-public services model on which China has built its success is coming to the end of its useful life. And the high-consumption, low-savings, generous-welfare American system is now in chronic crisis. China and America each confront the need to make painful adjustments in their economic structures and strategies in order to sustain growth and prosperity. Both countries have reached turning points in their

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31 Ironically, Americans seem more accepting of a political system that allows the will and interests of the few to prevail over the aspirations and pocketbooks of the many than Chinese may now be.

32 With the implied endorsement of China’s likely next premier, the World Bank has produced a blueprint for such transformation of the Chinese economy. (See “China 2030: Building a Modern, Harmonious, and Creative High-Income Society,” The World Bank / Development Research Center of the State Council, the People’s Republic of China, February 2012.) No such plan has yet been developed by or for the United States.
Towards Pax Sinica?

political economies. As they respond (or fail to respond) to the challenges before them, their politico-economic interaction will also change in often stressfully trying ways. The short-term prospect is for increased trade frictions as the two economies grow into ever-greater interdependence.

Strategic Rivalry

A similar dynamic is at work in the Sino-American military balance. For the foreseeable future, the United States will command formidable armed forces with power projection capabilities second to none. But chronic deficits, ballooning debt, and competing socioeconomic priorities foretell deep cuts in U.S. defense budgets and related military spending.\(^{33}\) (Political denial has so far held back fiscal realities but the need for the United States to manage its national debt will clearly not permit this to go on much longer.) The U.S. armed forces are about to enter a prolonged period of fiscally dictated downsizing. They will be configured to be able to confront a range of specific and limited contingencies, rather than to dominate the global commons.

On the other hand, there is no reason to expect anything but further rapid growth in Chinese defense budgets. Even if China continues to hold its overall military spending at its current, relatively low level (about 1.5 - 2 percent of GDP or 10 - 11 percent of the central government budget), given continued rapid economic expansion in China, sometime in the third decade of the 21st Century, Chinese military-related spending will exceed that of the United States.\(^{34}\) Spending is only loosely correlated with

\(^{33}\) The Department of Defense (DOD) budget contains about three-fifths of total U.S. military-related spending, with the rest in other budgets like Veterans Affairs, Energy, Homeland Security, etc. Thus, much commentary in the press about U.S. defense spending, which equates the DOD budget with defense spending is misleading. The DOD budget is about 4.7 percent of U.S. GDP or about 20 percent of the U.S. federal government budget. Overall military spending is about 6.6 percent of GDP or 26 percent of the federal budget.

\(^{34}\) China’s defense budget for 2011 was CNY 583.6 billion (1.4 percent of GDP or 10.7 percent of central government spending). Converted to U.S. dollars at the nominal exchange rate, this was about $91.5 billion. (An increase of 11.2 percent was announced for 2012, bringing the budget to about $106.4 billion or 1.28 percent of GDP.) Clearly, as in the case of the United States and other countries’ defense budgets, China’s published budget does not include all military-related spending. Foreign estimates of China’s actual spending on its military vary widely, but none rest on convincing methodology or can be squared with data on central government revenues. The most widely cited numbers internationally are those from the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). These appear to be derived by converting the Chinese defense budget into dollars, multiplying by 2, and subtracting $3 billion from the result. There is no apparent basis whatsoever for this methodology. It does not rest on reliable insights into Chinese budgeting practices, purchasing-power parity ratios for defense procurement, or anything else. It is best
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capabilities. Nevertheless, these trends strongly suggest that within a decade and a half China will be able to achieve its stated objective of defending itself against even as capable a military power as the United States.

China will also have gained the economic means to develop significant military power projection capabilities. Whether it decides to do so will depend on the extent to which its global interests and the demands of an evolving world order compel such a decision. The extent to which China enjoys a cooperative rather than a hostile military relationship with the United States and other major powers will be a major determinant in this regard. Should the United States appear to pose an escalating threat to China in alliance with China’s neighbors rather than a participant in an East Asian security balance that makes room for China, China will have the capacity to respond on a global level.

China has so far been very careful to avoid political or military rivalry with America. It has not sought to disrupt American alliances in Asia or anywhere else. On the contrary, while objecting to some specific U.S. policies, China has repeatedly expressed appreciation for the stabilizing effects of the U.S. presence in the Asia-Pacific region. This attitude has reflected China’s judgment that its interests are best served by “a peaceful international environment,” to which the U.S. presence in Asia is a significant contributor. It also resonates with an assessment that, as things stand, it could not win a military contest with America in any event. China is unlikely to revise its judgment that peace along its borders is in its best interest. In the future, however, it will be increasingly confident about its ability to hold its own against the United States in its near abroad.

If China comes to feel undue military pressure from America, it is less likely to respond in the Indo-Pacific (where its actions might easily exacerbate rather than relieve apprehensions by its neighbors about its power) than elsewhere. China could, for example, come to see distracting the United States by fostering challenges to U.S. interests in the Western Hemisphere as described as “seat-of-the-pants” guesstimating. The fact is that no one knows the actual level of Chinese defense spending, but that it appears to be at or below the target of 2 percent of GDP set by NATO for its members. The only things that appear to be certain are that the Chinese defense budget buys a lot more in Chinese currency than it would in dollars; that it measures the same items from year to year; and that its stated rate of increase should be taken seriously as an indication of overall trends in the importance China assigns to military aspects of its defense.
strategically advantageous. Some countries in the Caribbean and South America have been eager to enlist China as a counterweight to U.S. power. Were China to decide to accommodate their demands, it would bring considerably greater capabilities to bear than previous adversaries of the United States, including Imperial and Nazi Germany, Imperial Japan, and the USSR.

Yet such a Chinese move toward mounting a global challenge to American power seems unlikely. The common interests of the two countries in global order, peace, and prosperity vastly outweigh their few areas of serious disagreement and both sides are well aware of this. Only a major American or Chinese misstep could tip U.S.-China relations toward broad strategic antagonism rather than the continuing mixture of cooperation and competition that both sides' political leaders judge to be appropriate, desirable, and mutually advantageous. Still, the possible consequences of strategic antagonism are a pointed reminder of how much is at stake in the prudent management of Sino-American relations.

For better or ill, China has now joined America as a leading influence in global governance, the world economy, and Indo-Pacific politico-military affairs. Over the coming decade and more, China will become an even more formidable player on the world stage. There is no more consequential bilateral relationship at present than that between the United States and China. That is likely to be the case for many decades to come. The world must hope for wise statesmanship from the leaders of both countries. To date, China has proven to be a remarkably cautious and conservative international actor. In most respects, it has become the “responsible stakeholder” the United States has desired it to be. Whether China will continue to behave this constructively as its power grows will be decided in large measure by decisions and policies made in America.

A Few Features of the Next Forty Years

One way or another, by the middle of the 21st Century, most of the current conflicts between the United States and China are almost certain to have been resolved. The most troubling such question, Taiwan’s relationship to the rest of China, is a case in point. So are the current controversies over provocative U.S. patrols in China’s near seas, claims and counterclaims in the South China Sea between China and its neighbors, North Korea, alleged
currency manipulation, the protection of intellectual property, and the terms of trade and investment. Differences on still other issues, like human rights, seem destined to moderate. Yet, no doubt other contentious Sino-American differences will emerge to succeed these, as every resolution of a problem creates new problems. Furthermore, over time the United States and China will become even more interdependent than they now are, and therefore will likely have even more to bicker about than they do now.

**Taiwan and Other Territorial Disputes**

The cross-Strait relationship seems very likely to be worked out in coming decades – though perhaps not without a war scare or two -- by peaceful acts of mutual accommodation by both sides. After a decade of disruption by actions and events that originated in Taiwan, a process of pragmatic reintegration of the two sides of the Taiwan Strait resumed in 2005. The January 2012 Taiwan elections made it clear that a decisive majority of Taiwan voters have come to see independence as a dead option. The only course now acceptable to large majorities on both sides of the Strait is to continue economic integration and cultural rapprochement. Both sides hope this can culminate in the eventual elimination of military confrontation between them and both sides know that accomplishing this will ultimately require difficult compromises. Both are culturally Chinese and prepared to be patient.

Beijing and Taipei (with some involvement by Hong Kong and Macau) now seem poised to resume and perhaps accelerate the establishment of the “suprastatal” frameworks that enable

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35 See other sections of my upcoming book for detailed discussion of the effects of Lee Teng-hui’s self-contrived, quasi-official, congressionally sponsored visit to America in June 1995; the resulting March 1996 naval confrontation in the Taiwan Strait; Lee’s July 1999 proclamation of independence in all but name and its politico-military consequences; the March 2000 election of Chen Shui-bian, an open advocate of Taiwan independence; and Kuomintang Chairman Lien Chan’s courageous, healing visit to the mainland to meet with his CCP counterpart in April 2005.

36 “Suprastatal” best describes competencies created by agreement of the authorities on both sides of the Taiwan Strait to enable cooperation across it consistent with a vague mutual understanding that there is only “one China.” Under such suprastatal arrangements, each side continues to claim its own sovereignty, which the other side avoids either recognizing or challenging, but each side either 1) yields the exercise of a portion of its sovereign authority to an agreed institutional arrangement, or 2) agrees to limit the exercise of its sovereign authority in return for comparable restraint by the other. Such suprastatal arrangements manage or deconflict mutually specified aspects of cross-Strait interaction. They are enforced by concern for “face” and the sustainment of relationships rather than by reference to principles of law. (See discussion of the “Chinese Ideology” above.) Suprastatal arrangements resemble the confederal
cooperation within an ambiguous concept of “one China.” Such frameworks transcend issues of sovereignty by creating negotiated assignments of regulatory power to institutions that can manage cross-Strait engagement and cooperation. These frameworks and the rules they administer are, in a sense, supra-sovereign. They facilitate cross-Strait rapprochement on the basis of a common Chinese identity that they themselves are beginning to define. In time, as such an identity permeates all of greater China, these frameworks promise to constitute the foundations of some sort of Chinese commonwealth. As such a commonwealth emerges and ever more divisive issues are bridged, those within greater China will have the opportunity to determine the name, constitution, provisions for national defense, and law-making institutions of their community. Their choices may well surprise the world, as so many developments among Chinese have over the past forty years.

U.S. – China confrontations in China’s near seas will also be a thing of the past. Even if it could afford such operations, which is doubtful, the U.S. will not be able to continue them indefinitely in the face of active and ever-more-competent Chinese obstruction of them. America will have found ways to pursue its intelligence collection objectives by less expensive and provocative means. Or perhaps China, by initiating similar activities off America’s coasts will have driven the United States toward the reciprocal abandonment of aggressive patrolling. One way or another, the United States will discontinue this aspect of its current, misguided attempt to preserve the global hegemony bequeathed to it by the collapse of the USSR and the end of the Cold War.

It also seems very likely that sovereignty over disputed islands, islets, rocks, and reefs in the South China Sea will have been settled through negotiations. China now seems to recognize that early resolution of these issues, politically difficult as it may be in terms of nationalist sentiment, is in China’s interest. Other claimants see time working against them as China’s position strengthens relative to theirs, regardless of the level of American backing they may enjoy.

There is an obvious sequence of steps that leads to resolution of these issues. All concerned now appear to
comprehend it. This path or something like it will be pursued by China and other claimants with or without the intervention of the United States. South China Sea questions will then no longer be “wedge issues” for U.S. policymakers interested in enhancing American influence in Southeast Asian states. Ironically, both the case and the prospects for effective U.S. political, economic, and military engagement with these states to help them balance their ties with China would be enhanced, not weakened, by the dialing down of alarmism.

Korea

The Korea question may very well also find resolution over this period. The danger of conflict on the peninsula has subsided but not disappeared, as occasional armed clashes between the two Korean states periodically illustrate. The situation on the Korean Peninsula has long since ceased to be a major U.S.–China issue. Still, it remains a strategic irritant. For many reasons, it has been easier for the United States to treat the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) as a nuclear problem rather than a state or country. America has sought to manage tensions on the Korean Peninsula rather than to seek a lasting peace there, as China would have preferred.

A peace would require American as well as South Korean acceptance of the exceptionally unattractive regime in the north and the replacement of the armistice with a treaty. A continuing focus on nuclear disarmament is a distraction in this regard. Despite the DPRK’s interest in ensuring its continuing existence through normalization of relations with the United States, it is highly unlikely to be willing to give up the security it has gained from building a modest nuclear deterrent to a foreign or Republic of Korea (ROK) attempt to overthrow it or push it around.

China has a major interest in stability and the avoidance of

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37 China needs to redefine its claims to harmonize its nine-dash line of 1947 with the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). All claimants need to seek a common understanding under the UNCLOS of the criteria that enable islands to cast exclusive economic zones of 200 miles rather than simply territorial seas of 12 miles. Maps need to be redrawn to reflect this understanding. China and Vietnam need to set aside historical claims (as China has done in settling many of its land borders) in favor of the principle of *uti possidetis* – by which actual possession of a geographical feature creates a presumptive claim to it. The Philippines needs to curb its newly aggressive territorial ambitions. A negotiating process needs to be set up by which cooperation with other claimants is rewarded and recalcitrance is penalized. The United States needs to keep its military mitts off the cases and controversies the South China Sea generates. Not easy, but not impossible.
Towards Pax Sinica?

war on its borders, especially war that could draw great power intervention and require a Chinese military response. To this end, China has taken the lead in convening talks about the Korean situation between all interested parties. (It has -- it must be admitted -- done so less out of hope that the DPRK could be persuaded to abandon its nuclear program than from a desire to preempt destabilizing moves by either the DPRK or the United States.) Still, in the end, the state of tensions on the Korean peninsula and whether north and south are at peace or reunified will not be determined by China and the United States. These questions will be decided in interactions between Pyongyang, Seoul, and Washington, none of which now seems inclined toward bold moves.

Shifting Asian Balances

The disappearance of the China-specific and regional security issues that now agitate Sino-American relations will not, of course, mean the end of strategic balancing and bilateral foreign policy differences between the two countries. To cite an obvious example, consider the question of how China and America should respond to India’s growing military power and its aspirations to rival China for leadership in Asia and Africa. The many facets of this issue will play out over decades. Other examples are to be found in the possibly shifting strategic orientations of Japan and Russia.

After its defeat and occupation in 1945, Japan accommodated an unpopular American military presence on its soil to protect it from aggression by the Soviet Union and its allies, which then included a militant but militarily impotent China as well as North Korea. But the Soviet threat is no more. Japan's strategic orientation is now driven by the rising strength of China and the two Korean states, one of which (the DPRK) is Japan's avowed nuclear-armed enemy.

In reaction, Japan first began quietly to augment its independent self-defense capabilities and to draw closer to its American protectors. More recently, it has begun to diversify its defense relationships by exploring collaboration with others, including Australia, India, and Vietnam. As the military capabilities of China, the ROK, and Japan itself have improved, so have their efforts to enforce their sovereignty where it is disputed. The

38 See the discussion of this issue later in my upcoming book under the titles, "India, America, and the Times to Come," and "India, Pakistan, and China."
resulting military frictions annoy all three countries but, so far, have proved manageable. There is no reason to doubt that they will continue to be so.

Despite two-thirds of a century of exclusive reliance on the United States for defense of both its homeland and its interests abroad, it is improbable that Japan will entrust itself entirely to American protection very much longer. It could end up downplaying its ties to the United States and peacefully accommodating a more powerful China or rearming and seeking to enlist the United States and other Indo-Pacific nations against China -- or somewhere in between. Japan’s decisions, which will be heavily influenced by America’s, will have a major bearing on China, its policies, and its relations with the United States.

Russia is now rebounding from its post-Soviet nadir. It is doing so in association with its heavyweight Chinese neighbor rather than in opposition to it, as was so often the case in the past. This reflects a patient effort by China to cultivate good relations with Russia in its years of economic relapse, strategic resentment, and need as well as common interests that have found expression in the post-Cold War era. Russia and China are senior partners in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), an effort to contain Islamist extremism while neutralizing great power contention for influence in the newly independent states of Central Asia. For economically booming China, Russia has become a major source of oil, metals, coal, and timber as well as advanced weaponry. For oil-rich, consumer industry-poor, and diplomatically downgraded Russia, China is a key source of capital and manufactured goods as well as political backing against the humiliations of the post-Soviet U.S.-dominated world order.  

The past volatility of Sino-Russian relations advises considerable caution about their future course. Sources of strain include the demographics and politico-economic orientation of the Russian Far East. This vast part of the Russian Federation, just to the north of the nearly 110 million inhabitants of China's...
Towards Pax Sinica?

Northeast,\(^{41}\) remains both underdeveloped and very lightly populated. Chinese investment in Russian Siberia is currently running at a rate at least three times that of Russia, and Chinese migrants have become the primary means of meeting labor shortages. This causes natural concern in Moscow. China will also continue to calibrate its Russia policy to take account of its relations with the European Union (EU). And as the memory of an American-dominated world order recedes, China and Russia could find themselves more frequently at odds on issues of global governance.

**Trade, Investment, Peace, and War**

All of the paradoxes of interdependence are also likely to play out in U.S.-China economic relations, which will progress through a series of difficult adjustments over the decades to come. Current differences over currency alignments are likely to disappear as China's Renminbi yuan\(^ {42}\) becomes fully internationalized and available as yet another reserve currency. But new difficulties will doubtless arise as the United States ceases to enjoy the privileges of seignorage and exemption from the rules applied to lesser economies and China takes a more active and self-interested role in global monetary counsels.

Similarly, as China turns toward consumerism and a more labor-friendly workplace, the United States, now chronically in deficit, could well regain the trade surplus it once enjoyed with China, shifting the balance of political whining along with the trade imbalance. America has the resource base and productivity to accomplish this, especially if it begins to address some of the hobbles on its economic competitiveness imposed by special-interest-dictated decisions on taxes, tax subsidies, public sector investment, regulatory regimes, tort litigation, and popular culture. In any event, bilateral trade and investment flows are clearly destined to continue to increase. With more intensive transactions come more trade and investment frictions and disputes. As Chinese politics become more responsive to public opinion, the number of complaints originating on the Chinese side could well

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\(^{41}\) China's northeastern region ("Dongbei"), comprised of the three provinces of Liaoning, Jilin, and Heilongjiang, was formerly known as "Guandong" ("East of the Pass") or "Manchuria." Sino-Russian border issues in this region were settled in the Sino-Soviet Border Agreement of 1991. The last section of the border was demarcated in 2004 in a Complementary Agreement between the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation on the Eastern Section of the China–Russia Boundary.

\(^{42}\) As all the world is learning, "Renminbi" (which means "people's money") is the name of the currency (like "Sterling"), which is denominated in "yuan" (like "pounds").
come to equal or exceed those in America. As the volume of economic interaction between the United States and China increases, so will the sound level.

If the economic order that is emerging promises to test America's self-discipline and restraint and China's willingness to lead as well as complain, so too does the arena of international law and organizations. Both China and the United States have a stake in preserving as much as possible of the current United Nations system. After all, it gives both countries the status of permanent members of the Security Council and the power to veto the initiatives of other, less favored great powers. Yet, to the extent to which this system is failing to adjust to and represent shifting balances of global power and influence, it is becoming progressively less useful and effective. As proud beneficiaries of the status quo, both China and America will be challenged to yield a necessary measure of their status to other rising powers.

International law is now undergoing a fairly rapid evolution to reflect recent Western deviations from past norms as well as the moral outlooks of the various non-Western powers now taking the lead in international affairs. These changes increasingly pit the United States and China in argument, sometimes with each other, sometimes with still others. The large shifts in the global constellation of power, capabilities, and influence now taking place are multiplying the examples of this. Let me cite a few.

The regime applied to the world's oceans is unlikely to remain the same when the single national navy that has dominated it is joined by other navies determined to play a role in defending their homelands while policing the global commons.

Non-state and transnational actors -- previously essentially unknown to international law -- have now seized global roles. There is no agreement on how properly to deal with them.

Newly asserted doctrines of military preemption cannot be reconciled with either the UN Charter or traditional concepts of the law of war, raising the prospect of a world in which the law offers no protection from assault and there is therefore a premium on highly destructive deterrent capabilities.

43 The intimate relationship between levels of government and enterprise in cadre-capitalist China could easily lend such complaints particularly strident political overtones.
As robot and other electromechanical systems like drones replace human-operated instruments of war, both the concept of territorial sovereignty and the law of war demand further updating.

The consequences of global interdependence and real-time planetwide awareness of events meanwhile challenge the international community to rebalance traditional concepts of sovereignty and humanitarian accountability. And so forth.

Then, too, there is an abundance of unsolved issues of global governance, beginning with the crafting of an effective response to climate change, natural resource and energy management, and environmental remediation. All these matters and others must be thrashed out between the United States and China, testing the vision and statesmanship of both sides and the quality of their relations with still other great powers.

**Conclusion**

The world of the future is one in which the United States will no longer reign supreme, but neither will China or any other nation. China is not and will not be in the position to inspire and lead the world politically and economically as the United States did in the 20th Century. Nor, barring ill-considered challenges from the United States that stimulate it to do so, will China aspire to dislodge America as the world’s greatest military power.

