NEW CENTURY, OLD THINKING: THE DANGERS OF THE PERCEPTUAL GAP IN U.S.-CHINA RELATIONS

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FOREWORD

If a host of pundits are to be believed, we are fast approaching "the Pacific Century," and, many of them argue, the centerpiece of the new era will be China. Some forecasts have China rising to become the world's largest economy over the next two decades, and acquiring attendant political and military power in the process.

Unquestionably, China's size, population and burgeoning economy will elevate it to a more prominent role in Asia, the Pacific and the world by 2020. All the more reason then for those concerned with America's security to develop a keener understanding of this rising giant.

Perhaps a good place to start is with some introspection about ourselves in relation to the Chinese. Lieutenant Colonel Susan Puska, in the monograph that follows, provides just such an examination of the reciprocal relations between China and the United States over the past century and a half. She articulates the theme that cycles of misperception have characterized the relationship. If this past is prologue, then potential conflict looms darkly over future U.S.-China interactions.

The first step toward precluding conflict, according to the author, is to understand the nature of the past relationship. Then, the two countries must overcome the deep perceptual gap between their cultures, their historical views and their ideological perspectives. Such understanding, widely shared in each society, will not assure development of bilateral partnership, but is essential to giving it a chance.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

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NEW CENTURY, OLD THINKING: THE DANGERS OF THE PERCEPTUAL GAP IN U.S.-CHINA RELATIONS

INTRODUCTION

American angst over "China" and how to deal with it has spurred a seemingly endless cycle of U.S. policy debates. Each disagreement or new revelation, such as the recent allegation that the Chinese tried to buy influence through illegal funding to U.S. elections,[1] feeds another round of charges that U.S. leaders are either too "soft" or too "hard" on China. These charges are usually punctuated by warnings that these actions could lead to dire consequences for the United States in the future.

Although their deliberations are largely hidden, Chinese leaders also debate how best to manage the "America problem." Chinese policies toward the United States, as with U.S. policies toward China, have been inconsistent and contradictory, ranging from the current pragmatic decision to downplay differences between the two countries to the dangerously hostile confrontation over Taiwan in March 1996.

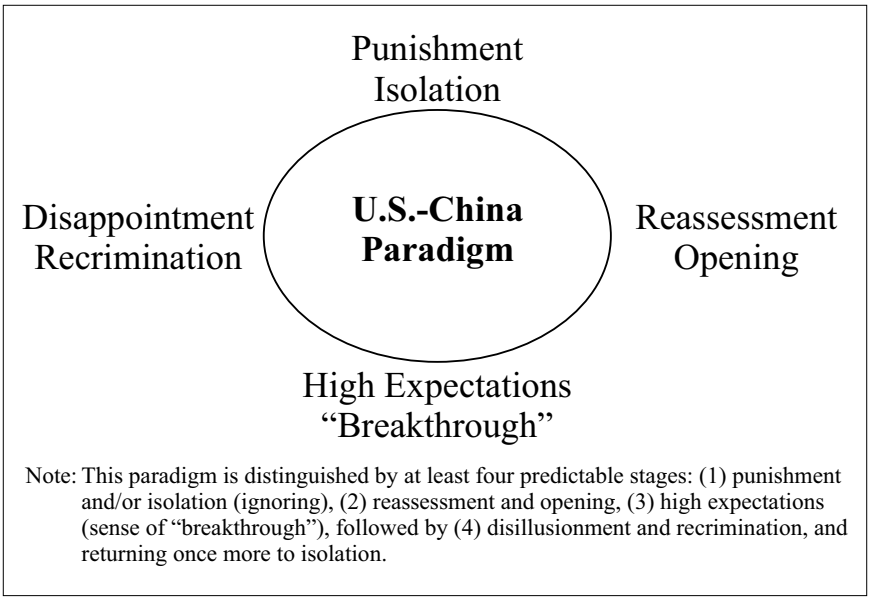
Since Tiananmen in 1989, U.S.-China state relations have been punctuated by one crisis after another. Between each crisis there have been brief, but exuberant attempts to make a "breakthrough" which could once and for all set relations on a stable course. Events in 1996 and 1997 have been particularly illustrative of this U.S.-China bilateral roller coaster ride. These 2 years highlight the difficulties that thwart attempts to stabilize U.S.-China relations in the post-Cold War period. They also foreshadow the dangers and risks inherent in U.S.-China relations as the 21st century approaches.

The up and down cycles of U.S.-China state relations during the 1990s are only a subset of a boom-bust paradigm (Figure 1), which has characterized state relations throughout the last 150 years. Based fundamentally on historic U.S. superiority, in terms of the economic, political and military elements of national power,[2] this paradigm has persisted almost uninterrupted until the present. The brief periods of the U.S.-China alliance during World War II and during the strategic anti-Soviet relationship of the 1970s have been anomalies within the dominant pattern.

Supporting and fueling this paradigm at each stage is a profound perceptual gap between the United States and China that is fed by at least three major sources: philosophical and cultural differences, historical experience, and ideological differences. This perceptual gap has helped give the boom-bust paradigm a life of its own in state-to-state relations between the United States and China, primarily because countervailing bilateral interests have most often either been lacking entirely or they have been insufficient to counterbalance it.

If this paradigm persists in U.S.-China state relations into the 21st century, it will likely continue to reduce options and opportunities for resolution of disagreements between the two countries. Over time, it could lead to a downward spiral in state relations, resulting in increasing levels of confrontation, hostility, and even war.

The perceptual gap has been a ubiquitous feature of U.S.-China relations since at least the 19th century; however, it has reemerged with a vengeance since June 4, 1989, within the changing context of successful modernization and economic development within China. Misperceptions do contribute to serious mutual miscalculations. For example, the United States miscalculated how China would ultimately respond to the Lee Tenghui visit to the United States in April 1995. When China conducted exercises in March 1996 near Taiwan, it also likely miscalculated how the United States would respond



Note: This paradigm is distinguished by at least four predictable stages: (1) punishment and/or isolation (ignoring), (2) reassessment and opening, (3) high expectations (sense of "breakthrough"), followed by (4) disillusionment and recrimination, and returning once more to isolation.

Figure 1.

and what effect the exercise would have on the perception of China within the Asia-Pacific Region.

An understanding of the perceptual gap and of the potential for dangerous miscalculations is of vital importance to bilateral relations between the United States and China. Miscalculations of intentions and capabilities by either or both countries can play a critical role in precipitating confrontation. Often based on underestimation or overestimation, miscalculations historically have been factors in the outbreak of war.[3] In the future, miscalculations by either or both countries on potentially explosive issues, such as Chinese sovereignty over Taiwan or the Spratly Islands, could push the United States and China toward long-term confrontation and conflict.

Fundamental to why the perpetuation of this paradigm is dangerous is the concrete change that is occurring in the power relationship between the two countries as China's economy continues to modernize and grow in real terms. Although China's presumed rise to great power, even superpower, status remains somewhat theoretical,[4] China's

comprehensive power, in terms of economic growth, political influence, and (to a much lesser extent) military capability,[5] has grown dramatically since the 1980s. At the same time, the United States, the only remaining superpower of the post-Cold War era, faces the prospect of decline at least in relative terms, as other powers, such as China or Germany, rise to level