The challenge before the two countries in coming decades is to manage a transition to a new world order to which each contributes and from which each benefits, like the rest of the world. In such an order, the United States and China must share political and economic power with each other and with others, and Sino-American military cooperation and arrangements for multilateral burden-sharing must first supplement, then incorporate capabilities now exercised by the United States alone. Such a world will not be perfect, but it is better than the conceivable alternatives to it. Getting to it will be difficult but not impossible. This is a transition that wise statecraft by the two countries can help the world to make.

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44 Consider recent disputes over the “responsibility to protect” and the right of the international community, acting through the United Nations and regional organizations, to take sides in situations of civil strife and civil war like those that have recently roiled societies in West Asia and North Africa (e.g., Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, Syria).

Shen Dingli, Ph.D.¹

2008 marked the 30th anniversary of modern China’s decision to begin “reform and opening” (gaige kaifang). In 1978, from December 18 to 22, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) held the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee. At that time, based on Deng Xiaoping’s speech on “Liberate Thinking, Seek Truth from Facts, Unite and Look to the Future,” the CCP decided to put the emphasis of national development on the construction of the national economy. Methods would be employed, including international cooperation, to speed up the modernization of socialism in China.²

On January 1, 1979, ten days after the CCP made the momentous decision to begin reform and opening, China made yet another strategic decision. On that day, the People’s Republic of China and the United States of America established diplomatic relations. This decision was the first major adjustment strategically carried out in Chinese diplomacy after the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee. It was a critical decision following in the path of reform and opening, and had an enormous impact on subsequent Chinese diplomacy and national development. Normalization also had the effect of setting the direction for the internationalization and modernization of China. It was a catalyst and helped accelerate the processes. To this day, the normalization of U.S.-China diplomatic relations continues to deeply influence China’s future trajectory.

Much time has passed. 2009, three decades after China’s reform and opening, also marked the 30th anniversary of the establishment of China-U.S. diplomatic relations. This essay looks back at the international background for each decade since the normalization of China-U.S. relations, pointing out the key characteristics of the bilateral relationship and the experiences gained and lessons learned. The essay further offers some basic predictions about the likely developments and trends in China-U.S. relations over the next ten years.

¹ Translation by Shannon Tiezzi, Research Associate, U.S.-China Policy Foundation
The First Decade (1979-1988):
Reform and Opening; Strategic Compromises

Diplomatic relations between China and America were established under the special circumstances of China’s domestic and foreign affairs. From China’s perspective, after experiencing the extreme domestic chaos of the “Cultural Revolution,” the national economy needed revitalization urgently. The people’s minds were made up. After Deng Xiaoping and other second generation leaders of the CCP reemerged, they conducted a thorough review of the experience of socialism’s development in China. They arrived at the strategic assessment that global war was not imminent, and could be avoided, and then put the nation on the path of economic development. After relinquishing the mistaken philosophy of “continuous revolution,” which had lasted for over ten years, China started on the new path of reform and opening.

At the same time, the CCP revised its development strategy from “having independence and self-reliance as the main goal; and obtaining foreign aid as supplemental” to comprehensive economic opening and cooperation. The Party no longer emphasized independence, but actively participated in the global economy. The CCP promoted all kinds of domestic and foreign economic factors that were beneficial to the construction of China’s modernization in the new era. The Party carried out extensive cooperation with various production elements that were advantageous to improving China’s modern production capabilities. In addition, the Party implemented a series of policies to help establish the country in commercial trade by letting in foreign investment, technology, and management and promoting an export-oriented economic model. China and America ended their long-standing attitude of all around hostility, which gave China the ability to more securely advance its strategy of economic development. Over the past thirty years, China and America’s large-scale interaction and cooperation in trade and other areas have catalyzed and even, on the whole, ensured steady progress toward China’s reform and opening.

The normalization of China-U.S. relations faced many difficulties at the time. The core impediments were ideology and

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3 For background information on China and America’s decision to establish diplomatic relations, refer to 《断交后的中美关系》[China-U.S. Relations after Breaking Off Diplomatic Relations] by Chen Yixin [陈一新], 五南图书出版有限公司 [Wunan Press, Limited], Taipei, 1995.
national security apprehensions. There were large disparities between the values systems and social systems of China and America. America practiced a market economy and held an anti-communist position, while China had for a long time used a planned economy, promoted the expansion of public ownership, and opposed monopoly capitalism and the monopoly capitalist class. In the realm of national security, China at that time simultaneously faced threats from “American imperialism” and “Soviet socialist imperialism.” America resisted socialism under the leadership of both the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Chinese Communist Party, and thought that the latter’s authoritarianism was incompatible with the “democracy and liberty” championed in America.

At the end of the 1970s, when comparing the severely depressed state of China’s national economy with the ideological danger posed by America, the CCP believed that the latter did not constitute an imminent threat. America promised to use military force to safeguard Taiwan’s security, but while at that time Taiwan still advocated “one China,” in fact Taiwan had already given up on counterattacking the mainland. Further, in the early 1970s, when comparing the persistent security pressures both America and the USSR created for China, the CCP had already arrived at the judgment that the Soviet threat exceeded the American threat. Accordingly, developing an international united front by initiating security cooperation with America was more beneficial for China’s overall interests at the time. Because of this, at the end of the 1970s, Beijing began to gradually adjust its security policy and ideology, assigning new rankings to security threats. On the global stage, China began to selectively develop security cooperation with America and other Western countries. Under the larger background of China’s decision to reform and open up, the Chinese side used a pragmatic logic for development, and no longer universally opposed the market economy. As China’s ruling party founded and perfected a new development philosophy, it also started to construct “socialism with Chinese characteristics.”

The normalization of China-U.S. relations brought China immense strategic benefits. It improved the foreign security situation China faced at the time, not only creating comparatively normal relations with the anti-communist government of America,

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4 At the 12th National Congress of the Communist Party in China in 1982, the CCP first introduced the idea that “We must integrate the universal truth of Marxism with the concrete realities of China, blaze a path of our own and build a socialism with Chinese characteristics.”
but also curbing the sizable security pressure the Soviet Union presented to China. Further, when China carried out military operations in Vietnam, China received tacit understanding from Washington, expanding the scope of regional security cooperation between China and America. More importantly, the normalization of China-U.S. relations provided a motivating force and collaborative resources as China underwent a transformation of its economic system. This created an external environment for the changes in China's modernizing system and thus helped China make strides towards peace and raised China's international competitiveness. From the very beginning of the economic changes, China's reform and opening marched inexorably towards comprehensive and powerful modernization of the national system.

In the first ten years after the establishment of China-U.S. diplomatic relations, China obtained relatively favorable space for both security and development. A large batch of national defense companies and research and development institutions, which had been moved to the third front (a term adopted in the 1960s referring to inland regions of China) during the “Cultural Revolution,” returned to the coastal areas (otherwise, the 2008 earthquake in the Beichuan region of Sichuan province would have caused even more severe damage in China). In these ten years, China began to attract foreign investment, and began international cooperation in realms such as manufacturing and science education. The establishment of China-U.S. relations also pushed a number of Western countries to recognize China, further raising China's international status. Although at that time China's comprehensive national power was still extremely limited, China still received a relatively advantageous position in international society.

Frankly speaking, the establishment of China-U.S. relations also left historical topics unresolved. In handling the Taiwan question, from President Nixon's 1972 visit to China on, America was under pressure from the former Soviet Union's global expansion. America cut off diplomatic relations with Taiwan, removed the American military presence from the island, and ended the U.S.-Taiwan Mutual Defense Treaty, fulfilling mainland China's legitimate requests, but Beijing and Washington did not reach a consensus on the point of requiring America to stop its arms sales to Taiwan as a precondition to normalization. After China and America established relations, the U.S. Congress quickly drew up the Taiwan Relations Act, implementing a constraint on China. On the issue of American arms sales to Taiwan, China and America
have a sizable disagreement. The “normalization” of China-U.S. relations in fact left many serious hindrances unresolved. Objectively, as long as China’s core interests are still being damaged by America even after the establishment of diplomatic relations, then we cannot maintain that China-U.S. relations have already been normalized. It is a so-called “normalization” only in comparison with the time when the two countries lacked formal diplomatic relations and were in the midst of a serious confrontation. Under a strict definition, “normalization” of China-U.S. relations is a process, and not a moment that has already passed. But from the perspective of history, the above question reflects the balance of power between China and America as they reestablished relations, as well as the pressing needs of both sides for security cooperation. It also reflects the realism of both China and America in their diplomatic philosophies. Under the respective domestic and foreign conditions facing China and America at the time, China and America were able to succeed in establishing relations; both sides implemented compromises. This was a fairly pragmatic game played by the two countries under the mutual requirements of each other’s demands.⁵

On the Taiwan question, in the 1980s Taiwanese authorities still pursued the “one China” policy. The Taiwan question was an explosive issue that had not yet come to prominence. Although the American Congress passed the Taiwan Relations Act, and the Reagan administration continued to push for arms sales to Taiwan, under pressure from the mainland Chinese government, America and China issued a joint communiqué in 1982⁶ in which America promised to implement more restrictions on arms sales to Taiwan. At the same time, America began to export defensive weapons and equipment to the Chinese mainland, deepening the significance of their security cooperation. China assisted America in obtaining relevant intelligence on Soviet nuclear tests conducted near the Chinese border. America provided the Chinese mainland with “Blackhawk” military helicopters, and planned to use the “Peace Pearl” project to help China’s air force upgrade the defense penetration capabilities of the J-8 fighter planes’ electrical systems. In the middle and late years of the Reagan administration, China and America carried out a series of effective security cooperation


⁶ “Joint Communiqué of the USA and the People’s Republic of China” 《中华人民共和国和美国合众国联合公报》, issued August 17, 1982 (also called the “China-U.S. 817 Joint Communiqué”).

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initiatives. The characteristics of definite strategic cooperation emerged in the two countries' relationship.\(^7\)

**The Second Decade (1989-1998): “Hiding One’s Capabilities and Biding Time”; Altering the Relationship**

In the first period following the establishment of U.S.-China relations, described above, China’s modernization and development used America as an important reference. China’s culture and education and scientific research gradually abandoned the Soviet model and began to learn from various aspects of American and European countries. In operating the market economy since reform and opening, China also paid attention to the successes and experiences of relatively mature market economies, including studying America’s experiences and lessons during the process of constructing the market and the legal system. Because of this, China and America initiated numerous exchanges and areas of cooperation. Towards the middle and end of this period, China-U.S. relations overall were balanced.

However, in the summer of 1989, China-U.S. relations encountered a serious difficulty; Western society interfered in China’s domestic affairs. In 1989, America and the Soviet Union continued to ease tensions and the Cold War was nearing its end. After the “crisis of ’89,” America placed sanctions on China and public contacts between American and Chinese officials were almost at a standstill. During this time of change, China put forth the guiding policy of “hiding one’s capabilities and biding time, calmly observing.” China’s policy was to strengthen diplomatic relationships with bordering countries, improve relations with major states, persist in reform and opening, and create a favorable situation in the near future. In 1991 and 1992, respectively, Japanese Prime Minister Toshiki and Emperor Akihito visited China, encouraging the West to gradually restore high-level official exchanges with China. America’s contacts with the Chinese government also gradually moved from low-profile to public.\(^8\)

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In 1993, at the first unofficial meeting of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) leaders in Seattle, Washington, the Chinese and American heads of state held an official meeting. The two sides confirmed: as important countries in international society, the two nations held important responsibilities for ensuring world peace. The American side recognized China’s important role in the world, and hoped that China-U.S. relations could improve. The Chinese side believed that the interests of Chinese people, American people, and the people of the world all needed China and America to start out with an eye towards overall international circumstances, using a far-sighted perspective to look at and manage bilateral relations. From this meeting, China and America were able to restore the mechanism of summit meetings between the highest leaders.

Although the improvement of China-U.S. relations was the overall trend, in the 1990s there still existed four major obstacles to the two countries’ interactions. First, the two sides had serious differences on the Taiwan question. After the Cold War ended, America raised the level of arms sales to Taiwan, exporting large quantities of advanced attack weapons. This not only failed to respect China’s sovereignty, but also did not honor America’s relevant promises. Second, on the issue of human rights, America frequently criticized China, and even threatened to couple this issue with China-U.S. trade. Third, America applied pressure over the issue of unbalanced trade between China and America and criticized China over questions about market access and intellectual property rights. Fourth, America repeatedly sanctioned China over the issue of anti-proliferation, but America itself exported advanced conventional weapons to Taiwan. On the issues described above, China and America carried out the practical measures of handling the problems on a case-by-case basis. With the final goal of effectively managing and solving these issues, China and America gradually established all types of specialized talks and consultation mechanisms. Over the decade of the 1990s, they gradually implemented comprehensive dialogues, causing the relationship to gain different degrees of improvement in the areas described above.

After experiencing the serious shock that stemmed from America permitting the then-leader of Taiwan to visit America in the mid-1990s, the two countries began to once again examine and position the overall bilateral relationship. At one time the countries recognized that China and America “turned towards a 21st century
relationship of strategic cooperation and partnership.” Another time, Washington clarified the contact policy toward mainland China. The head of both countries held separate state visits to each other’s nations in 1997 and 1998, remarkably easing tensions that had existed in the rigid China-U.S. relationship since the end of the Cold War.⁹

On the issue of Taiwan, America shifted from a policy of using the Taiwan question to constrain mainland China to an increasingly greater recognition of the serious danger that Taiwan’s leaders, in a period of major social changes, were using populism to advance the extremely irresponsible position of “Taiwan independence.” America recognized that the actions of this kind of “troublemaker” were fundamentally harmful to America’s interests, and because of this began both exploiting and also restricting “Taiwan independence,” a more complicated policy that was balanced with regards to Taiwan. Although there was no fundamental change to America’s intention to preserve the cross-strait situation of non-reunification, at the same time American constrained the more and more fierce actions of “Taiwan independence.” Objectively, America expanded its common interests with China on the issue of opposing “Taiwan independence.” To a definite extent, this caused America to become a comparatively more responsible interested party on this issue.

On the issue of human rights, as President Clinton’s experience in office increased, he gradually realized that linking human rights issues with China and America’s trade relationship would not help to solve any problems. For this reason, he took the initiative in 1994 to publish an article in the Los Angeles Times, admitting that his policy of linking trade and human rights was a mistake. Following the development of America’s “address questions of differences on a case-by-case basis” style of pragmatic diplomacy, China and America would jointly enter dialogues to handle problems. The two countries’ human rights disagreements over time stopped being a taboo subject that could not be discussed. Also, China and America opened frequent consultations and negotiations on each specific area of trade. According to specific situations, the two sides made mutual concessions, made allowances for each other, and simultaneously

⁹ “U.S.-China Joint Statement”, Washington, Oct. 29, 1997. The statement indicates: “The two Presidents are determined to build toward a constructive strategic partnership between China and the United States through increasing cooperation to meet international challenges and promote peace and development in the world.”
took care of their respective national interests and their mutual interests. As a result, during this decade both countries pushed hard for deeper access into each other’s markets, and created favorable conditions for China to enter the World Trade Organization at the beginning of the 21st century.

As for anti-proliferation and regional security, China and America redoubled their efforts to revise this aspect of the relationship beginning in the mid-1990s. Step by step, the two countries changed this dispute into a bright spot of cooperation. America shifted from unilateral sanctions to seeking effective cooperation. The American executive branch and China’s central government implemented a series of positive interactions aimed at solving this problem. Notably, China upgraded its national export controls over strategic materials such as nuclear materials, biological materials, and chemical materials as well as sensitive technology, achieving an appropriate balance between the combined interests of economics and security. On the issue of anti-proliferation, China and America’s positive interactions expanded in the 21st century to include developing cooperation on the platform of the “Six Party Talks” aimed at the North Korea problem, where the countries cooperated in urging North Korea to renounce nuclear weapons. Beijing and Washington also increased their cooperation on the question of a nuclear Iran. Based on the foundation of respecting facts and international law, the two countries have handled the balance between Iran enjoying the rights to civilian nuclear energy and assuming relevant responsibilities. America and China limited the possibility Iran could alter the technology of civilian nuclear energy for other purposes.

In this period, as China-U.S. relations entered the post-Cold War era, the structural demands of the two sides, which had been formed in the Cold War, underwent profound change. This era of great changes prompted China and America to undergo a repositioning of themselves and of each other. Each country looked closely at the changes in their national interests, and considered the importance of and methods for re-stabilizing their relationship. During this period, major fluctuations emerged in the relationship: they competed over the issues of Taiwan and human rights, and

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10 For further details, see the Chinese State Council News Department’s 《中国的防扩散政策和措施》[China’s Anti-Proliferation Policies and Measures] white paper, pub. Beijing, Dec. 3, 2003, and the 《中国的军控、裁军和防扩散努力》[China’s Efforts on Arm Control, Disarmament, and Anti-Proliferation] white paper, pub. Beijing, Sept. 1, 2005. These two documents elaborate on the current state of China’s anti-proliferation export control policy and the evolution of relevant policies over the past 10 years.
even reached the grim situation of having a naval confrontation in the high seas over the Taiwan question. Yet this period also provided time for the two countries’ elite strategic thinkers to consider the connection between China-U.S. relations and the harmonious progress of all humankind. These ten years laid out an important foundation for the two countries’ relationship to develop into a more mature stage, where the relationship never or rarely would be influenced by the international environment.

The Third Decade (1999-2008):
Seize Opportunities; Expand “Win-Win” Situations

After China-U.S. relations entered a relatively short period of stability in the mid to late 1990s, in 1999 the relationship again suffered serious harm from the American-led NATO bombing of the Chinese embassy in Yugoslavia. Also, at the beginning of the 21st century, the countries faced the serious incident of an American military aircraft coming close to China for reconnaissance, which led to a collision between military aircraft from the two countries. Although the nature of these incidents was fairly serious, with China suffering losses of both people and material property during these two events, China and America still engaged in basically effective control of these two crises. Beginning from the basic interests of Chinese, Americans, and the people of the world, the two countries managed these events creatively and properly, thus preserving the continued development of the China-U.S. relationship as a whole.

In the third decade since the normalization of China-U.S. relations, a series of new characteristics emerged in the bilateral relationship. First, because China successfully managed its foreign relationships, it received a major opportunity to concentrate its energy on development and opening. In this period China’s economic development obtained great achievements; China was rapidly moving from being a major country in the region to being a major country in the world. Gradually, China was showing some signs of becoming a world power. Following along with this, China’s and America’s respective domestic political agendas started impacting the bilateral relationship more frequently. Next, on the issue of Taiwan, which had long disturbed China-U.S. relations, in this period the ever-intensifying developments in “Taiwan independence” also more frequently compelled China and America to come to a consensus and use cooperation in order to safeguard the current situation in the Taiwan strait. From 2002 on, then-U.S. President Bush repeatedly indicated that he “did not support” and
even “opposed” Taiwan independence; America’s executive branch authorities then repeatedly emphasized the importance of preserving the current cross-strait situation.

In this period, China and America’s core security cooperation effort was joint anti-terrorism. A serious attack on America occurred on September 11, 2001. This international terrorist incident not only constituted an unprecedented attack on American soil, but also raised an important test of America’s ability to respond to an unparalleled crisis. The Bush administration declared that America was entering a state of war, and launched two foreign wars. Clearly this response was inappropriate, and it forged an even more serious crisis which until now America has been unable to end. To fight terrorism, America required international cooperation. International terrorism rapidly rose to become the Bush administration’s primary national security threat. By launching international anti-terrorism cooperation, China and America raised overall trust and cooperation between the two sides. China and America not only quickly emerged from the crisis formed by the collision of the two countries’ military planes, but also formed a relatively long period of stability in the relationship over the majority of the eight years of the Bush administration. China indeed predicted and also brought about this “important strategic opportunity.” At the same time, China-U.S. relations also mainly preserved the cooperative situation in areas such as anti-proliferation, regional stability, and opening up markets.

In this period, as China’s economic development unceasingly advanced, China began to move from achieving an initial period of prosperity towards increasingly discussing an efficient and harmonious style of scientific development, and increasingly valuing the path of sustainable progress. Being concerned with social insurance and human rights has already become an important element of improving the relationship between the government and the people, and improving the relationship between labor and capital. Being concerned with the environment and ecology has also already become the primary force behind the national revision of environmental protection policies. The improvements on these issues not only fit with China’s orientation towards socialist development, but also were beneficial in strengthening the construction of China’s modernized system, and helpful in improving China’s international cooperation efforts, including China’s cooperation with America in the new century.
During this time, the gap between China and America’s economic power and overall national power was growing notably smaller. On the foundation developed by the two earlier stages since the establishment of relations with China, China’s economic production has doubled twice in the past 10 years. As calculated by the official exchange rate, the gap between China and America’s economies has already fallen from a 1:10 ratio in 2000 to a 1:3 ratio in 2008. As calculated by purchasing power, China’s end-of-year economic output has already reached 70-80% of America’s, and will overtake America’s by the end of the 2010s. Within America, there have also been more calls for the need to reevaluate the exchange rates of China and America in order to adjust bilateral investment and the trade relationship. Although these voices relentlessly add pressure to the two countries’ trade relationship, this also induces both sides to look for new ways to plan mutually beneficial cooperation. During the Bush administration, the “China-U.S. Strategic Dialogue” (also called the “China-U.S. Senior Dialogue”) and the “China-U.S. Strategic Economic Dialogue” arose from this occasion, and then were elevated to the “Strategic and Economic Dialogue” of President Obama’s time. The new platforms for high-level dialogue, in elucidating the respective development views of China and America, eased and made use of both domestic and foreign pressures. By integrating each country’s administrative resources and promoting win-win cooperation and other aspects via compromises, the dialogues already have and still continue to display important results.

The issue of Taiwan, which had once severely disturbed China-U.S. relations, began to cool down in the third decade since the establishment of China-U.S. relations, after experiencing continuous ups and downs for over ten years. On one hand, mainland China’s continued rise in power was then profoundly reconstructing China-U.S. relations, making them more equal and proactive, and even influencing America to adjust its course towards a more pragmatic cross-strait policy. In the first decade of the 21st century, America faced in succession a serious attack from international terrorism and a grave financial and economic crisis. America’s national strength was severely restricted, which in turn curbed the global exercise of America’s power, forcing America to pull back from areas that were not core security interests, including adjusting policy on the Taiwan question. On the other hand, the

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rapid rise of mainland China's overall strength, and the self-confidence and influence China gained as a result, also directly pushed the cross-strait relationship to break away from old patterns to a certain extent, leading the relationship to advance in a more stable, win-win, and proactive direction. Under these circumstances, more opportunities also emerged for China and America to develop a positive, mature bilateral relationship.

At the end of this period, the financial storm which had started in America and exploded to a global scope formed for America an even more serious challenge than the terrorist attacks of “9-11.” The “9-11” incident attacked America’s government and economic center. Although to some extent it perhaps was a countermeasure to many years of American foreign policy, its methods could not be accepted by modern civilization. But the financial crisis that occurred at the end of 2008 was a fundamental challenge to the contemporary system of free capitalism. It endangered the production relations of the whole capitalist system, causing America to experience a comprehensive decline for the first time since World War II. Because of this, its results absolutely cannot be compared with the “9-11” attack. Although China was already deeply involved in the global market economy, and inevitably was influenced by the worldwide financial crisis, the effects of this crisis were different for China and America. Similarly, the crisis also raised criticisms of lifestyles of both countries' peoples. Americans' unprecedented consumerism caused the country’s excessive financial overdrafts, and the newly-created financial derivatives were not reasonably supervised by the government or specialized mechanisms. By contrast, China’s material, produced wealth was not fully consumed, but turned around and invested in America’s theoretical economy, perhaps adding to the risk of America’s financial crisis. Since China and America’s economic relationship was already highly interdependent, when facing an extremely serious crisis, China and America had no option of “decoupling.” They could only remain in the same boat, support each other, and continue to cooperate.

During this decade, China and America faced two important crises. The first gave an opportunity to China, because the tricky China-U.S. relationship was still relatively independent, and China still had many choices, but China chose cooperation. However, the second crisis truly made America and China share interrelated interests; China and America had no option besides cooperation. Such homogenized interests, created by three decades of a
developing China-U.S. relationship, probably could not have been predicted by the strategists who, 30 years ago, decided to normalize the bilateral relationship. Although China and America each lost certain policy options, the two countries’ close interdependence further formed the reality of an economic community, and this is a factor in the continued stabilization of the present and future China-U.S. relationship.

The Next Decade (2009-2018):
A Strategic Rise; A World Stabilized Together

The development of the relationship in the 30 years since America and China established relations is a process of unending opening and development at the same time. China’s opening and cooperation created the unceasing buildup of China’s strength, and also laid a more solid foundation for the next ten years of national development. The advancement of China’s modernization is closely related to the normalization of relations with America. From the concept that normalization is a process, we see that not only are China-U.S. relations still in the middle of continuing normalization, but this process also directly promotes the normalization of China’s national construction. As a result, China, after undergoing a hundred years of humiliation and becoming an independent republic, progressively approaches the norm of a modern, national, institutionalized civilization. Building on this idea, there exists a close link between the establishment of China-U.S. diplomatic ties and China’s modernization. Looking ahead to the next ten years, the development of China-U.S. relations will come to be more and more tied to China’s strength and capabilities.

For one thing, China’s forward progress towards modernization cannot be obstructed. On a basic level, China’s system of centralized state power still provides the country with unique and powerful integrated administrative capabilities. The reform and opening of China raised the country’s competitive strength, providing more material foundations for national power and ensuring a secure society. This is abundantly manifested in every aspect, such as the continuous increase in the people’s standard of living, the ascendency of China’s national status, and the safeguarding of an environment for peaceful development. In this time of globalization, when each country and each region interact with each other, the domestic and external factors of China’s rapid development have not undergone essential changes: to a great extent, there are still international circulations of capital; there is still
space for the continued development of China’s peaceful and prosperous society; the international community still commonly accepts a “win-win” philosophy. Even though the international community faces a severe financial crisis, this not only has not and could never destroy the Western nations’ power to consume and produce, but it has actually pushed China to enter a new historic phase of attaching importance to domestic demand, adjusting production capacity, promoting efficiency, and protecting the environment.

During reform and opening, the Chinese government also underwent significant innovations. The central and the regional governments played a chess match over the distribution of power, which was carried out in an orderly fashion according to a people-oriented philosophy. National governance entered a higher realm. These factors all required China to continue to promote the protection of democracy and the legal system, and to seek for greater movement towards a market economy and environmental and ecological protection. From this, China could eliminate foreign and domestic tension, prevent every type of crisis, and truly construct a harmonious society.

Following the rapid development of China’s economy, China in 2008 already achieved the targets for comprehensive social prosperity that had been set for the year 2020 by the 16th and 17th National Congresses. China had planned that by 2020, the GDP would have quadrupled that of the year 2000 (a target raised by the 16th National Congress, aiming to raise the GDP from $1 trillion to $4 trillion), or that by 2020 the per capita GDP would have quadrupled that of the year 2000 (a target raised by the 17th National Congress, with the goal of moving from $800 to $3,000). In 2008, China’s GDP had already surpassed 30 trillion RMB, which according to the official exchange rate of the time equaled $4.4 trillion, and per capita GDP had reached $3,300. Thus China achieved two core goals for its comprehensive prosperity a full twelve years early. The size of China’s economy has also passed Japan’s. In light of this type of rapid development, even if in the next ten years China only continues to “maintain 8%,” in 2018 the development level of China’s national economy will have again doubled from the foundation of “comprehensive prosperity,” reaching $9 trillion and greatly reducing the gap between China and America. In terms of purchasing power, China even has a hope of

12 Translator’s note: “Maintain 8” or baoba means to keep up an annual economic growth rate of 8%.  

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surpassing America. Accordingly, the next ten years are the decade of China’s strategic rise.

For another thing, after calculating that in the next ten years China still can expect rapid development, the swift development in the 70 years after the founding of new China, especially China’s accelerated rise in the 40 years since reform and opening, already has and will continue to have a deep influence on the international system. The maturation of Asian power, with China as the representative, has the chance to revise the world’s governmental and economic structure. The international order long led by the West will begin to enter a new international system where the comparative powers of East and West are more balanced. At the same time, in the next ten years, America will be required to face the situation of its relative economic power continuing to decrease and its relative competitive advantage could possibly further weaken. This also means that as China-U.S. cooperation develops, China-U.S. competition could expand.

In the next ten years, the world could step by step see this type of change: a stable China requires a measured step in order to mature, and peacefully reaches “the promised land” within the existing international framework. Also a mature America, facing a new world-class nation that both peacefully rises and respects the international system which was fundamentally created by the American-led Western world, should have sufficient mental preparation to accept it (or will be unable to not accept it). The shift in American and Chinese power within the international system must occur through negotiation of the rules and through peaceful means.

In the next ten years, the fields of advantageous China-U.S. cooperation will expand. On a myriad of topics, like politics and law; economics and finance; culture, education, athletics, and health; and global and regional security, China-U.S. mutually beneficial cooperation has extensive space to grow. At the same time, China and America still maintain various degrees of contradiction on aspects such as scientific, technological, and military competition; economic fairness and openness; the global market and economic order; and the Taiwan question. At times, the two countries could still erupt in conflict on specific questions. On many-sided issues, the two sides’ cooperation and competition could also simultaneously deepen. In some areas, China will share in international stability and other common goods produced by
American leadership. On other issues, China and the U.S. must cooperate together in order to promote the stability of each region. On most important issues, and regarding conflicts and competition between China and America, and the reliance on institutional innovations and technological innovations, further development can be used to create resources and therefore solve problems. For example, on the question of safeguarding the international energy supply, the crux of the China-U.S. conflict is not raising energy efficiency or reducing energy consumption, but developing new energy sources, including thermonuclear fuel capable of providing for future human society for ten million years and other zero-carbon or low-carbon new energy sources. This is the only basic way to strive for continuing economic growth while at the same time improving the state of the global climate.

At the beginning of the 21st century, China had already seized important strategic opportunities. In the midst of significant international events, China took a stable stance and peaceful development as its philosophy, and took non-traditional security as an important task. China successfully advanced continuing cooperation with the outside world. Cooperating with America in the next ten years will remain the key to Chinese development during this period. The international society recognizes that China’s model of peaceful development is already widely well-known and accepted by the world. China’s action in solving important regional and global issues is indispensable. China is currently making important preparations for the strategic rise of the Chinese people over the next ten years. There is reason to look forward to China-U.S. relations developing to become more equal and stable; the two countries’ cooperation could shape a lasting stability for the world.13

The result of China’s strategy to develop and rise will be to balance the strategic relationship spanning the Pacific Ocean. First, China and America have already created multifaceted and overlapping communication lines for political and security topics. These lines bring timely communication and favorable conditions for increasing trust and dispelling suspicions, forming a fixed

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13 President Hu Jintao’s report in the 17th National Congress, 《高高中美高食人高高高高高高高,胡为为为面中为邓为人高陈为利为为为》["Raise High the Flag of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics, Strive to Capture New Victories in Comprehensively Building a Middle-Class Society"] raised the idea of “sharing opportunities for development and rising to challenges together.” (Oct. 15, 2007, Beijing) China’s moderate and stable development strategy is advantageous for a “win-win” situation for all people, and has already become a new, civilized method that receives extensive attention.
mechanism for preventing and managing crises. Times like the early stages of the Korean War, when China and America lacked the conditions for trust and communication, have already disappeared forever. Second, China and America are both countries with superior military ability, and both countries are able to conduct high-intensity conventional war or conflicts that cause extensive damage. The two sides would have a hard time coping with the consequences of a serious military confrontation; each country must avoid this. Third, the two countries have many mutual interests on issues like economic cooperation, stabilizing the international situation, and controlling large scale epidemics. Due to this, China and America are sure to develop a relationship of mutual respect and “win-win” cooperation.

As China’s international status rises ever higher over the next ten years, this will have a fundamental stabilizing effect on China-U.S. relations. This is because China is self-reliant and has increased its abilities. At the same time, this is also a process that relies on America and even gives benefits back to America. However, although rational elite strategists in America can understand the positive significance of China’s international status, inevitably they still have difficulty accepting the relative weakening of America’s status. Although America cannot and has no power to restrain China through force, it will still contest every step of China’s development process by seeking relative and absolute victories under the umbrella of “win-win” economic relations and protecting America’s interests in the name of defending the international security order. Because of this, we can predict that in the next decade or two, that is, the time when China’s overall economy is in the process of overtaking America’s, disputes between China and America over the fair distribution of benefits will necessarily occur. This includes arguments over the role of labor rights and environmental protection in the process of amassing wealth, as well as the influence of economic development on climate change and other international issues. But these are questions of balancing interests in the midst of development, and belong in the category of acceptable arguments and contentions.

Conclusion

China and America have already embarked on the stable path of a predictable relationship determined by realism. China and America both seek peace; the question is under whose control this peace will occur. China has vowed not to seek a peace under
Chinese control, but cannot accept an unfair peace controlled by American hegemony. America still is unwilling to give up its hegemony, but already feels that it lacks the strength to carry out its desires when it comes to safeguarding the peace under American control. The financial crisis that exploded in 2008 is a case in point. America’s development model has already attained considerable success, but as time passes its inherent drawbacks become more and more evident. Moving in the direction of socialism and using the national government to protect the basic human rights of more common workers must be the direction for social reform in America. As the power gap between China and America decreases, it is hopeful that important questions that still exist between the two countries, such as the Taiwan question, could become less important, or even be fundamentally settled. The next ten years will make the final preparations for the arrival of this time. At that time, China can be said to have successfully risen. It is also a time for America to correct some long-standing basic errors in its foreign policy, causing America to receive more respect.
Forty Years Later: 
My Reflections on a Changing China

Chi Wang, Ph.D.

This year all students, scholars, and enthusiasts of the U.S.-China relationship are celebrating the fortieth anniversary of President Nixon’s historic trip to China. Nixon’s visit in 1972 set off an unpredictable chain of events that has led to the U.S.-China relationship as it stands today: the countries are inextricably interdependent in the economic sphere, co-exist uneasily in the military sphere, and alternately cooperate and bicker in the political sphere. The relationship has had its share of ups and downs at the highest political levels, and will continue to experience more vacillations in the future. Many of the other excellent articles in this edition of the Washington Journal chronicle the past and the future of the official U.S.-China relationship.

However, I would like to focus on a different, but perhaps more important, aspect of the relationship. Apart from government summits, high-level dialogues, and joint communiqués, there is another level of U.S.-China relations, what is today called “people-to-people exchanges.” These exchanges, often scholarly in nature, are the bedrock of communication between Chinese and American citizens. While scholars and pundits often focus their attention on the words and interactions between high-level government officials, connections and ties between the two countries are constantly evolving thanks to cultural, scholarly, and scientific exchanges programs. These exchanges allow for conversations between ordinary people (at least in the sense that the individuals involved are not diplomats or ranking government officials). The vast majority of Chinese and American citizens are only able to connect with and understand each other through exchange programs.

While many of my colleagues rightfully celebrate the 40th anniversary of an official political visit, I would like to celebrate the 40th anniversary of one such exchange. In 1972, I was sent to China, the land of my birth, on my own mission. I was to organize, for the first time in decades, a cultural exchange between America and the People’s Republic of China. While naturally not as famous as Nixon’s trip, in its own small way my trip was also a historic moment in U.S.-China relations, when one more wall dividing the peoples of the two nations began to crumble.
Dr. Kissinger Sends Me to China: June 1972

In 1972, I was serving as the University Librarian at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. I had moved to Hong Kong temporarily in 1970 for this assignment; it was my first trip back to Asia since I left China for America in 1949. I was excited to be so tantalizing close to my homeland. Little did I know that I was about to be offered the opportunity to get even closer.

In late 1971, I went to a dinner party in Hong Kong, where I met a Xinhua News Agency editor named Mr. Zhou. As the party ended, Mr. Zhou asked to take me to the ferry to go to the Kowloon side. He joined me on the boat so that we could continue our conversation. On the boat, he startled me by asking if I would like to return to China and see my native city of Beijing. He told me that just as Kissinger had gone to mainland China, I could go. Apparently, just like Kissinger’s, my trip was also to be cloaked in secrecy. Zhou came to the party as a newspaper official, then waited until we were on board a ferry before speaking to me as a Chinese government official.

At that time, American citizens could not go to China without special permission. The Library of Congress, the State Department, and Dr. Henry Kissinger all had to sign off on my trip. Though I had been invited to come to China in late 1971, my visit would not be approved until after Nixon’s trip to China in late February of 1972. Nixon was well aware of the historical implications of his visit, and wanted other exchanges to be put on hold until after he had made his famous trip. Once the Shanghai Communiqué had been signed, and Nixon had departed, my trip was cleared by the government. I was to visit China under the sponsorship of the Department of State and the Library of Congress.

The official mission of my trip was to establish a book exchange with the PRC, and a cultural exchange between America and China. Prior to 1972, there had been Chinese delegations to visit the United States; however, these delegations were all scientific.¹ It was the goal of my trip to establish the first non-scientific Chinese delegation to visit the United States. As a Chinese American, this mission was exciting to me on both a

personal and an academic level. I had worked as the head of the Library of Congress’ Chinese and Korean section beginning in 1967, and I knew firsthand how severely the lack of U.S.-China relations impacted scholarship.

Though I considered myself an academic, not a government official, I was traveling to China under the auspices of the government, and had to follow certain protocols. Before I entered the PRC, David Osborne, the American consul-general in Hong Kong, and vice consul David Dean gave me a two-hour briefing in preparation for my trip. They made it clear that I was not to publicize what I was doing—even after Nixon’s ice-breaking visit, my trip was supposed to remain a secret. Unfortunately, this meant that I had to lie to my colleagues in Hong Kong about the trip. I wasn’t even allowed to tell my wife what I would be doing in China, although she at least knew that I was going. With all the bureaucratic preparations and cloak-and-dagger secrecy, it was hard to remember that my purpose in going to China was purely academic. At the very beginning of U.S.-China relations, in the early 1970s, every trip to China was a political event, no matter who was going and why.

On June 1, 1972, I prepared to return to my homeland for my first time since I had left in 1949. I carried with me two small suitcases and three cameras. Given the extensive preparations for my trip, the journey itself was remarkably simple. A chauffeur drove me to the border between Hong Kong and mainland China. There was no customs agency; I just walked across the Lowu Bridge and entered Shenzhen City. I was greeted by a 40- or 50-foot billboard of a soldier carrying a rifle; underneath him was written in big characters, “We must liberate Taiwan.” If there was any lingering doubt that I had actually entered in the PRC, the billboard settled the question. This was indeed China, which had been considered America’s enemy for 23 years. Now it seemed America and China were attempting to redefine their relationship, and I was to be a part (however small) of the effort.

While the billboard served as a stark reminder of China’s feud with America over Taiwan, an encounter on the train ride from Shenzhen to Guangzhou drove home once again the necessity of overcoming differences in the U.S.-China relationship. As I drank hot tea and tried to tune out the continuous loudspeaker broadcasts of the same patriotic speeches and songs, I felt a tap on my
shoulder. As I turned around, a man said to me, “When you go to
Beijing, buy more books for the Library of Congress.”

I was shocked. Even my own wife didn’t know the details of
my trip, yet this older man somehow knew who I was and why I was
in China.

The mystery man turned out to be a researcher at the Center
for Chinese Studies at University of California at Berkeley. Like me,
he was enjoying his first trip back to China in more than 20 years,
taking advantage of the thaw in relations brought about by Nixon
and Kissinger's overtures. The researcher had been told not to
approach me, but as a scholar he felt compelled to make sure that I
brought home books for China researchers in the United States. In
those days, research materials were scarce, and my journey
represented an incredible opportunity to share knowledge between
the two academic communities.

Guangzhou Manifests Signs of Cultural Revolution

The trip from Shenzhen to Guangzhou lasted about two
hours. Once we arrived in Guangzhou, an official car picked me up
from the train station and brought me to the best hotel in the city,
Eastern Guesthouse. It was a large, old-fashioned hotel of about
300 rooms, with dim lighting and no air conditioning. Guests used
electric fans to stay cool and guests had to wrap a mosquito net
around their beds at night. Overall, it seemed to me that there were
far more workers than guests at the hotel.

It was hard for me to believe that this shabby-looking
establishment was the best hotel in the city, but it was—even
Chairman Mao stayed there when he visited the city. I stayed there
for three nights while I toured the city, taking advantage of the
incredible opportunity to spend time in China.

One of my stops in Guangzhou was Sun Yat-Sen University,
the best university in South China. All over the campus, there were
signs of the Cultural Revolution. Banners proclaiming support for
Mao were everywhere. Professors (several of whom had earned
PhDs in the U.S.) went about their research, but no students
attended classes. The library, a point of particular emphasis given
my background and mission, was in very poor condition. I
immediately saw how essential library exchanges could be in
helping raise the bar for China’s academics.
Reflections on a Changing China

I also visited two major Xinhua bookstores in Guangzhou. Government-controlled Xinhua is the major bookstore in China, where no book can be published without approval from the Communist Party. I purchased about 200 books, most of them compilations of Mao's speeches and writings. I also bought works on Chinese medicine and on acupuncture. While these materials represented only a fraction of Chinese scholarship, especially given the strict censorship in existence during the Cultural Revolution, I could at least bring back a part of Chinese academia to the United States.

My Brief Stop in Hangzhou

Three days after my arrival in China I boarded a two-propeller airplane bound for Shanghai. There were only six people on the flight—two Chinese government representatives there to escort me, two pilots, and one flight attendant. I asked the attendant where the other passengers were, and she told me that I was the only one. At the time, I enjoyed the VIP treatment, but later I realized by providing me with specialized service the government was also isolating me from contact with Chinese citizens.

Before arriving in Shanghai, we stopped for two nights in Hangzhou, a city in Zhejiang province famed for its scenery. Hangzhou was nearly empty, and the city's university was shut down. I was alarmed to see so many universities closed; I was in China to promote academic and cultural exchange, but China's institutes of higher learning seemed to have come to standstill.

My visit to a middle school in Hangzhou left a better impression; when I got there, the students greeted me with open arms. They had made welcoming posters, which hung at the front gate. They showed me the classrooms and their chemistry lab, which was not bad considering the situation in China, but still far behind Western standards.

They also showed me their school farm. During the Cultural Revolution, each school converted a portion of its property into a farm. All Chinese high school students had to work several hours a day as farm laborers. The school farm was just one more piece of evidence that China in 1972 was not emphasizing academic education, but proper political education. It was a hard time to be a scholar.
The Peace Hotel in Shanghai

After my stop in Hangzhou, I continued by train to Shanghai. There I visited several universities in Shanghai and met with a local official. The Shanghai library was still closed; instead of touring the library, I visited automobile and steel factories.

I was also able to visit Fudan University, one of the top five universities in China. I met the school president, the librarian, and the dean of the College of Arts & Literature, all of whom indicated to me that the school was slowly recovering from the harmful effects of the Cultural Revolution. Though the Cultural Revolution would not officially end until Mao’s death in 1976, by 1972 its most virulent phase had ended. After seeing empty campuses in Guangzhou and Hangzhou, I was glad to see Fudan University was gradually regaining its footing. The university library was almost deserted, but at least it was open. A huge statue of Chairman Mao kept a watchful eye on the school from the center of campus.

In the president’s conference room, I was briefed on the development of Fudan University over the past several years and the changes that had been taking place there. I met President Tan, an internationally renowned geneticist who had a PhD from Cornell University; and Professor Liu, one of the top scholars of Chinese literature in all of China. I was so grateful that I was able to meet these professors and learn from them about Chinese literature development over the previous 20 years. I knew many of my colleagues in America would do anything for just such a chance, and I hoped that someday soon such meetings would be commonplace.

Also in Shanghai, I was invited to meet a Chinese scientist, Cai Zhuquan, who had never had a formal education. Raised in a poor farming family, he was completely self-taught. Cai showed me his laboratory where he had developed high-intensity light bulbs. It was amazing to me that a man with no formal schooling had achieved so much. I wondered how much more Chinese people could achieve when they received a good education, and could freely share knowledge with colleagues and counterparts around the world. My meetings with Fudan University faculty and with Cai Zhuquan further drove home how much both America and China stood to gain from cultural and academic exchange programs.
Return Home to Beijing: Shocking News

After I finished my visit to Shanghai, I flew to my native city of Beijing. Once again, I was the only passenger on the airplane. I wanted to meet more people, but I knew I could not ask the Chinese government officials to arrange this. The Chinese people I had met so far had provided some interesting revelations. They were fascinated by what I thought of as everyday objects: my camera, my Western-style clothes, and even my handheld radio. The Chinese, even the scholars and scientists I had the privilege of meeting, had never imagined that such technologies existed. And yet, no one felt quite at ease expressing these sorts of thoughts to me. I longed to meet more Chinese people, to see if my impressions were typical, but it was not to be.

However, I did look forward to seeing my mother and the rest of my family in Beijing. I had not seen any of my relatives since I left China in 1949. I was so moved by being back in the city in which I had grown up, even though to me it seemed almost unrecognizable. The city had been remade since 1949. The city wall and its gates had been torn down. The narrow, muddy hutongs of my childhood had been replaced with broad paved roads crowded with bicyclists hustling from one place to another. The city I knew, governed by the KMT, had been thoroughly capitalist, with Western fashions, movies, and foods widely available. This new Beijing was the capital of a communist state, and seemed hopelessly cut off from the outside world. Although I was happy to be in Beijing again, it was there I realized that I was in the "New China." This "New China" was like a foreign country compared to the China I remembered.

When I arrived in Beijing, my two brothers, their wives, and my sister were in the airport waiting room. I tried to hold back my tears as I hugged my sister and shook hands with my brothers. But one face I had expected to see was missing—I did not know why my mother hadn’t come. When I asked about her, my sister told me that she had passed away in 1966. I was stunned. My family had not told me that my own mother had died. Even now, they seemed uncomfortable talking to me about her. My sister only said that we would talk more at the hotel.

I was staying at the Beijing Hotel next to Tiananmen Square, the only deluxe hotel for foreign guests. I checked in and went to my room, which was quite big. Finally, the Chinese government
officials who were accompanying me on my trip left me alone in the room with my siblings and I was able to talk with them in relative privacy.

My brothers and my sisters finally felt comfortable enough to tell me that in 1966, at the height of the Cultural Revolution, my mother had been killed by the Red Guards. She had been 80 years old when the Red Guards broke into our house. I could hardly believe that the Cultural Revolution, whose influence still haunted the campuses I had visited, had had such a tragic effect on my own family. Its influence was still strong, even in 1972. My family was too afraid then to fully tell me the details of my mother’s death. In fact, they seemed reluctant at first to talk to me at all because I was now an American citizen, a foreigner.

I had not expected my return to China to be so bittersweet. Even though my siblings had survived the worst of the Cultural Revolution, they too had suffered. When I took them to eat at the hotel, it was also the first time in a decade that they enjoyed themselves. They had not tasted butter or ice cream in all that time. They liked Western food, especially steak and fried chicken, but had been unable to taste such food in decades. I would also find out later that my brother was only moved into a decent apartment shortly before my visit. Before that, he had lived in a tiny, filthy apartment after being evicted from our old family home.

I was saddened by the way the revolution had turned out. Mao had unified China, but what about the people? Even when meeting scholars and academics, I had been upset by the way China seemed to have regressed, technologically and culturally. Hearing the bitter experiences of my own family, I could not understand what had happened to my homeland. Even now, I fail to comprehend what happened in China during the years of the Cultural Revolution that caused people to kill each other.

For two nights, I could not sleep. I did not know whether or not I should hate Chairman Mao. How could such a thing have happened, not only to my family but to countless others? The Chinese people had had such high hopes for their “New China”, and I couldn’t accept that all these hopes had been dashed. After all I had seen in China, I was even more determined to do my part to help open China to the world. It seemed to me that for “New China” to truly prosper, it would need to open its doors to the outside world, especially America. China would need help.
recovering from the Cultural Revolution, and based on the invitations extended to Henry Kissinger, President Nixon, and now myself, I hoped China was ready to accept this help.

The next day, I needed to be able to negotiate the book exchange. I was exhausted from my trip and the news I received from my family, but I still went to the Chinese cultural working group office to discuss the matter. More than ever, I realized the important role cultural exchanges could play in helping life China out of the darkness of the early 1970s. Scholars would certainly benefit, but so, I hoped, would ordinary people.

**Recognition of My Achievements**

June 17 was my last day in Beijing. I went to the Chinese Cultural Working Group to discuss the upcoming librarians’ exchange and the book exchange. It was agreed that 12 Chinese librarians would visit the United States sometime in 1973. This visit would be the first by a Chinese delegation for non-scientific purposes. I was also able to negotiate a book exchange program between the Library of Congress and the National Library of Beijing, China’s central library. At that time, of course, there were no diplomatic relations between China and the United States; the books had to be exchanged as gifts. In those early years of exchanges, the Library of Congress sent more books to Beijing than the National Library sent to Washington. The first shipment of around 300 books from Beijing arrived in October 1972. The Librarian of Congress, the State Department, and Dr. Kissinger’s office were all delighted at the results of my trip. The White House even sent me a letter of thanks.

When I returned to the United States, I wrote a report for the Library of Congress that was circulated to the State Department and the White House. It was also translated into Japanese and German. The State Department then hired me to brief leading American publishers such as Prentice Hall, McGraw-Hill, and Simon and Schuster on the publishing industry in China and on the library situation there. As a result of my efforts, I became renowned in library circles. My name appeared in the Library of Congress bulletin, the American Library Association bulletin, and other publications. I was grateful to be the first American librarian to visit China and make major breakthroughs for exchanges.
Looking back on my trip, it is hard to believe that the China of 1972 turned into the China of 2012. There have been so many changes, physically and culturally. When I arrived in 1972, Shenzhen was little more than farmland; now the city is one of the most developed industrial areas of southern China. Likewise, during my trip all of eastern Shanghai was farmland, whereas today this area, the district of Pudong, holds many of Shanghai’s major hotels, the international airport, and the tallest building in China.

I truly believe that President Nixon’s visit helped to bring about monumental changes in China. Without a relationship with America, how would China have embarked on the process of “reform and opening” that brought unprecedented prosperity to millions of Chinese? President Nixon set in motion the renewal of U.S.-China relations, which allowed China to raise its global status, remake its economy, and begin the long climb back from the historical low of the Cultural Revolution. In 1972, it was hard to believe that China even had the potential to change. President Nixon’s visit helped pave the way for Deng Xiaoping to create another “New China,” one marked by a more open economic and social system.

However, one aspect of Chinese society has remained constant: the rule of the Communist Party. Many Western observers expected the Party to collapse along with the USSR, but instead the Party has flourished along with China. Perhaps this stability contributed to China’s progress over the past forty years. Besides the growth of education and wealth, Chinese people now possess certain freedoms that were non-existent in 1972—the freedom to move to a new city, to change one’s profession, and to choose one’s school.

In other areas, reforms have been slow. Corruption is rampant, leading to severe inequality. Despite the growth of China’s middle class, there are still millions of Chinese who remain impoverished. China also has become less willing to compromise with other countries, perhaps as a result of its growing global power. There is still much work to be done, and the pace of reforms is slow. Yet the progress that has been made since 1972 is undeniable, and I am hopeful that the next years and decades will bring about even more change in China. As living standards continue to rise, and more Chinese are lifted from poverty, calls for
freedom and liberty will increase. Mao’s “New China” gave birth to a Cultural Revolution; Deng’s “New China” reshaped the economy. It is my hope that in the future China will shift its focus to reforming the political system, creating a third “New China.”

I am glad to have played a small part in breeching the barriers separating Chinese and American scholars, helping pave the way for China to reacquaint itself with the world. I hope that China will be able to carry this cooperation into the future, and to continue along the path of reform.
China’s Ethnic Policies in the Xinjiang Region

Rosalyn Lim

What is the root cause of the Uyghur-Han Chinese conflict in Xinjiang? Does the conflict inherently arise from the practice of Islam not being reconcilable with the official atheist stance of communist China, as is commonly assumed? Is economic development the panacea for the wide-ranging grievances of the Uyghurs in Xinjiang that Chinese authorities often maintain it is? There is no simple answer to these questions, but the objective of this paper is to critically evaluate the efficacy of China’s management of ethnic separatism in Xinjiang and the role of Islam in the conflict by examining the opposing rights of sovereignty and national self-determination. In short, I argue that the minority-state contention that exists in Xinjiang is not simply a clash between Islamic and Confucian orientation of the societies. It is a complex and multifaceted conflict on multiple levels. The tendency to generalize issues, especially those involving religion, is highly undesirable, and fails to take into account the historical and political contexts in which the conflicts are deeply rooted.¹ In a multi-ethnic state such as China, the prerogatives of sovereignty and minority self-determination are perceived by the respective parties as being diametrically opposed and incompatible.² Therefore, the Han-Uyghur contention is not so much about the incompatibility of Islam and the Chinese order, but rather is a clash between the state-building aspirations of the Chinese authorities and Uyghur hopes for more economic equity and cultural and political freedoms. Current policies in Xinjiang should be re-evaluated, because instead of working to foster accommodation of the Uyghurs in Chinese society, their effect has been to reinforce the Uyghurs' will to be distinct from the Han Chinese. More work has to be done in order to halt the damage to inter-ethnic group relations in China, with a moderate and more inclusive approach to managing minority groups required.

This paper will start by outlining the historical context of the Uyghur-Han conflict in Xinjiang. From there, specific strategies that Chinese authorities have adopted in the name of curbing separatist forces will be evaluated. Following that, a prognosis of Xinjiang's

². Bovingdon, The Uyghurs, 163.
future and policy recommendations for China and the U.S. are discussed.

The Historical Context

Ethnic conflict in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region in the northwestern part of China has been going on for decades, with the region commonly referred to as being turbulent or restive. Most recently on July 18, 2011, there were violent clashes between Uyghur and Han Chinese ethnic groups yet again. The attacks on a police station in Hotan, Xinjiang, left at least 20 dead. The on-and-off episodes of ethnic group confrontations highlight the pervasiveness of Uyghur-Han discord and underscore the urgent need for Chinese authorities to better manage religious diversity and ethnic differences in the country.

Minority conflict in China is not only an issue of domestic concern. Increasingly, violent and armed resistance to Chinese rule could be seen as having a far-reaching, international impact. In particular, calls for self-determination could spread to ethnic groups with a similar outlook residing in some of the former Soviet republics bordering Xinjiang. It is worth distinguishing between the contagion process by which conflicts spread across national borders and the diffusion process, as both are described by Ted Gurr. Contagion occurs when conflict spreads across borders, and these conflicts can involve ethnic and religious elements. Diffusion, meanwhile, describes how an uprising in one place can inspire similar movements by people living elsewhere. The renewed salience of nationalism, the natural tension between the rights of sovereignty and self-determination, and the recent perception of an Islamic threat in the non-Muslim world have turned the Uyghur-Han conflict into an issue of international concern.

The Central Asian border region of Xinjiang, in northwestern China, accounts for one-sixth of the country's land mass and is

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home to about 20 million people from 13 major ethnic groups. Chinese control over its northwestern region dates back to the eighteenth century and the name Xinjiang was likely used for the first time in 1786. At the time, it was not the Han Chinese but rather the Manchus of the Qing dynasty who ruled China. The fairly sinicized Manchus were expansionist, conquering large amounts of land including the Manchu homeland, Mongolia, Xinjiang or Eastern Turkestan, and Tibet.

Broadly speaking, Xinjiang is divided between Muslims, most of whom speak Turkic languages, and the non-Muslim Han Chinese. The Muslims form a majority although they do not constitute a united bloc that excludes the Chinese, as there are cultural and linguistic nuances between different Muslim groups. The ethnic group most frequently involved in unrest in Xinjiang would be the Uyghurs, the people who lend their name to the autonomous region. The Uyghurs do not share any cultural or linguistic links with Han Chinese inhabitants who form the largest ethnic group in China and make up 92% of China's population. The ethnic heritage of Uyghurs and other ethnic minority groups living in Xinjiang, including the Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Uzbeks, and Tajiks, more closely resembles that of people in the neighboring former Central Asia Soviet states of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. In comparison, another Muslim group in China, the Hui, has become ethnically indistinguishable from the Han Chinese after centuries of inter-marriages. The Hui Muslims speak Mandarin and share certain customs with the Han. As a result, they have been more assimilated into mainstream Han practices and norms, and are not deemed a threat to the state.

9. Ibid., 23.
Uyghur nationalistic desire for independence has manifested in one form or another since the early 1900s when Xinjiang began enjoying various degrees of autonomy. Turkic rebels in Xinjiang declared independence in October 1933 and established the Islamic Republic of East Turkestan, also known as the First East Turkestan Republic. The following year, the Republic of China reabsorbed the region. In 1944, factions within Xinjiang again declared independence, this time with the support of the Soviet Union, and created the Second East Turkestan Republic. But in 1949, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regained control of the territory. In October 1955, Xinjiang became classified as an “autonomous region” of the People’s Republic of China, with a number of autonomous Mongol, Kyrgyz, Kazakh, and Hui counties.\textsuperscript{15}

Beijing has essentially pursued a two-fold strategy to deal with ethnic separatism in Xinjiang since the 1990s. While there has been a prohibition and suppression of unofficial religious activity, there has also been an “ambitious program of economic reform, on the assumption that the principal underlying reason for the disaffection of the Uyghurs is not ethnic nationalism but poverty and underdevelopment,” wrote Michael Dillon, former Director of the Centre for Contemporary Chinese Studies at the University of Durham, U.K.\textsuperscript{16}

Yet despite the state’s efforts, cultural assimilation between the Uyghurs and the Han Chinese in Xinjiang has been limited.\textsuperscript{17} This can be attributed to a confluence of reasons, including a lack of trust and Uyghur disaffection arising from the mass immigration of Han Chinese into what Uyghurs consider their indigenous homeland, policies restricting the practice of Islam, and the growing income gap between the Uyghurs and the Han Chinese. In particular, state-directed Han migration into Xinjiang has stirred popular discontent as it has been viewed as a move to obliterate Uyghur culture. In the 1940s, Xinjiang was inhabited overwhelmingly by Muslim peoples, mainly the Uyghur, Kyrgyz and Kazakh, with the Han Chinese constituting only a very small

\textsuperscript{15} Dillon, \textit{Muslim Far Northwest}, 35.
\textsuperscript{16} For a brief discussion on economic reform in Xinjiang, refer to Michael Dillon’s \textit{Contemporary China—An Introduction} (Milton Park, Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), 181-82.
\textsuperscript{17} Eric Hyer, “China’s Policy towards Uighur Nationalism,” \textit{Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs} 26, no. 1 (April 2006): 75-86. During the many demonstrations over the years in Xinjiang, slogans calling for the Chinese Communist Party and the People’s Liberation Army to get out of Xinjiang and calls to establish “Xinjiangstan” or “Uyghuristan” are common. The common cause is Pan-Turkic nationalism, Hyer argued.
minority, or about 6.7% of the population.18 After the Chinese Communist Party took control of China, large numbers of Han Chinese migrated to Xinjiang, so much so that by 2001, Uyghurs made up 46% of the population, while Han Chinese accounted for a not insubstantial 39%.19

Meanwhile, because of the precedent set by East Turkestan independence, there have been simmering hopes of ultimately being free of Chinese rule. This was especially the case in the 1990s, in the wake of the implosion of the communist Soviet Union where several regions with similar ethnic populations gained independence. As a result, nationalistic Uyghur elements have been agitating for independence from China for decades, very often appealing to their brethren in Central Asia and other Islamic countries across the world for support. In this politico-historical context, a key source of the Uyghurs’ contention with Chinese rule arguably arises from nationalistic inclinations, rather than militant intentions or religious differences.20 Ultimately, this is also a display of the conflict arising from the opposing rights of sovereignty and self-determination, with these urges stemming from very different sources. As Rupert Emerson said, as cited by Gardner Bovingdon in his book The Uyghurs, Strangers in Their Own Land, "The state has an indisputable prerogative and duty to defend its own existence, and the nation comes likewise to be endowed with a right to overthrow the state."21 The rights of self-determination and the rights to state-building are inherently conflicting and may be destabilizing if the circumstances are permissive.

Other scholars point out that Uyghur nationalism is a relatively recent construct that needs to be analyzed in the historical context of Soviet influence in the region. For instance, Kazakhstan-based Uyghur historian Ablet Kamalov contends that the Uyghur national identity was started in and shaped by Russian Central Asia.22 This argument counterbalances the notion that the Uyghur national identity is created and reinforced by the Chinese

19. Dillon, Muslim Far Northwest, 24-25.
state. Kamalov argued that Soviet scholarship played a formative role in the construction of a Uyghur national consciousness and nationalistic views of Uyghur history. "Soviet historiography has consistently characterized the Uyghurs as a people of Central Asian origin indigenous to the territory of today's Xinjiang," wrote Kamalov. While it is true that Uyghur history was exploited by the Soviet government in ideological disputes with the Chinese communists, Soviet support for Uyghur scholarship and cultural institutions were crucial in helping to reinforce and propagate a nationalistic Uyghur vision of history and narrative, argued Kamalov.

The Chinese State's Dilemma

It is often a mistaken perception to begin with that decades of radicalized, Maoist policies have destroyed China's religious culture. It is also wrongly assumed that the officially atheist stance of communism has yielded a society bereft of religious culture and incapable of religious accommodation. To be sure, the anti-traditionalist policies from an earlier era, especially during the Cultural Revolution period of the 1960s, wiped out a huge amount of religious culture and practices. At the time, religious leaders were callously stripped of their socio-economic and religious powers. Nonetheless, it should be noted that the most unforgiving period of anti-traditionalist policies and the most intense crackdown on religion lasted less than ten years. Sufficient material survived, such that "memories of rituals" and "organizational know-how" served as the "seeds for revitalization in the reform era." The Chinese state has arguably been "regulatory and managerial" toward religion rather than "suppressive and hostile," with the exception of Falungong, some sects, and ethno-nationalist movements that could be perceived as having anti-establishment leanings.

In the case of the Falungong, a discipline that combines meditation with qigong exercises and moral philosophy, it is the group's organization and concerted action by members that the Chinese authorities find threatening, not the group's beliefs. In a

26. Ibid.
similar vein, the Communist Party is concerned about Uyghur Islamic beliefs and practices that impinge upon potential political motivations and the political uses of religion.\(^{27}\)

In comparison, another Muslim group in China, the Hui, has become ethnically indistinguishable with the Han Chinese after centuries of inter-marriages. The Hui Muslims speak Mandarin and share certain customs with the Han.\(^{28}\) As a result, they have been more assimilated into mainstream Han practices and norms, and do not face the same level of scrutiny that the Uyghurs face.\(^{29}\) The dynamic of the Han-Hui relationship is substantially different from the Han-Uyghur relationship, although both are Muslim groups in China. Therefore, while religion is an important dimension to be considered in Han-Uyghur contention, religious differences alone cannot explain the conflict.

From the perspective of the Chinese leaders, a key goal at this critical juncture in time is simply to attain and preserve internal stability, and for a vast country such as China, with its large and diverse population, this is not an easy task.\(^{30}\) China, despite conventional assumptions, is not devoid and intolerant of religion. It is when religious organizations are deemed to have over-stepped their boundaries by exhibiting what are considered subversive or anti-state inclinations that suppression and repression tends to be quick and harsh. Crackdowns on religion and other organized movements are mostly attributable to concerns about the potential mobilization of masses of people for political purposes, which is deemed a threat to stability and the ruling Communist Party. In short, Islam per se, is not the principal source of Han-Uyghur contention. However, when Islam is perceived to be a threat to the state, the religious repression and discrimination that results may fuel inter-ethnic group animosity.


Nationalism, National Identity, and State-Building

The quest for a national identity has become more important as China becomes an increasingly influential regional power. Coupled with the fading relevance of communist ideology in the day-to-day lives of the Chinese, the Communist Party has had to pursue new ways to justify regime legitimacy. Building upon a sense of nationalistic pride among Chinese citizens and perpetuating myths of the Communist Party's central role in the nation's success is one such strategy.

Nationalist feelings are also reinforced when sentimental nationalism is invoked with reminders of how China was subject to injustices and insults by Western countries in much of the 19th century. China’s humiliating defeat in the Opium Wars of the 1840s, which was followed by numerous trade concessions to, and extraterritoriality deals with Western colonial masters are reminders of how weak China was in the past. Those experiences tore down the self-indulged myth of the middle kingdom’s superior civilization and achievements, shaking its sense of invulnerability. Following that low point in Chinese history, nationalism, state-building, and national identity were introduced into Chinese intellectual discourses, urging generations of Chinese to rebuild China as a “sovereign, strong, and independent state in the community of nations.” Whether China was under the leadership of Sun Yet-sen, Chiang Kai-shek or Mao Zedong, arguably their goals were similar: to build a strong, sovereign, and united country that was respected and recognized by the world. In some respects, their efforts have worked, for Chinese nationalism is always proudly on display whenever China makes a major accomplishment, such as hosting the Olympic Games or sending astronauts into space.

Expressions of Chinese nationalism would include populist-based but state-tolerated or even state-encouraged nationalism like “nativism and anti-West literature,” to state-led efforts like “patriotic education and promotion of Chinese culture and civilizational achievements.” State-led nationalism, and patriotic education in

32. Ibid., 64.
33. Ibid., 64-65.
particular, identifies the Chinese nation with the communist state, with the CCP becoming the “embodiment and expression of the nation's will as well as its central role as the defender of national interests—national unity, sovereignty, and economic prosperity.” Patriotic campaigns impart legitimacy to the CCP, instilling the perception of the centrality of the CCP to China's success. Nationalism, or patriotism as it is sometimes referred to in Chinese terminology, has therefore been tapped and encouraged for state-building purposes and legitimacy-enhancing reasons by the ruling elites of the Communist Party.

What is more striking and relevant to our discussion on China's ethnic minority policy, however, is the concern that Chinese nationalism is being seen as Han chauvinism. The transition of the Chinese Communist Party from an opposition party to the establishment power presented a dilemma, which up to today has not been attenuated. While struggling for power against the nationalist Kuomintang before 1949, the communists could afford the Leninist view that national minorities should have the right of secession and could therefore proffer "ideological niceties" to minority groups. However, once in the government, the CCP had to deal with reality and the practical issues of national interest. The CCP quickly realized that the major minority groups dwelled in the border regions of China and posed a serious challenge to territorial integrity if separatist or nationalistic movements were allowed to voice their opposition and organize against Beijing. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Chinese government was even more cautious, for there was empirical evidence that a federal system of autonomous regions could engender conflict, rather than resolve it. Scholars have argued that in the Soviet case, the freedom bestowed on individual republics precipitated the emergence of secessionist movements.

The problem here then is the inherent contradiction between the state-building ideals of the Chinese state and the aspirations for

37. Ibid., 70.
national self-determination of the Uyghurs. There is tension between the rights of sovereignty and self-determination, which originate from very different sources. Yet, in and by themselves, the goals are reasonable from the respective points of view.40

The state is defined as an entity which possesses a monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force within its defined territorial perimeters. Other actors may challenge that arrangement with their own organized use of force against the state, but those leading the state will not accept such assertions as legitimate. Herein lies the role of laws, which proscribe and discourage the use of force by players acting on their own will and not the state's behalf.41

Modern China only came into being in 1949 after the communists won a long-standing civil war against the nationalists and, therefore, is considered a relatively new state. It is generally agreed that among the core state-building imperatives are sovereignty and the prerogative to maintain territorial integrity. To achieve those ends, the Chinese Communist Party, as the center and core of the political system, aspires to exert control over the country's periphery. The CCP is often willing to employ force to keep power centralized, and is ready to use harsh action to prevent secession and unrest in order to keep itself in control.

The periphery emerges as the space where the political center's power is demonstrated even though it is physically removed from the immediate environment. The center's definition and viability is derived in part from its relationship with and the ability to exercise influence on its periphery.42

The manifestations of the Chinese state's efforts at "locking in" peripheral actors and resources, and the erecting of structures to rein in oppositional forces using hierarchy and privileges are aplenty. China's state-building efforts include the stationing of state-backed entities throughout the region, and attempts at creating homogeneity via cultural assimilation efforts, for instance through the designation of Mandarin as the national language.43 Meanwhile,

40. Bovingdon, *The Uyghurs*, 162.
43. Truls Winje, "Xinjiang, A Center-Periphery Conflict in Display" (master's thesis, University of Oslo, 2007), 65.
the Uyghurs react to and resist authority via "countercultures" and other means of undermining China's state-building machinery. In effect, the ways in which conflicting group ideals are played out only serve to reinforce inter-group differences.\textsuperscript{44}

To sum up, the process of state-building involves a political center projecting power on its territorial periphery with the ultimate aim of integration and control,\textsuperscript{45} and that process in itself can bring about conflict. In a multi-ethnic state such as China, the rights of sovereignty and minority self-determination are perceived by the respective parties as being diametrically opposed and incompatible.\textsuperscript{46} Therefore, the Han-Uyghur contention is not so much about the Islamic and Chinese orders being irreconcilable but due to the clashing state-building aspirations of the Chinese authorities and Uyghur hopes for more economic equity and cultural and political freedoms.

**Specific Chinese Policies and State-Building Strategies**

The Chinese government’s approach to minority management can be divided into military and non-military measures. Military and paramilitary forces at the state's disposal include the People's Liberation Army (PLA), the People's Armed Police Force (PAPF), and the People's Police.\textsuperscript{47} The PLA has a presence of an estimated 50,000 to 100,000 troops in Xinjiang, which oversee border defense and internal security.\textsuperscript{48} The PAPF is a component of China's armed forces and is equipped to handle political unrest like rioting with tear gas and high pressure hoses, and terrorist attacks. The People's Police constitute China's public security force. It counts maintaining social security and order among its key responsibilities. There was arguably a more liberal use of the national military forces when dealing with potential separatist elements and insurgencies in the past, but in the current era, local policing and the PAPF have taken on the lead role in the Chinese

\textsuperscript{44} Bovingdon, The Uyghurs, 86.
\textsuperscript{45} The tension arising from the ideals of nationalism versus the ideals of state-building was broached in Bovingdon's book, The Uyghurs. For works on the center-periphery power conflict in Xinjiang, please see Nicolas Becquelin, "Staged Development in Xinjiang," The China Quarterly, no. 178 (June 2004): 358-78; Winje, "Xinjiang, A Center-Periphery Conflict," 31-80; and Gunaratna, Acharya, and Wang, Ethnic Identity and National Conflict, 15-16.
\textsuperscript{46} Bovingdon, The Uyghurs, 163.
\textsuperscript{47} Gunaratna, Acharya, and Wang, Ethnic Identity and National Conflict, 143-51.
state's efforts at countering Uyghur separatist violence and resistance.  

 Nonetheless, even today, there is little doubt that the Chinese authorities would use force to quell uprisings if necessary. Unfortunately, coercive military and paramilitary law enforcement tactics have often aggravated grievances among the affected communities. Terrorists and other radicalized nationalists can then tap into this negative sentiment to validate their actions and recruit supporters in order to advance their agenda. In short, brute military might alone is not a robust antidote to social unrest in minority dominated regions. The Chinese government is aware of this and has also pursued non-military means of addressing the Han-Uyghur divide.

Economic Development

Economic development is a cornerstone of China's effort in combating minority dissatisfaction in Xinjiang. There are compelling arguments for this approach, as poverty and underdevelopment are known to breed dissatisfaction and desperation, which lead to the emergence of radical groups that target the state. In other words, Beijing believes that providing some sort of basic livelihood is essential to countering the emergence of political resistance. Economic development and jobs would help to reduce support for "independence, separatist, and politicized Islamic movements," which are strongest in rural areas where poverty is widespread.

The Chinese government's development strategies have a main focus on the extraction of natural resources and minerals such as petroleum, oil, coal, minerals and non-ferrous metals. Xinjiang represents part of China's solution to its ever-growing need for oil, natural gas, and raw materials. The autonomous region is also a commercial hub for regional commercial exchanges as it is centrally located at the borders of Russia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India. Meanwhile, Xinjiang has large reserves of another commodity—space, which is in short supply in China's overpopulated east although much of Xinjiang's terrain is unforgiving and made up of mountains, steppes, and desert land. In short, Xinjiang is resource-rich and a gateway

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50. Ibid.
51. Dillon, Muslim Far Northwest, 37.
52. Ibid., 39.
to Central and South Asia, therefore being of great strategic interest to the Chinese leadership.

There has been massive infrastructure investment by the government in the region since the 1990s. Parts of Xinjiang, especially the administrative capital of Urumqi, have been modernized and had new buildings and expressways constructed. While standards of living have risen, Xinjiang has remained generally poor, with rising Han-Uyghur inequalities. A common Uyghur complaint is that the Han Chinese monopolize the most well-paying jobs in Xinjiang and that there are employment disparities between Han and Uyghur in the oil industry and the private sector.

Language Policy

In another indication of the Chinese state's attempts at influencing the periphery, processes aimed toward “cultural standardization” within the polity have been put in place. This includes a national language imposed throughout the country. Mandarin has replaced indigenous Uyghur dialect as the language of instruction in higher education, with Xinjiang University ceasing to offer courses taught in Uyghur since 2002. Uyghur is still offered in primary and secondary education, but Mandarin is introduced to Uyghur students from about the third grade and is clearly the language of economic upward mobility. With the focus on learning Mandarin in schools, the Chinese authorities aim to boost the employability of national minorities and at the same time facilitate a process of acculturation.

Local populations have mixed feelings about this shift towards a Chinese education. On one hand, Uyghur parents recognize that learning and speaking Mandarin will boost employment opportunities and raise the chances of their children receiving a better education. On the other hand, many are resentful about the marginalization of the Uyghur language and interpret the
language policy as just another ploy by the Chinese government to encroach on their cultural identity and dilute their heritage.\textsuperscript{59}

**Migration of Han**

Even from the time of the Qing dynasty, the strategy of settling large numbers of Han Chinese was used to integrate the region with the mainland. After the Communist Party took control in 1949, the practice continued, with incentives offered to Han to relocate to Xinjiang to help with the development of the region and also to “reinforce national unity.”\textsuperscript{60} Specifically, a large number of Han Chinese were recruited to join the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC), known as the bingtuan in Chinese, a paramilitary organization created in 1954, charged with building farms and spearheading economic development. The XPCC today consists of retired soldiers and military personnel and plays an important part in maintaining social order in Xinjiang.\textsuperscript{61} Following the fallout with the Soviet Union in the 1960s, there was renewed fervor to move Han Chinese to frontier provinces such as Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, and Heilongjiang to guard against the potential Soviet military threat.

The huge influx of Han Chinese to Xinjiang has dramatically changed the demographics of the area. Statistics show that the local Han population has risen from about five percent in the 1940s to approximately 40 percent today.\textsuperscript{62} The great surge in Han Chinese numbers to a predominantly Muslim region created ethnic enclaves which only heightened tensions between the earlier settlers and the newer immigrants, worsening ethnic divides. Uyghurs have repeatedly identified the influx of Han migrants as the greatest challenge to their community. Uyghurs are now nearly a minority in Xinjiang when they used to constitute a strong majority.\textsuperscript{63}

However, migration patterns to Xinjiang might be changing. A recent study on migrants to Xinjiang shows that Han population movements to Xinjiang nowadays are mostly self-initiated, versus the state-directed movements of the past. In addition, Han migrants to Xinjiang these days are not necessarily more skilled and

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid., 376.
\textsuperscript{60} Gunaratna, Acharya, and Wang, *Ethnic Identity and National Conflict*, 162.
\textsuperscript{61} Howell and Fan, “Migration and Inequality,” 120.
\textsuperscript{62} Bhattacharji, “China’s Xinjiang Region.”
therefore not necessarily in a more advantageous position when compared with Uyghur migrants from the south of Xinjiang, who are younger, tend to be better educated, and often have higher incomes than the newer Han settlers.  

At the end of the day, the Chinese authorities should take heed of the local minority community's perception of the huge influx of Han to Xinjiang. Some Uyghurs have asserted that the strategy was a design to dilute ethnic populations and obliterate their culture in order to strengthen Beijing's stronghold on the region. As the Han are not Muslims, the Uyghurs perceive the overwhelming numbers of Han amidst them as a threat to their ethno-religious identity. There is also the concern that young Uyghurs would be drawn into the Han's secular world of materialism and would not practise Islam in what Uyghurs consider the traditional way.

Co-optation of Uyghur Elites

Dean Pruitt and Sung Hee Kim argue in Social Conflict that rulers basically use three techniques to interfere with the mobilization of groups that wish to challenge their authority, namely the disruption of group communication, getting rid of potential leaders, and co-opting these leaders. Chinese leaders have utilized all of these tactics. Positions of power and economic incentives have been offered to Uyghur elites, some of whom have joined various organs of the state in Xinjiang. Meanwhile, the most intransigent of Uyghur intelligentsia have allegedly been incarcerated to prevent them from communicating their “renegade” thoughts and ideas to others. In other words, the Chinese state has made a strong effort to woo Uyghur elites to join the Party ranks, but if that does not work, more coercive methods of censoring opposition voices will be brought in. The government wields a heavy-hand on media censorship, and also moves quickly to deal with individuals with the potential to lead and organize dissent.

All in all, Beijing's strategy to deal with ethnic divisions in Xinjiang has been two-fold: to spearhead economic development in the region and alleviate poverty, while at the same time stamping
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out unofficial religious or political activity that could foment unrest or is considered separatist. The Chinese state has also taken ownership of the natural resources in the northwestern peripheral region of Xinjiang and the unilateral decision to appropriate resources for uses that the government deems fit is an expression of state power. Other efforts at state-building include policies that facilitate the standardization of culture and language. Yet these state-building tactics imposed from the political center have unintentionally led to an aggravation of Uyghur disaffection and a deep sense of grievance, deepening the Han-Uyghur cleavage. The Develop the West investment plan, which is constructive in theory, does not take sufficient consideration of ethnic diversity and cultural identity, and could be counterproductive if the economic development program ultimately benefits one ethnic group, the Han.70

The primary purpose of Chinese leaders at this point is to attain and preserve internal stability, and for a vast country such as China, with its large and diverse population, this is not an easy task.71 To achieve the fundamental goals of maintaining social stability, territorial integrity, and sovereignty over the entire country, Beijing has employed both “carrot and stick” policies of control in Xinjiang. These actions can be interpreted as manifestations of the political center asserting power and influence on its periphery, rather than the expression of a desire to eradicate Islam in Chinese society.

Meanwhile, regardless of what the merits might be of what the Chinese government has done, there are critics who have always managed to frame the measures as manipulative ploys by the Chinese authorities to subjugate minorities that have been deemed culturally inferior to the Han. Reconstruction of the old cities of Xinjiang can either be interpreted as modernization efforts to boost the standards of living or the purposeful elimination of Uyghur culture. The implementation of higher education in Mandarin can be perceived either as efforts to improve the upward mobility of minorities or the marginalization of indigenous Turkic languages. It all invariably depends on one’s perspective. The reality is that the Chinese authorities have to try to reconcile the opposing forces of Chinese state-building ideals and Uyghur desires for more freedoms. Yet more autonomy and political rights in Xinjiang could very well lead to further consolidation of Uyghur

70. Dillon, Muslim Far Northwest, 47.
nationalist sentiment and the realization of the very breakaway region scenario the Chinese are trying to avoid. At the same time, the continuation of harsh policies of control and repression are likely fueling the Uyghurs' indignation and will to be distinct from the Han Chinese. All in all, from the Chinese perspective, the Catch-22 at hand is not easy to resolve.

What Does the Future Hold for Xinjiang?

Scholars generally agree that China is not vulnerable to the forces that led to the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Nonetheless, it is important not to underestimate the damage that prolonged ethnic confrontation can bring to a society. Uyghur responses to Chinese rule may well become more radicalized and violent as periodic roundups and detentions of people suspected of terrorism and separatism have forced the movement underground, increasing the possibility of alienating Uyghurs even further from mainstream Chinese society.

Indeed, the Han-Uyghur conflict is a conflict on multiple levels, involving incompatible positions and goals, parties trying to coerce each other, and even the use of deadly force. The situation is not helped by the fact that the Han Chinese are the overwhelming ethnic majority in China, asserting dominance in the government and society. Meanwhile, as the conflict persists over time, the respective attitudes and preconceived notions become entrenched. Ethnicity and religion, issues that have inevitably entered the equation, convolute the situation as they elicit highly emotional responses and may devolve into issues that cannot be compromised upon.

Independence for Xinjiang brought about with help from overseas Turkic or Muslim-linked supporters is also a very unlikely scenario given China's strong economic growth and increasing influence on matters of global interest. Separately, there is the argument that Xinjiang may not be economically viable even if it became independent. Xinjiang's economy is very closely integrated with mainland China's, and with the Uyghur population primarily

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73. Ibid., 393.
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located in the south, where there is less industry and natural resources but oil, the extractive industry is unlikely to flourish without significant investment. Moreover, the history of poor relations among the three Muslim groups in Xinjiang—Uyghurs, Kazaks, and Hui—likely means lingering conflicts among Muslims groups. Clashes along ethnic, religious, urban-rural, and territorial lines could easily emerge.75

China Policy Implications

With a new generation of leaders taking over in 2012, it is an opportune time for Chinese authorities to take steps toward a reconciliation effort with the Uyghurs in Xinjiang in order to secure a longer-lasting peace. While widespread violent mobilization against the Han Chinese is not an imminent threat, the need to bridge the gulf that has emerged between the Han and the Uyghurs is urgent and real. Motivation for change could come from the long-term ideal—albeit a lofty one—of building a great country through an inclusive society where different people can accommodate one another and identify China as home, and where race, creed or religion does not matter. An accompanying challenge would be to persuade the Uyghurs to buy into this nationalistic vision.

As a start, respected Han and Uyghur leaders who can spearhead a reconciliation effort should be identified. These individuals should sincerely believe in change and genuinely desire a multi-ethnic China that accommodates all people. They will be the leaders in seeking mutually beneficial solutions and correcting ethnic prejudices in Chinese society. This group of leaders would be what Eric Marcus termed as a critical mass of "connectors" who will foster commitment and help to inspire change in the social system.76

On a related note, Marc H. Ross’s study on the structural features of low-conflict societies has found that the presence of

76. Eric C. Marcus, "Change and Conflict: Motivation, Resistance and Commitment," in The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice, ed. Morton Deutsch, Peter T. Coleman, and Eric C. Marcus (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2006), 436-52. Marcus’s theory of social change highlights the three phases of change: unfreezing of the status quo, movement of the social system to a new level, and refreezing of new behaviors that support the changed system. He pointed out that a critical driver of change is motivation, with the overcoming of resistance and commitment to the change process as key components of a process that can lead to lasting constructive change. While change can originate either from top down or bottom up, it would seem more plausible for a centralized approach given China’s current political arrangement.
cross-cutting ties or multilayered relationships between parties in conflict strengthens the overall relationship. Strong identification with the larger community and the resulting inter-linking between individual and community interests would encourage cooperation in working to resolve differences.\textsuperscript{77} Settings for interactions between the Uyghur and Han have, indeed, been limited and should be expanded. In addition, it seems that the growing Han aversion to the Uyghurs is helping to perpetuate the conflict. More studies are needed to shed light on the perceptions of the non-Muslim majority in China in order to understand the "evolution and causes" of anti-Muslim sentiment and to keep mutual prejudices from spreading across society.\textsuperscript{78}

A possible means of lessening mistrust could be the implementation of confidence-building measures to repair societal cohesiveness, as Gary T. Furlong argued. Furlong, in his \textit{Dynamics of Trust Model of Conflict}, highlighted the central role of trust and mistrust in conflict situations, arguing that blame attribution is something that warring parties regularly slip into, despite the fact that the exercise is really pointless. Furlong suggested rebuilding trust through confidence-building measures, legal protections like procedural trust and justice, and attributional retraining.\textsuperscript{79} At the micro level, more team-building exercises involving mixed groups can be conducted in school and workplace settings, and this can range from sports and a variety of classroom activities to crisis-solving simulations to allow individuals to interact and work as equals in a team. This would be a concrete demonstration to individuals of how "the other" is not as bad as made out to be, and it is possible to co-exist. Ethnic ratios in schools, offices, village associations, and community settings can be put in place, so that the venues where the Han and Uyghurs can interact are increased. This raises the chances of forming cross-cutting ties and multilayered relations, which will help to attenuate inter-group tension when it arises. These are small ways to start to tackle a huge problem, but small consistent steps are necessary and all change must start from somewhere.

All that said, a key obstacle remains: whether the Chinese leadership will have the motivation to take the initiative and level the playing field for the Uyghurs in Xinjiang. This form of change in

\textsuperscript{77} Marc Howard Ross, \textit{The Management of Conflict: Interpretations and Interests in Comparative Perspective} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 35-42, 56-68.
\textsuperscript{78} Zhao, "Social Cohesion," 39-52.
attitudes and worldviews does not come about easily. But perhaps as new generations of highly educated Chinese leaders come to the fore, they will be imbued with a greater sense of justice, equity, and altruism, even if not in the near future, hopefully in the longer term.

Ease Religious and Cultural Restrictions

The Chinese authorities are cognizant about international scrutiny of the treatment of minority peoples, with the Turkish authorities and other foreign Muslim groups expressing concern in the past. Meanwhile, the U.S. and other Western governments regularly put pressure on China over its human rights record, criticizing the Chinese authorities for not honoring commitments to international agreements on human rights. 80 Indeed, China has ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. Article 1 of the covenant says, "All peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right, they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development." The second point reads, "All peoples may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources without prejudices to any obligations arising out of international economic co-operation, based upon the principle of mutual benefit, and international law. In no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence." 81 In short, the covenant proposes that human rights encompass the freedom to express oneself culturally, religiously, and politically, with all people entitled to economic opportunities and a basic income.

But it is important to note that China is a society largely informed by Confucian values emphasizing obedience to authority and the prioritization of collective interests over individual desires. China quite clearly possesses a different worldview from Western societies, and therefore does not necessarily adopt the same standards for human rights and other freedoms. At this moment in time, some Uyghur freedoms have been relegated to the back burner as societal stability and the country's economic growth take precedence. Ironically, by thwarting a community’s means of cultural expression and ability to reproduce itself, intense

resentment is generated and the desire to challenge authority is strengthened. In so far as precipitating radicalization and violence, the violation of human freedoms may play a contributing role.

Therefore, the removal of the most repressive measures on the Uyghurs will take away the most important weapon that radical Uyghur elements have to justify violent mobilization against the Chinese government. 82 Muslim Uyghurs should be allowed to openly practice their faith, with the regime fully respecting Muslim customs and allowing the operation of mosques and religious schools. University students and government employees who wish to pray in the day should be accommodated, especially since these religious observances need not be disruptive to the classroom or work setting. Basically, the state should only interfere if there is clear evidence of militant teachings and the harboring of terrorists. 83

Chinese authorities need to be forthcoming and sincere in extending conciliatory gestures to Uyghurs. There is a strong need to allow legitimate channels for cultural, religious, also political and economic grievances, with the acknowledgment of these dissatisfactions and provision of redress when justified.

In short, the Chinese authorities need to recognize that religion can be a force for peace, and differentiate between terrorism, separatism, and mere expressions of political, economic, and cultural grievances. 84 China’s coercive approach to managing ethnic relations in Xinjiang is perceived as an attack on the Uyghur identity, and this is fanning the simmering conflict in Xinjiang. Moderating the controls on Uyghur society would help to ease Uyghur dissonance arising from the need to fight for cultural survival.

Adjusting Education, Language Policies

The Chinese authorities have used national education and the designation of Mandarin as the language of instruction in tertiary educational institutes to help integrate the Uyghurs into Chinese society. At the same time, an aspect of education that has not been addressed is the need to correct increasingly negative

Han attitudes towards the Uyghurs. The growing antagonism between these two groups likely underpinned the violent Urumqi riots between the Han and the Uyghurs in 2009. As such, an institutionalized program in schools to help Han Chinese engage and develop positive interactions with minority groups should be put in place. All Han Chinese, in particular migrants to ethnically mixed areas, should learn about minority customs and traditions and respect the ways of others.

In addition, a three-language policy for the region should be explored, similar to what is being done in India. Resources should support the national language, Mandarin, as well as English, and Standard Uyghur, because each language serves a specific purpose. Mandarin facilitates communication across ethnic lines; English would bring international economic advantages, while Standard Uyghur is useful for interactions and trade with the Central Asian states and would help “foster pride in ethnic heritage.”

Ensure Equity in Economic Opportunities

After the deadly riots in Xinjiang in 2009, Chinese authorities unveiled a new policy package which planned to pump hundreds of billions of yuan to boost the economy and livelihoods in the region. The development plan has put the spotlight on the southern part of Xinjiang. Most industries and investment are concentrated in the northern part, where most of the Han live, whereas most Uyghurs live in the south, such as Kashgar and Hotan. Regional inequality has widened income gaps between the ethnic groups and the government has said it will fix the problem with financial investment. How exactly, it is not clear, but this is a general move in the right direction. Uyghurs have constantly complained of being marginalized economically, claiming the better jobs all seem to go to the Han Chinese. Combined with a reinvigorated education and language policy, Uyghurs would become better educated in the long run and from then should have better job prospects.

89. Ibid.
Separately, crucial questions remain about the long-term sustainability of this breakneck developmental approach. A strong focus on extractive industries combined with pollution from industrial development, and a surge in urbanization are likely causing irreversible damage to the environment and compromising the livability of the land. According to one report, only about 4.3% of Xinjiang land is fit for human habitation, and population density is already high at 249 per square kilometer. Meanwhile, there has been a noted rise in desertification and the shrinking or drying up of parts of the Tarim River and the Ebonur Lake. The Chinese government needs to display a greater awareness and sensitivity towards the environmental impact of its developmental strategy.

**Implement Trust-building Measures**

Grievances inevitably arise when people fear for their future. The Chinese government must reassure the Uyghur minority of their physical and cultural integrity, and give them hope for a decent future in China. In particular, major trust-building mechanisms for helping ethnic minorities deal with perceived insecurity and a sense of losing out to the majority should include the demonstration of respect and power-sharing.

Demonstration of respect involves reciprocity of respect, with each side viewing the opponent as honorable and having legitimate interests. If there is no sense of respect, minority groups are likely to fear being relegated to second-class citizens, and this continued fear increases the "social distance" between groups. Also, repeated overtures without expectations of an immediate "tit-for-tat" response could stimulate momentum for the rebuilding of relations. Sometimes, even a simple apology for insensitive remarks can go a long way. Accordingly, important gestures of trust and respect would include "less gerrymandering in favor of Han Chinese among Xinjiang's administrative units," and more proportionate inclusion of ethnic peoples to government structures to represent Uyghur interests.

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91. Ibid.
93. Ibid., 114.
94. Chung, "China's 'War on Terror'".
Trust-building measures are creative ways by which states can reassure ethnic minorities. By showing respect for differences and by the sharing of power and resources with the more vulnerable groups in society, the perceived risks of inter-group association are reduced and the prospect of cooperation with other groups becomes more desirable.95

In totality, the management of the Xinjiang conflict requires a more constructive strategy of de-escalation. Neither coercion nor concessions alone can solve the problem, but more persuasive and moderate measures to win the hearts and minds of Uyghurs are necessary. The Chinese authorities need to publicly acknowledge the sources of Uyghur dissatisfaction and take concrete steps to address the situation and end the vicious cycle of violence between the Uyghurs and Han. Specific measures include ensuring that economic benefits also accrue to the Uyghurs, and the broadening of religious and cultural rights. Taking away oppressive measures would remove the most powerful weapon radical separatist movements have. Only by some give-and-take and consistent compromise can there be progress towards a more enduring peace.96

U.S. Policy Implications

Broadly speaking, the U.S. should demonstrate sensitivity to and accommodation for China's core concerns of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and state-building. Discretion should be exercised, especially when it is clear that China subscribes to a wholly different political philosophy, with very different conceptualizations of human rights and freedom. In essence, any U.S. action should first consider the emerging power's "historically inherited vulnerabilities," grievances, and sensibilities. China was in the past rocked by ethnic separatism and territorial fragmentation, so instead of dismissing these insecurities, the U.S. should continue to engage China, in a patient and positive manner.97

Do Not Support Separatist Elements

China is particularly sensitive when foreign powers are seen as interfering in what it deems as its domestic affairs. Therefore, the U.S. should not be seen as supporting separatist movements.

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Even meeting with leaders of minority groups, some in exile, can be seen as interfering in China's domestic matters, and so the pros and cons of such meetings should be weighed carefully in the context of the geopolitical environment of the day. The best option is to continue to encourage justice in the Chinese state's dealings with all citizens, and the use of rule of law.\(^{98}\)

**Help to Reframe the Dominant Security Discourse**

For a long time, particularly since the start of the U.S. War on Terror, Islam has been cast as prone to nurturing terrorists with anti-state intentions. The global media has largely picked up on this oversimplified idea and reinforced stereotypes of Islamists. But any serious scholar knows that extremism can happen to any religion, and even religious radicalization often has secular grievances underpinning the reasons for mobilization.

Contrary to popular assumptions, Islam—while an important factor—is not the primary cause of many conflicts afflicting Muslim people in countries around the world. Each conflict has its own unique drivers, and can never be simplified to ancient hatreds that different civilizations have for one another. Religious radicalization is usually the result of religion being used as a vehicle for mobilization over political purposes.

Meanwhile, the positive effects of religious and ethnic diversity have been dwarfed by the overwhelming dominance of security rhetoric dealing with the Islamic threat to the non-Muslim world. This statement is not intended to dismiss the gravity of religious militancy, but rather to point out that it is often forgotten that religion is potentially a force of peace and facilitator for the development of cross-country ethnic relations.

Most Uyghurs are not the sort of religious extremists who commit indiscriminate violence.\(^{99}\) Most are merely concerned with their livelihoods and future. Yet their potential contributions to China and Central Asian relations have not been fully realized. They could have the capacity to play a greater role in the economic


\(^{99}\) Finley, "Chinese Oppression in Xinjiang," 627-28. Finley argued that the majority of Uyghurs express their opposition through non-violent "symbolic resistance," which includes the repetition of negative stereotypes of the Han Chinese, spatial and social segregation from the Han, and the "dissemination of alternative representations" of the Han-Uyghur relationship through popular Uyghur song. Other Uyghurs demonstrate "symbolic opposition" to the state through Islam itself, and this includes actions like returning to the mosque and more orthodox religious practice.
development and the stability of Central Asia for they have the linguistic and historical links, also trade networks and even families. Xinjiang, which stands at the heart of the Euroasian land mass, also has the potential to serve as a two-way conduit linking China and Europe, and even the Middle East. Development of transit trade routes through Central Asia would not only give Xinjiang better access to European markets but would also enable it to provide trade services for the movement of goods between Europe and all of China.

In short, there should be a greater focus on the potential benefits that a multi-ethnic population brings to a country. The U.S., home to some of the world’s best academic institutions, can help by de-emphasizing the "Islamic threat" to the world, and by the encouraging of a more thorough investigation into the exogenous and endogenous causes of conflicts.

To sum up, the Chinese government needs to make every effort to bridge the growing divide between the Han and the Uighurs and put a stop to spreading hatred, provocations, revenge, and the splitting of society in order to work toward a more desirable state of affairs in Xinjiang. More attention has to be paid to encourage the Han to engage and develop positive interactions with Muslims. Sincerity, respect, and a moderate approach should be key elements of China's conflict management process.

On the part of the U.S., heightened sensitivity towards the insecurities of China is needed. Constant haranguing on the need for democratic changes is unlikely to have any constructive effect, although the subtle encouraging of the use of the rule of law, combined with the promotion of justice in the economic, political, and legal realms is probably the best plan of action.

Understanding Chinese Politics through the Lens of Modern Chinese Literature

Shannon Tiezzi

Chinese literature, from its infancy, has been closely intertwined with politics. The most well-known works from Chinese antiquity are philosophical discourses on the ideal state, the ideal ruler, and the ideal subject. Even the esoteric Daoist works by Laozi and Zhuangzi touch upon issues of state and self, and the relationship between ruler and subject. Yet perhaps more curiously, even the ancient Chinese works that, on their face, have little or no connection to the political realm were given political readings with a well-defined lesson to be learned. The oldest collection of Chinese poems, The Book of Songs, was traditionally held to reflect the political sentiments of the Zhou empire’s subjects. Another famous ancient collection of poetry, Songs of the South, is supposedly political allegory revealing the sentiments of a wrongly exiled minister. By reading these texts in the “right way,” thus uncovering political allegories in poems about peach trees or spring-time romances, the reader is expected to gain political insight.

Over the past two thousand years, Chinese literature has naturally evolved a great deal. Yet the close connection between literature and politics remains. Literature, in all its forms, is assumed to be fraught with political meaning. More significantly, literature is assumed to be a powerful political force. Literature does not merely document a political reality or catalog the emotions of citizens, but can take an active role in shaping a new citizenry, a new government, and a new China. This possibility has been both the dream and the nightmare of the Chinese Communist Party.

Thus the CCP continues to lionize the reform-minded writers who took up their pens in the early 20th century to satirize, expose and lament the hardships suffered by Chinese citizens during the chaotic period of warlord infighting and later under the rule of the Guomindang (GMD). These writers were heralded as revolutionaries who fought bravely in a literary war on behalf of the people. Yet once the CCP was established as the ruling party, it could no longer tolerate the exposés of reform-minded writers. The CCP, afraid of the historically constructed power of literature, worked swiftly to ban and censor any writings that even vaguely projected criticism of the party or the current state of affairs in China. The Party did an abrupt about-face from praising
revolutionary authors to attacking “bourgeoisie” and “rightist” novelists, playwrights, and poets.

However, since the death of Mao and the end of the Cultural Revolution, Chinese literature has slowly been regaining some measure of freedom, and at the same time beginning to reclaim its place as a realm of political discourse and critique. The advent of the internet, with the instant audience it provides to any writer, and the possibility of a global readership, where authors can write their political works in foreign countries, have both worked to lessen the CCP’s control over writing. More and more writings are taking up the authorial functions of critique and satire. Given the significant amount of political power China has historically attributed to literature, those who are interested in China’s political future would do well to acquaint themselves with China’s literature and its general trends.

The May Fourth Movement & Political Literature

To understand the role of literature in modern China, it is helpful to look at the May Fourth Movement, a joint literary and political movement that saw the birth of modern Chinese fiction, drama, and poetry as well as the founding of the Communist Party. The May Fourth Movement, while rather vaguely defined, is generally agreed upon to run from 1919 to the mid-1920s. During this time, writers largely wrote out of political motivations. Every work of literature was scrutinized for its political message or lack thereof, and critiqued accordingly. At the same time, the seeds for China’s political future were being laid.

The May Fourth writers certainly believed in their political power. Liang Qichao, one of the early advocates for literary reform, argued for a strong link between fiction and the government. He believed, without reservation, that bad literature could destroy the state just as good literature could make it stronger. In a 1902 article entitled “On the Relationship Between Fiction and the Government,” Liang rather ambitiously traced every flaw in Chinese society to the deleterious effects of popular works of fiction. To Liang, all the ills of China were caused, or at least exacerbated, by fiction, and thus the only cure was the creation of a “good” fiction. This fiction, with the right morals at heart, could cure Chinese society. While Liang’s ideas predated the May Fourth Movement by nearly 20 years, his general faith in the political efficacy of literature...
was at the heart of much political writings during the 1920s and 30s.

At the height of the May Fourth Movement, the Chinese scholar Hu Shi attempted to reform Chinese literature, with the end goal of making Chinese society stronger and better. His call for reform went hand in hand with a call for modernization; Hu’s major point was that the classical language of ancient China should no longer be used in writing. Instead, Hu advocated the use of vernacular Chinese, a modern language that would supposedly allow Chinese writers to express modern thoughts. In this way, Hu sought to bring Chinese society as a whole out of the shadow of antiquity and into the modern world. Again, literary reform was being used as a tool to achieve a larger goal of social and even spiritual reform. Many May Fourth writers took up Hu’s challenge and began writing in the Chinese vernacular, or *baihua*.

While there were many authors active during the May Fourth Movement, the most famous is unequivocally Lu Xun. He has been hailed as the first and greatest author of modern Chinese literature, beginning with his short story “Diary of a Madman” (pub. 1918). If we take Lu Xun as the modern Chinese writer *par excellence*, then the relationship between literature and politics becomes even more tangled. Lu Xun, like so many others of the May Fourth era, turned to writing not for individual self-expression or fulfillment, but as a social duty. Lu Xun, like Liang Qichao, saw fiction as a possible antidote to the ills of Chinese society. Lu Xun describes in his “Preface to A Call to Arms” his transition from medical studies to literature: he abandoned his attempts to cure the Chinese body in order to cure their spirits.

Lu Xun’s faith in literature was far less enthusiastic than Liang Qichao or Hu Shi’s, however, and his doubts as to the efficacy of the literary project dogged him throughout his career. However, while Lu Xun may have doubted that literature could make a political impact, he remained committed to the attempt. Lu Xun felt compelled to write out of the faint hope that perhaps his writing could lead to some sort of change in Chinese society. Lu Xun’s writings stem from a sense of responsibility to society; he crafted polemical essays and biting satires in an attempt to lay bare the ugly foundations of Chinese society. Even Lu Xun’s most deeply personal work, a collection of prose-poems called *Wild Grass*, was given a political-allegorical reading in a later introduction Lu Xun wrote for the English edition. Lu Xun gave his
own writing a political meaning, just as readers gave the ancient *Book of Songs* political morals. Literature in all its forms was closely bound to politics, or risked complete irrelevance.

Not all writers during the May Fourth era believed in writing with political motives. There was a spirited debate between proponents of “art for art’s sake” (writing for individual expression) and “art for life” (writing with political motives, with the hope of fostering social change). The writers in the “art for art’s sake” camp found themselves on the wrong side of history, as political crisis after political crisis besieged China and the writers who could claim political relevance found themselves on the ascent.

These “art for life” writers slowly began to align themselves with the newly-formed Chinese Communist Party. In the 1920s, when the Party was first formed, Communism represented exactly the sort of political and social change that these writers were championing. It is no coincidence that the same man, Chen Duxiu, co-founded both the Chinese Communist Party and the famous literary journal *New Youth*, where Lu Xun’s “Diary of a Madman” was first published. Chen Duxiu championed democracy, science, and eventually communism, and he believed that the most effective way to propagate these ideas was through literature.

**Literature and the Chinese Communist Party: Literary Politics**

In 1930, the shared sympathies of the CCP and many “art for life” literati were given formal ties through the creation of the League of Left-Wing Writers. These writers believed it was their duty to use literature to change China for the better, and they believed that the CCP was China’s path to a golden future. Thus writing “for life” and writing in support of the Communist Party became conflated into a single cause. However, by aligning themselves with a specific cause, the writers had to give up a certain amount of control over what they wrote. These writers, whose greatest dream was to help change society, began to write in support of the CCP, and slowly the CCP began to gain more control over what constituted acceptable writing.

This trend culminated in one of the defining moments of modern Chinese literature, Mao Zedong’s 1942 “Yan’an Talks on Literature and Art.” In this speech, Mao reaffirmed the political usefulness of literature; in essence, he gave Party approval to a long-held belief in the awesome power of literature. Yet, at the
same time, Mao subsumed literature into the fold of revolution. Literature became one front of the “cultural war” waged by the Party in its attempt to win control of the state. Instead of being an independent entity, literature was reduced to the level of the gun, becoming a tool to be used in the struggle. Thus Mao succeeded in both affirming the power and importance of literature and paradoxically insisting upon literature’s secondary status. In essence, Mao’s Yan’an Talks had two main theses: Literature has the power to change society, but literature must always use this power in the service of the CCP.

The end effect of the Yan’an Talks was to redefine the field of acceptable literature. Mao created guidelines for correct writing, mostly based on the perceived class affiliation of author, audience, and characters. Within the view conveyed by the Yan’an Talks, all literature was reduced to the level of propaganda, either for or against the CCP. While on its surface, the Yan’an Talks affirmed the May Fourth spirit of politically useful literature, by so sharply contracting the definition of “politically useful” Mao had effectively declared a CCP monopoly on valuable writing. Writing to reveal social injustices or government corruption was only “correct” if the government and society in question were enemies of the CCP.

Once the People’s Republic was declared, any writing about social ills had to be confined to the past in order to help perpetrate the illusion that Mao’s China was a paradise. Writers who clung to the May Fourth notion of a literary responsibility to foster social change found themselves targeted under CCP rule, for the CCP would not tolerate the suggestion that it required change. Thus the Hundred Flowers Movement of 1957, which called for free discussion and debate of social issues, was quickly followed by the Anti-Rightist Campaign in 1957 and 1958. Those who voiced criticisms of the Party or its policies were publicly denounced, demoted, and imprisoned. Literature was still politically motivated, but the freedom to take up true social responsibility was denied to authors during the Maoist era. No longer could socially-motivated authors draw attention to inequality and call for change. All writing was required to reflect positively on the Party and the current state of China. With the CCP safely ensconced in power, any truly revolutionary writing was quickly suppressed.

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The culmination of the Maoist policy towards literature came during the Cultural Revolution. During the ten-year span of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), the only plays sanctioned for production were the famous “model plays.” These operas and ballets were seen as fulfilling the strict guidelines of literature that had grown up since the Yan’an Talks. They were, in essence, the apex of “correct” art under Mao; they serve to glorify the Party and its revolutionary heroes. Tellingly, all but one of these plays were set in the past. The social responsibility of the authors could only be carried out through a disjointed timeline, where they retroactively displayed injustices in order to celebrate how these wrongs had been righted. Literature’s only political function was to uphold the status quo.

Literature Since Mao: Reclaiming the May Fourth Spirit?

However, since Mao’s death and the end of the Cultural Revolution, Chinese literature has been slowly regaining its social power. After Mao died and the excesses of the Cultural Revolution were officially condemned, the Party allowed a brief spurt of literary freedom, where writers could begin to express the national trauma China had just experienced. These writings, known as “scar literature,” flourished for a brief period in the late 1970s, and represented a partial return to the May Fourth style of political literature. “Scar literature” was written to draw attention to the injuries, hypocrisies, and injustices that were commonplace during the Cultural Revolution. For the first time in 30 years, Chinese writers had the opportunity to reclaim their ancient social-political function, and give vent to grievances on behalf of society with the hope of causing change.

Scar literature was only a tentative foray back into the realm of socially-critical literature. Most of the authors critiqued not the government at large, but the small (and already safely ousted) clique that supposedly bore full responsibility for the tragedies of the Cultural Revolution. Also, the government was quick to step in when it felt these writings crossed the line between a healthy airing of past wrongs and calls for substantial political reform in the present. The government was quick to tamp down on literature after blatant calls for democratic reforms were posted on the so-called “Democracy Wall” in Beijing.
By reapplying strict censorship to literature in the wake of the Democracy Wall, the CCP implicitly drew a connection between “scar literature” and the surge in political activism. Once again, the CCP affirmed its belief in the power of literature by applying censorship. Yet by tolerating, however briefly, writings that focused on suffering, social injustices, and governmental excesses, all set during the rule of the CCP, the government had taken a large step away from the wholesale control exercised during the Mao years.

With the advent of social media and widespread access to the internet, governmental control over literature has grown ever more tenuous. Rather than relying on direct censorship, the government increasingly exerts control through what Perry Link has called “the anaconda in the chandelier”:

[T]he Chinese government’s censorial authority in recent times has resembled not so much a man-eating tiger or fire-snorting dragon as a giant anaconda coiled in an overhead chandelier. Normally the great snake doesn’t move. It doesn’t have to. It feels no need to be clear about its prohibitions. Its constant silent message is “You yourself decide,” after which, more often than not, everyone in its shadow makes his or her large and small adjustments—all quite “naturally.”

Instead of relying on direct censorship with clearly defined limits on literary freedom, the Chinese government enforces its will seemingly at random, so that many authors and journalists have little idea what specific actions will bring down punishment. The government thus relies to a large extent on self-censorship: authors are not necessarily prevented from publishing inflammatory material, although this does occur. More often, according to Link’s argument, authors “self-censor” and refrain from being too outspoken in their critiques of the government, lest they cross the invisible line between tolerance and punishment.

However, as government controls relaxed in the post-Mao era, writers felt more and more liberated to report on and write about social issues and injustices. To some extent, this is encouraged by the CCP, for the Party bases its ideological

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credibility on dealing with poverty and the needs of the people.\(^4\) To report on social injustice, then, is a double-edged sword. It reveals the need for the Communist ideology of the past as China becomes more and more capitalistic, but it also reveals the shortcomings of a government that bases its legitimacy on how it treats the lowest socioeconomic classes. Likewise, the CCP is always aware of the role that literature played in its own founding and rise to power, which underlines both the need for pro-CCP literature and the potential danger of political attacks in the literary realm.

Chinese writers and other intellectuals are themselves unsure of their position. Intellectuals today are actively trying to carve out a role for themselves as distinct from the Party and the state, which gives them a newfound freedom to critique both the CCP and China.\(^5\) There is a general consensus that intellectuals have a duty to aid the nation by possessing “fervent public concern towards society” or by representing “a sort of public conscience.”\(^6\) Chinese intellectuals have seen themselves in a similar light for thousands of years, going back to the Confucian ideal of the literati as a benevolent government official. May Fourth authors who subscribed to the “art for life” school viewed themselves in much the same way. The question, then, is how modern Chinese writers who see it as their duty to better Chinese society might one day affect China’s political sphere.

The young writer Han Han provides an interesting case study. The most famous writer of China’s “post-80” generation, Han Han often voices outrage over social injustices and ills. His wildly popular blog has survived, whereas many blogs that outspokenly criticize China’s status quo are instantly removed from the web. In the last few months, Han Han posted articles with titles purposefully designed to be inflammatory: “On Revolution,” “On Democracy,” and “On Wanting Freedom.”\(^7\) In these writings, Han Han holds out hope for a gradual sea-change in China, where citizens gain more and more freedom thanks to easier access to ideas from outside of China.

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\(^6\) Timothy Cheek, 412.

\(^7\) For English translations, see [http://zonaeuropa.com/201112a.brief.htm#008](http://zonaeuropa.com/201112a.brief.htm#008). For the original Chinese, see Han Han’s blog, [http://blog.sina.com.cn/twocold](http://blog.sina.com.cn/twocold).
While many of Han Han’s supporters were disappointed by his refusal to support immediate political revolution, in many ways what Han Han wrote in these articles echoes the May Fourth writers. He certainly seems to be channeling the spirit of Lu Xun by rejecting the possibility of a successful democratic revolution due to perceived failings in the Chinese national spirit. Han Han sees a need to change that character before China can gain any sort of political freedom, and a need for literati and cultural leaders to stand at the forefront of this wave of change. In a separate blog entry, “This Generation (2012 Edition),” Han Han envisions a world where, thanks to the power of social media, any single person can wield power and cause change. Over 90 years after the May Fourth movement began, one of the most popular young writers in China is advocating a similar spirit, where literary and cultural reform both precedes and leads to political change.

These parallels have been seen in China as well; in fact, Ai Weiwei, a famous dissident artist, called Han Han “another Lu Xun.” Writers of this generation must acknowledge and wrestle with the legacy of May Fourth as they seek to carve out their own niche in modern China. Today’s contemporary authors, in dealing with social issues and actively placing themselves at the forefront of social change, are taking up the same burden Lu Xun and his contemporaries did in the early 20th century. Once again, they are engaging with the age-old question of whether art can truly influence the world of politics. The mythos of Chinese history suggests that it can, and the CCP has shown itself to be in agreement ever since Mao’s speech at Yan’an on how to control art for political purposes. In this light, literature and contemporary authors’ attitudes towards the Chinese government are one key to understanding China’s political situation. The growth of literature outside the control of the CCP may have important implications for the Party’s, and China’s political future.

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8 Han Han, “This generation (2012 Edition)”
http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_4701280b0102e0th.html

Observing Taiwan’s 2012 Elections

Katie Xiao

In mid-January, I returned from a weeklong trip to Taiwan with my classmates and professors arranged by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Taiwan, in order to observe its presidential and legislative elections. Many people have asked about my thoughts on the election, as well as my general impressions of Taiwan. As this was my first time in Taiwan, although not the first time to be exposed to the complicated issues undergirding cross-strait relations, the trip left a very strong impression on me. For a student of international relations, it was an unparalleled experience that would rival the most authoritative reading list on cross-strait relations or modern Taiwanese history. The trip confirmed my belief that it is absolutely essential to form your own judgment on what the important issues are in any debate rather than just what Washington finds compelling.

Over the course of the week, we had the opportunity to meet and engage in candid, frank dialogue with not only foreign ministry officials and American diplomats in Taiwan, but also students and professors at Taiwanese universities in Taipei and Taizhong. Only by spending time in Taiwan and speaking with Taiwanese people, even just in the span of a week, was it possible to discern broadly what issues mattered to an average Taiwanese voter and a government trying to do right by them. It struck me from listening to them how different the political atmosphere in Taiwan is from how it is portrayed in the news and even policy documents assigned as reading for class.

Certainly, even though Washington tends to scrutinize every arms sales package, spending on defense is not one of the most important issues to Taiwan. Political scientists often offer the view that relations between Taiwan and China could be inevitably characterized as a security dilemma. China is concerned about Taiwan becoming a breakaway region, which might severely test its ability to manage other regions agitating for independence, so China directs much of its military spending toward Taiwan to prevent this scenario from occurring. Taiwan, on the other hand, would build up more defensive weapons systems in order to protect its security, and so on. However, this characterization is patently untrue in the case of Taiwan for a number of reasons. Over the past few years, there has been an increasingly downward trend in
defense spending by Taiwan despite an increasingly larger amount of arms packages approved by the U.S. in compliance with the Taiwan Relations Act.

We heard from several different individuals in Taiwan that there simply is no domestic or legislative consensus for increased defense spending, and Taiwan cannot afford to spend approximately a quarter of its discretionary budget income on weapons procurement. It is a known fact that China through years of military modernization has gained a tremendous military advantage over Taiwan. Despite attempts to gauge public opinion and understand people’s mindset, it still seems somewhat puzzling to me that Taiwanese people at this time should be more concerned about their economic livelihoods, social justice, employment and a host of domestic issues, rather than the looming threat just over the horizon, which could send huge shockwaves through their economy and obliterate what is near and dear to them. But what is clear is that Taiwan wants to take no part in an arms race and many believe that China will not use force against the island even though China has not renounced the use of force officially.

With the shared history and important role that the U.S. government aid played in the early stages of Taiwan’s economic development and U.S. assurances to Taiwan in the form of arms sales stipulated in the Taiwan Relations Act, there is a certain type of closeness and familiarity between the two that does not seem to come without great efforts in U.S. interactions with other countries in the region. It would not be inaccurate to say that channels of communication between the U.S. and Taiwan are remarkably open. Despite this important backdrop to U.S.-Taiwan relations, it is clear that they are evolving. Some voices we heard in Taiwan seemed to suggest that the U.S. role in providing defensive weapons had perhaps shifted from a material one to a symbolic one, or at least to assure Taiwan psychologically, in order to resist intimidation from China.

From Taiwan’s perspective, it may have better insight into Chinese thinking and perhaps takes some pride in China’s glory, if not necessarily for the Chinese government, then at least for the Chinese nation due to unbreakable bonds of shared ethnicity and language. In fact, it struck me as we heard from many Taiwanese professors and students, all of whom believed that China’s military modernization did not necessarily pose the challenges to Taiwan
Taiwan’s 2012 Elections

that the U.S. felt was necessary to countermand, it would not come as a surprise if a day will come when Taiwan can offer the U.S. more insight into Chinese thinking and strategic policies if the U.S. is open to hearing them rather than dismissing them as naïve.

Nor is Taiwan’s democracy simply a contrived device for the U.S. to stake its foreign policy on in the Asian region, despite the popular view that the U.S. tends to promote democracy when it happens to suit its objectives at the moment. Taiwan is a democracy in every sense of the word, and our visit to the polling station staffed by volunteers confirmed the transparent and fair process in which elections are held. Yes, Taiwan, in some ways, does borrow from some of the more undesirable aspects of American democracy. Taiwan is not without its share of politicians engaged in campaign smear tactics or indicted on corruption charges. The practice of vote-buying is also endemic in both parties, and once indicted, legislators who have engaged in vote-buying practices are forced to step down and by-elections must be held.

Yet, despite these undesirable features, it must be acknowledged that the culture of democracy has taken hold in Taiwan. In many ways, Taiwan’s democracy is even successful in areas where U.S. democracy in this day and age perhaps falls short. The high voter turnout rate for presidential elections, 74% in this election but as high as 80% for past elections, is absolutely astounding. Civic education efforts and low thresholds for voter registration are also impressive. Most voters who have resided in a district for a prescribed number of months are automatically registered by the government to vote. They receive an election bulletin prior to voting that lists the age, educational attainment, party affiliation and other background information on their presidential and legislative candidates.

Many in the U.S. foreign policy establishment lament the low priority that foreign policy is given in elections. But in Taiwan, even when foreign policy issues do not take front and center in an election, they are still the backdrop. Voters grapple with the difficult choices presented to them by the two candidates. On the one hand, voting for the incumbent Ma Ying-jeou would inevitably bring Taiwan closer to mainland China in the form of greater economic integration and possibly more substantive political dialogue in the near future over the contentious issue of reunification. On the other hand, voting for Tsai Ing-wen, who had already rejected the
important political principle on which mainland China and Taiwan had conducted past negotiations, would surely pose a greater risk to stability across the straits, as well as to the economic and diplomatic benefits that came along with improved ties with the mainland.

Furthermore, whereas we are used to hearing about more critiques rather than paeans to China’s charm offensive, I dare say that in the case of Taiwan, China has hit on the right policy by harnessing its economic leverage and providing visible economic benefits across the Strait. During the election, many Taiwanese businessmen with lucrative operations on the mainland endorsed Ma Ying-jeou because stable cross-strait relations would no doubt bring greater prosperity and livelihoods.

But good economic relations with Taiwan were not just the only thing working in China’s favor during the election. It was also domestic trends. Democracies all run the inherent risk of electing leaders who are victorious because they pandered to their electoral base, and Taiwan is no different in this respect just looking at its early history. As a young democracy, Taiwan experienced the first party turnover in 2000, when Chen Shui-bian of the opposition Democratic Progressive Party was elected into office. Chen Shui-bian could also be seen as following in the footsteps of the third president of Taiwan, Lee Teng-hui, who had been hand-picked by Chiang Ching-kuo to be president but eventually played an instrumental role in bringing about Taiwan’s democratic consolidation and instituting the first direct presidential elections.

The DPP played an instrumental role in remolding the national consciousness, I would argue. The divisive political issues became very much about Taiwan under a repressive, authoritarian regime headed by the KMT and the local population. Under Lee Teng-hui and Chen Shui-bian, in fact, ethnic issues became intertwined with issues of national identity. Particularly under Chen Shui-bian, ethnic identity played a larger role in Taiwanese politics. Since 2000, ethnic identity began aligning with party affiliation, as mainland-born individuals in Taiwan and their offspring tended to align with the KMT while those who had been living on Taiwan prior to the Chinese civil war tended to identify with the DPP.

Over time, however, the open hostility toward the KMT has been receding. Tsai Ing-wen, in fact, is part of a third generation of DPP politicians who were shaped by different circumstances than
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the first and second generation of DPP leaders. The first generation was part of the Dangwai movement to create space for a political opposition, who had risked their lives and were even put in jail for being political dissidents and remember the White Terror and 228 incident. The second generation of DPP leaders was comprised of largely defense lawyers like Chen Shui-bian and Annette Lu who had defended the political dissidents, identified with their causes and even saw a disproportionately long jail time for their association with the political opposition. During the Chen administration, the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall was encased in a cage to symbolically lock up Chiang Kai-shek up for the atrocities he committed, which is a testament to the indignation that a portion of the population felt under the one-party rule of the KMT. Since the Chen administration, however, we heard from the Election Study Center of National Chengchi University that voter turnout rates have been falling, particularly in the legislative elections, possibly because Taiwan’s democracy is maturing and people have become accustomed to party turnover, since the DPP has been in office for two terms. It may be that as history becomes more distant, voters will be less polarized.

In this election, it was clear that the DPP sought to move away from over-politicizing ethnic issues that prior DPP politicians had maneuvered to mobilize their voters. Although they still spoke Taiwanese rather than Mandarin Chinese at their rallies, there was also less China-bashing and fewer overt gestures to attempt to change the status quo. However, the DPP’s official stance is still to take engagement with China at a slower and more managed pace than the KMT. DPP candidate Tsai Ing-wen mentioned if elected, she would promote a Taiwan Consensus rather than the 1992 Consensus in which both Taiwan and China agreed there is one China with respective interpretations of it. For political reasons, Tsai initially opposed the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) undertaken by Ma Ying-jeou that has brought Taiwan significant economic benefits, but months later she said she supported ECFA.

Despite a more moderate DPP that sought to back away from the legacy of Chen Shui-bian, Tsai Ing-wen still lost by a comfortable margin despite earlier polls predicting a close race. There have been many explanations offered, one of them being people’s acceptance of growing ties with mainland China, but perhaps this statement is too bold. People in Taiwan certainly recognize the growing importance of China’s economy to their own
livelihood, but we should resist the temptation of letting one election turnout define Taiwan’s mindset toward China. It was an uphill battle for Tsai Ing-wen when she began the race. She had largely been a faceless bureaucrat up to the point of announcing her candidacy for the presidency, but Ma Ying-jeou had a proven track record in economic management and carving out international space for Taiwan over the past four years. People also felt she lacked charisma and despite being a woman, still had trouble garnering the female vote. Tsai then tried to bring a more personal side to her campaign when the DPP spearheaded a massive piggy bank drive through Taiwan to promote a culture of small donations and civic engagement among its supporters. But in the highly personality-driven politics on Taiwan, Tsai was not a heavyweight like James Soong or Lee Teng Hui. Although Tsai resigned the party chair to take responsibility for the electoral loss, it will no doubt be much more interesting to see the vote share four years from now, when both candidates will be largely untested and need to offer distinct policy offerings.
reviews


Reviewed by Carmen Marchetti

Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China, Harvard Professor Emeritus Ezra Vogel’s incredibly detailed new biography of Deng Xiaoping, traces the evolution of a man against the revolutionary and bloody birth of modern China. The reader found herself in the midst of what very much felt like an intimate conversation between Deng Xiaoping’s loved ones and loyal supporters and that great judge of all people, History. This biography not only offers sweeping views of modern history’s most dramatic changes but painstakingly colors each shade of grey in the human condition of its subject, a man who, when he died on February 19, 1997 at age ninety-two, had requested a simple funeral and, with his life-long allegiance to science, had his corneas and internal organs donated to research.

Vogel’s work stretches across six sections (Deng’s Background, Deng’s Torturous Road to the Top, Creating the Deng Era, 1978-1980, The Deng Era, 1978-1989, Challenges to the Deng Era, 1989-1992, Deng’s Place in History) and 24 chapters. What shines through is Deng’s quiet personal resolve and steely determination, keeping his eye on the prize – the transformation of China into a wealthy and modern country—while closely guarding his deeply loved family.

As the tumultuous events of China’s violent repudiation of the imperial feudal system, the painful civil war, the botched hubristic experiments in social engineering, ideological dogma and economic misgivings erupted in first the Great Leap Forward and then the Cultural Revolution’s bloodshed, mayhem and despair, there emerges from Mao’s shadow a true Confucian.

In his first chapter Vogel reminds us that Deng Xiaoping, from Paifang, Sichuan, was born into a family that deeply valued education and had attained great honor in 1774 when a member of their extended family, Deng Shimin, become a high official. Deng’s strong sense of family and the role his family played in grounding him, a key theme throughout the biography, were nurtured by a
devoted mother and a father committed to the young Xiaoping's education.

And so we witness Deng Xiaoping, a bloodletting Revolutionary and long-time facilitator of Mao's dogma, coming back from his exile in Jiangxi during the Cultural Revolution, having personally taken care of his paralyzed son Deng Pufang, washing, massaging and rotating him, vehemently of the view that the Cultural Revolution was a disaster. It was this experience and what, as he had acknowledged to his daughter Deng Rong, was his regret at “not doing more to stop Mao from making such grievous errors” [during the Hundred Flowers period and Great Leap Forward] (41), that would place him on a collision course with Mao when he refused to affirm the Cultural Revolution.

This is the third clearly identifiable change in Deng's awareness since his participation in the May 4th Movement, which Vogel describes as “the birth of Deng Xiaoping’s personal awareness of the broader world” (17). The events leading to the second change during which Deng “a cheerful, fun-loving extrovert before the heavy blows of 1930-1931 … became more subdued, less talkative” are described in the first chapter.

Vogel’s work continuously compares Deng to Mao and it becomes clear that Deng wanted his legacy to be distinct from that of Mao and his cult of leadership. Deng, Vogel convinces us, was able to step outside of the personal and to redraw the boundaries and re-contextualize the Revolution. “By the time Deng left for Jiangxi, he was already convinced that China’s problems resulted not only from Mao’s errors but also from deep flaws in the system that produced Mao and lead to the disastrous Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution. … Deng …became a builder, helping to establish a new political system and a socialist structure” (44-45).

One can hear Vogel’s struggle with how the transformed Deng came to be responsible for the Tiananmen tragedy, taking the lives of young and defenseless students, when he writes, “all of us who care about human welfare are repulsed by the brutal crackdown on June 4, 1989” (634). The writer provides sketches of the various views, both supportive of and against the measures taken by Deng. Vogel tries to deepen his understanding of what drove Deng by developing a “what if” scenario.
The biographer grapples painfully with the issues at stake, describing the incident once again as “a tragedy of such enormous proportions, one that caused such extensive human suffering and was witnessed around the world, led all those who care about the welfare of humankind to ask how such a catastrophe might have been avoided …” (636) and, furthermore, “as much as we scholars, like others concerned about human life and the pursuit of liberty, want to find clear answers to explain the causes of that tragedy, the truth is that none of us can be certain what would have happened had different courses of action been taken” (638).

Vogel is as honest as he can be about this final manifestation of Deng Xiaoping, the Revolutionary with blood on his hands. Deng the Builder, the Reformer steps back in, following his mantra that had grounded, guided and invigorated him over the many decades of modern China’s painful transformation, “observe calmly, hold one’s ground, respond soberly, and get some things done” (658).

The reader asks, was it an old man’s fears that had allowed Deng the Revolutionary back in, even if it was only for a few hours whilst the PLA cleared Tiananmen Square of somebody else’s child? That after so much personal hardship, the demons of the Cultural Revolution still so close to the surface, the splintered dreams of communist ideology lying amidst the ruins of totalitarian regimes around the world, that nothing was to interfere with “some things” that needed to get done?

Was it the knowledge that social legitimacy, in a world of growing awareness of the human condition, is not something that can be secured by the barrel of a gun that had Deng the Reformer refocus the Party’s energies on delivering economic prosperity, institutional accountability, and the promise of more freedom in the wake of the tragedy?

Deng is quoted as addressing a delegation of US university presidents in 1974, “I have never attended a university, but I have always considered that since the day I was born, I have been in the university of life. There is no graduation date except when I go to meet God” (14). In his own words, it is not only Deng Xiaoping’s respect for and love of learning that shines through, but a keen understanding that perseverance and adaptability are demanded and that, poignantly, there is a higher judgment and so, implicitly, a higher objective before which a man stands humbled.
This book, based on many personal interviews with people close to Deng, and enriched by a lifetime of scholarly work, is essentially a well-constructed platform for a dialogue on Deng Xiaoping's contribution to our modern world. Ezra Vogel tells a gripping story of the transformation of a man and his country. He allows distinct voices to form a conversation with the reader, one which will undoubtedly continue to deepen as people in China continue to strive, alongside each one of us and in spite of our own histories, towards a brighter future of greater understanding and shared prosperity for all our children.

*Reviewed by Robert L. Worden*

Although not newly published, this valuable volume came recently to hand and is worthy of review for China scholars. The book was originally published in 1989 but there was sufficient interest in the content, for a paperback reprint, with a new postscript, published by the University of California Press in 2001. There has been renewed interest since 2011, more of which will be discussed below. As the subtitle reveals, the book deals with an immigrant Chinese family and that in itself is of sufficient interest. The progenitor of the Guangdong-origin Tom Leung family in California was Tan Zhangxiao (1875–1931), or in Cantonese dialect, Tom Cherng How, modified to Tom Leung for business purposes. Westerners referred to Tom Leung as “Dr. Leung”—he was a noted westernized practitioner of traditional Chinese medicine in Los Angeles—and over time, the children of the family came to be known as Leung rather than as Tom.

The memoir begins with the family origins in China. The title, Sweet Bamboo, refers to the translated name of Gum Jook, the home village of the Tom and Wong families in Guangdong. The author, the daughter of Tom Leung and Wong Bing Woo, begins with a description of her mother’s family life in the Pearl River Delta. Because Wong lived longer and was more forthcoming about her origins than was the more secretive Tom Leung (“we know nothing of Papa’s boyhood”), there is interesting detail on her girlhood, betrothal, and marriage. The importance of this memoir unfolds as Leung reveals the education of her father in Guangzhou under the famous Chinese reformer Kang Youwei. It was just two months after the collapse of the One Hundred Days Reform (June-September 1898) that Tom Leung and Wong Bing Woo were married. How much Tom learned the practice of medicine in China is unclear but soon after he migrated to California in 1899 and took up work in a cousin’s herb company, he set up a herbal medicine practice in Los Angeles. The influence of Kang’s reform philosophy, however, was deeply rooted. Much of the memoir describes the life of the family of Tom Leung, the ups and downs of his business life, the births and education of his children, and the construction of an elaborate family home to Tom’s exacting specifications. This aspect of the memoir is a telling description of one family’s adjustment and
success in America despite the odds of anti-Chinese discrimination.

The part of Sweet Bamboo that enlarges the whole story to one of greater historical significance is the relationship between Tom Leong and Kang Youwei. Simply put, Tom shared Kang's progressive ideas and continued to have a close association with his teacher until Kang died in 1927. Over the course of years, Kang corresponded with Tom Leong and these letters, poems, and other documents were saved, almost lost, rescued, and eventually donated to the East Asian Library at UCLA. But Tom Leong was not just a saver of old documents; he was one of the founders and officers of the Los Angeles chapter of the Baohuanghui (Society to Protect the Emperor, or Chinese Empire Reform Association), an international political party founded in Victoria, British Columbia, in July 1899, that for years seriously rivaled the overseas work of Sun Yatsen and his followers. Toward the beginning of Kang's extensive tour of the United States in 1905, he first spent two months in Los Angeles, always in close proximity to the Tom Leung family. Indeed, it was Kang who gave a Chinese name to the author, the new-born Louise Leung: Law Lan ("Pink Flower"). When Kang embarked on his tour of the United States, which included two interviews with President Theodore Roosevelt in the White House, he was accompanied by Tom Leung as his physician. Although Tom did not always agree with his mentor, he was an eyewitness to the history of the overseas Chinese political movements before and after the 1911 Revolution. That the Tan Zhangxiao (Tom Leung) Collection of Letters and Documents survived and has been made available (349 images are available on the UCLA Digital Collections web site) as primary source material to scholars ensures Tom Leung's legacy.

Besides the 2001 postscript written by Tom Leung's granddaughter, Chinese American historian Jane Leung Larson, Sweet Bamboo includes a foreword by Shirley Hune on the importance of the book in Chinese American history and the author's foreword from the first edition. Rounding out the 36-chapter book is a brief epilogue by the author about her family in later years, a longer biographic sketch about the author, who was a ground-breaking Chinese American woman journalist, a five-generation Tom Leung family tree, and a glossary of Chinese terms used in the book. A map of the family homeland in China and numerous black and white photographs supplement the book. The reason this book and the Tom Leung Collection at UCLA have become more important recently, was the convening of two recent
panels on Kang Youwei’s North American travels between 1899 and 1909 and the activism of the Baohuanghui in Canada, the United States, and Mexico. The first was held at the Association for Asian Studies Annual Meeting in Toronto in March 2012 and the second was at the Fifth World Conference of Institutes and Libraries in Chinese Overseas Studies in Vancouver. A book publication project is underway using the Tom Leung and other archival documents.

*Reviewed by Amanda Watson*

Richard McGregor, a reporter and former China bureau chief for the Financial Times, draws back the curtain on the internal workings of the Chinese Communist Party in his book, *The Party: The Secret World of China’s Communist Rulers*. Drawing from sources both within and outside of the Chinese Communist Party, McGregor gives a highly detailed and revealing account of an organization that seeks political survival through total control—of the political system, the military, the economy, the media, and even history. Using numerous case studies and colorful anecdotes of China’s leaders and public figures, McGregor provides a thorough and accessible study of the one-party system in China, examining the internal politics of appointments and succession within the Party, the Party’s relationship with the state, the military, and business, and its struggles with ideology, corruption, and dissent.

The book looks in turn at each of what McGregor terms the “three pillars” of the Party’s power and survival strategy: control over personnel, propaganda, and the People’s Liberation Army. It first examines the relationship between the Party and the state, which is based upon the Party’s control over personnel. Through the Central Organization Bureau, the party appoints state officials down to the local level, as well as the heads of large state-owned companies, major universities, and media outlets. Unlike in multi-party systems in which the state exists independent of the political party currently in control, the state in China is subordinate to the Party. Political officials who often have two titles—a government office and a position within the Party—owe their loyalty first to the Party. For example, although Hu Jintao is introduced as President of China abroad, it is his title of General Secretary of the CCP that marks him as the highest authority at home.

This and the other valuable insights McGregor gives his readers into the Chinese political system help to explain the numerous contradictions and paradoxes that Westerners have often faced when dealing with China. McGregor’s explanation of the Party’s control over the appointment of personnel shows how the Party has been able to closely manage China’s economic reforms.
and growth, from restructuring state-run companies to sell portions of their shares overseas, to keeping big business in line by transferring their CEOs without notice, all while carefully hiding the extent of its involvement. These insights will no doubt be useful to foreigners and foreign governments looking to do business with China. McGregor shows that while China looks increasingly capitalist on the outside, the private sector is still closely watched and regulated by the Party, which remains firmly in control over the country’s economic policy.

The Party is a testament to the adaptability of the Chinese system. Throughout his book, McGregor shows how the CCP has responded to the various challenges that have confronted it in the last half-century, by assimilating and co-opting new forces and making reforms where expedient, and maintaining and employing its mechanisms of control and coercion when necessary. However, his book also exposes the vulnerabilities of the Chinese system. What McGregor refers to as a “fundamental paradox” of the Chinese political system is that the overwhelming power of the Party results in a weak government. Any institutional mechanisms of accountability, such as the justice system and the political body that investigates corruption, are either internal to or effectively controlled by the Party. As a result, the leaders in the highest positions of the party are virtually untouchable, local officials in the provinces tend to be highly independent of the central government, and corruption—particularly among mid-level officials—is rampant. McGregor argues that the Party’s lack of external accountability is what helps it to survive; the Party protects the positions of its members by allowing corruption as long as it remains politically expedient and by maintaining strict control on the media and the Party’s image.

However, the Party’s adaptability and political survival in the long run may not be as certain as McGregor predicts it will be. As the author points out, the legitimacy of the Chinese leadership is based primarily on economic performance, but China’s current economic growth model has significant flaws that make it unsustainable. China invests almost half of its GDP, and investment far outweighs personal consumption, leading to economic imbalances and vast income inequalities. Its reliance on exports has already proven to be a weakness in the face of a global financial slowdown. The economic reforms necessary to fix the flaws in China’s economic model may cause the Party to have to make changes that sacrifice a significant measure of its control
over the economy, which would have consequences for its political control as well. Furthermore, new forces such as the growing number of Chinese “netizens” active in social media and discussing sensitive topics such as corruption and rivalries within the Party leadership are increasingly out of reach of the Party’s traditional mechanisms of control. While the so-called “Great Firewall of China” is a formidable censorship tool, the sheer volume of content being produced and shared on China’s microblogs makes it difficult for the authorities to keep up. These challenges do not necessarily spell the collapse of the CCP, but it seems likely that there will come a point when internal pressures will make the Party have to respond in such a way that it gives up a significant measure of its control, over the economy, society, or both.

It remains to be seen how the Party will respond to the new challenges it will inevitably have to face, but as McGregor’s book makes clear China’s leaders have been remarkably successful so far in maintaining power and control. The Party is a highly readable and useful investigation of the role of the CCP in China, and an essential read for those seeking to gain a deeper understanding of the mechanisms and motivations behind China’s actions as it becomes an increasingly powerful global player.

*Reviewed by Kathy Ogawa*

As the mysterious death of an English businessman was making headlines in the news in recent months, a book about the mysterious death of another English resident in China, 75 years ago, was being widely reviewed. *Midnight in Peking* reconstructs the investigation of the brutal murder of Pamela Werner, the 19-year old daughter of a British official-turned-scholar, an ordinary school girl leading a secluded life centered around the foreign enclave of Legation Quarter and its dances, tea parties and ice skating rinks.

I picked up this book one hot and humid summer day, thinking of idling away the afternoon in much the same way I would reading an Agatha Christie murder mystery. After all, it had the usual ingredients of intrigue, conspiracy, rich and famous people, and sleuths, all confined to Peking’s Legation Quarter. With its quick pace and colorful characters, *Midnight in Peking* was indeed a page-turner, but this book proved to be more than a captivating murder mystery, for it is a true story, which makes it even more intriguing, significant and ultimately, sad.

The day after Orthodox Christmas in 1937, as Beijing is still buzzing with stories of the bizarre Xi’an Incident (the kidnapping of Chiang Kai-shek by the Young Marshal of Manchuria, Zhang Xueliang) – Pamela’s body is found at the base of the Fox Tower just outside Legation Quarter, brutalized and mutilated beyond recognition. Rumors spread that the “fox spirit” believed to haunt the Fox Tower murdered her. The first half of the book is centered on the Chinese investigating detective and his British counterpart sent from Tianjin as an “observer” to the investigation. The story is told mainly from these two detectives’ viewpoints as a most unusual collaboration between a Chinese and ex-Scotland Yard detective unfold, each constrained in the investigation by jurisdiction issues and limits imposed by superiors. The development of their professional relationship and mutual respect, alongside the uncovering of key evidence and leads, are vividly depicted. Just as the reader becomes anxious to know how their cooperation will evolve and what the leads will reveal, these two characters abruptly disappear. They are ordered by their respective authorities not to
talk about the case and the investigation is closed by the British Legation, as Beijing is now preoccupied with the ever-tightening Japanese encirclement and foreign residents are scrambling to leave while they can.

In the second half of the book E.T.C. Werner, Pamela's Sinologist father, takes center stage. Portrayed earlier as an eccentric, stubborn, and volatile man often at odds with the officials in Legation Quarter and whose own tenure as British consul in various Chinese outposts is not without blemish, we now meet a Werner who is a loving and grieving father doggedly conducting a one-man investigation to find his daughter's murderer, his appeals to reopen Pamela's case having been rejected. To this end he hires his own informants, follows every lead, and meets with the unsavory characters in the shady underworld of Beijing's Badlands where prostitution and drug-dealing abound, even as Beijing sinks into chaos as it is now occupied by Japanese troops. With each lead or evidence, the different pieces of information start to fall into place like a jigsaw puzzle, and it seems as though Werner has just about cracked the case. Sadly, his reports on his findings and evidences are ignored by the British authorities in Beijing and London (although one Whitehall official did write: “If British administration in China is to recover its good name, a case of this heinous nature cannot be merely pigeon-holed, ‘dropped’ and forgotten.”) As a result, no arrests are ever made, and the perpetrators literally get away with murder. (Adding insult to injury, Werner is interned in the Weixian Internment Camp in Shandong during the war, together with a group of Beijing expatriates among which is the prime suspect.) It is Werner's reports, which the author accidentally comes across in the British National Archives, that form the basis of this book.

Midnight in Peking is a joy to read simply for its thrilling mystery solving and vivid character development, and indeed the reader gets confused as to whether the book is a work of historical fiction or creative non-fiction. Halfway through the book, I actually flipped back to see if there was the usual disclaimer of “any resemblance to actual events or locales or persons” being entirely coincidental. The author calls it a “reconstruction” based on official documents, press reports, and Werner's copious notes on his own investigation. But it has a lot more to offer than just an exotic “whodunit”. The nostalgic ambiance of “Old Beijing” emanates throughout the story. When I lived in Beijing in the 1990s, I would sometimes drive through Legation Quarter, to get away from the
crowded parts of Beijing and savor the feeling of what Beijing must have been like in the times gone by, the Beijing of Lao She, Lin Yutang and George Kates\textsuperscript{170}, a Beijing with its walls and gates and archways, with its residents clinging to the aura of normalcy as the footsteps of war steadily approach. Reading Midnight in Peking took me back to this old Beijing, complete with frightening side tours to the notorious Badlands.

The student of Chinese history will also enjoy the bits and pieces of well-known persons and events making their appearances. In one scene, Helen Foster Snow (who reported from China under the pseudonym “Nym Wales,” and was also known as Mrs. Edgar Snow) walks in to tell the detectives that she thinks she was in fact the intended victim, not Pamela. We learn that Pamela’s father was involved in the disposition of the Dunhuang scrolls discovered by Sir Aurel Stern and actually opposed their transfer to the British Museum; he was also known to go on excursions to search for the tomb of Genghis Khan, leaving Pamela alone for long stretches of time. George Morrison once wrote to his editor at Times of London to complain about Werner as the British Consul in Jiujiang. The Legation Quarter Commissioner was a veteran of the Boxer Uprising when Legation Quarter was under siege for 55 days. And so on.

For those who are into multi-media, the book’s website (http://us.midnightinpeking.com/) will make reading the book into a more informative and interesting experience with audio and visual material. Here the reader can find: a video walk with the author through present-day locations where the story takes place; an audio walk through the routes of the crime scene; a podcast of the author interviewing the British detective’s daughter-in-law; an interactive map of “Pamela’s Peking”; photographs of the cast of characters and of the old city; newspaper clippings of the reporting of Pamela’s murder; and information on Chinese history and literature relating to this period.

Finally, the book evokes some somber thoughts: how often a lid is put on an “inconvenient truth” (the scandal at Pamela’s school

\textsuperscript{170} Lao She (1899-1966), a notable Chinese writer born in Beijing, was famous for his depictions of life in Beijing from his works, \textit{Rickshaw Boy} and \textit{Teahouse}. Lin Yutang (1895 – 1976) was another well-known and influential Chinese writer of his generation and author of the book, \textit{Moment in Peking}, written in English. George Kates was an American who moved to China and completely immersed himself in the culture and daily life of the Chinese. Kates offered a recollection of those days in his memoirs, \textit{The Years That Were Fat: Peking, 1933-1940}.
in Tianjin, the nudist colony in the Western Hills, the links between Legation Quarter and the Badlands), and how often a person’s credibility is thrown out owing to unfavorable reputation (in Werner’s case, for being eccentric and volatile) along with it throwing out any view or evidence presented by them, however valid. Against the stonewalling and inertia of bureaucracy, it is as though Pamela was twice murdered, once when her life was brutally taken and again when her case was closed by those wishing to protect reputations and vested interests. Pamela was only just starting her transition from a child to a young woman, testing the waters of her independence and adulthood within the safety-net of people she knew and trusted -- and what a price she had to pay... Through this book, which he dedicates to Pamela, Paul French has given meaning to her sadly and suddenly truncated short life.

Reviewed by Robert L. Worden

This posthumous autobiography of Him Mark Lai (1925–2009), the “dean of Chinese American history,” was released for publication late last year, two years after the author’s death. It begins with a description of the origins of the Maak family in China and Singapore. The first member of the Maak, or Mark, family in America was, at age 18 in 1909, the “paper son” of Lai Poon, a Chinese dry goods and clothing merchant in San Francisco’s Chinatown. As a paper son, Maak Bing took Lai as his surname. Through hard work, Lai Bing established himself as a tailor in the garment industry and following years of hard work and saving, he returned to China for a wife in the early 1920s. Lai Bing returned to California in 1923 with his bride, Dong Shee, who also became a garment worker after being officially admitted to the United States. Their story was one of humble beginnings, hard work, and perseverance. The author brought considerable value added to the book by placing the family’s endeavors in historical context with the struggles of Chinese overseas in America, life in early twentieth-century Chinatowns, and the still broader context of political upheaval in revolutionary China. This weaving of biography and autobiography with urban life, professional development, and emerging world events is used throughout the book.

Most of the book is devoted to the author’s childhood in San Francisco’s Chinatown, growing up during the Depression, attending Chinese and public schools, education at the University of California at Berkeley, his career as a mechanical engineer, and his coming of age as a preeminent Chinese American historian. His second career, as a historian, began soon after World War II when he noticed changes occurring in Chinatown, including the going-out-of-business of a Chinese bookstore that led to his beginning to collect Chinese classical literature. Around the same time, he became interested in progressive Chinese organizations, which led to questioning by the FBI in the early 1950s about his membership in pro-People’s of Republic of China groups. The FBI’s surveillance of his activities continued until 1980. His participation in the Chinese American Youth Club, which focused on cultural and
recreational activities, heightened his interest in Chinese American and New China cultural developments. Close to half of the book is then devoted to his role in learning about, teaching, and archiving Chinese American history. He saw this personal development as the result of the raising of the Chinese American self consciousness after the end of the Chinese exclusion laws in 1943, the close of World War II in 1945, and the spreading of the civil rights movement to Chinese American communities by the 1960s. Besides accumulating more books on Chinese culture and politics, he began to collect classical and ethnic music recordings. Soon he was writing articles on Chinese American history and invited to teach a course on the same at San Francisco State College (now San Francisco State University). When the relaxation of U.S. immigrations policies in 1965 eventually led to more non-Cantonese Chinese emigration, Lai evolved from his concentration on history of Guangdong and Cantonese emigration to broader studies and more in-depth historical perspective. A special interest of his was in Chinese-language newspapers from throughout the United States as well as the scholarly documentation of Chinatown organizations. This eventually brought this reviewer in contact with Him Mark Lai in the early 1970s. Realizing the fragility of these Chinatown resources, he worked to save them and encouraged libraries and archives to add such materials to their collections. By the 1980s, Lai had become what he called a “full-time historian” following his early retirement from his engineering career. Between then and his passing away in 2009, Him Mark Lai became recognized as the “dean of Chinese American history.” His autobiography ends with marching orders for himself and the next generation—an epilogue entitled “History Yet to Be Written.” It lays out a range of topics, from immigration to extraterritoriality and ethnic Chinese diversity and others, topics Lai was sure are worthy of Chinese American studies.

Him Mark Lai’s autobiography includes a selection of photographs from throughout his life, a seven-generation Maak family tree, and a six-generation Dong family tree. There also are three appendices (on the origins of the Maak clan name, the geographical origins their ancestral village, and other branches of the Maak family in China), endnotes, a bibliography, a list of online resources, and a list of Lai’s awards and honors. The book was completed and edited by a team (listed in the title of this review) of Lai’s former students, who also authored the preface to the volume. A foreword by John Kuo Wei Tchen points out Lai’s “Herculean efforts” on behalf of Chinese American studies, comparing him
favorably to other heritage communities’ leading historians and hailing his work in building a massive collection of Chinese and English-language resources on Chinese Americans and Chinese overseas in general, all of which has been donated to the University of California at Berkeley.
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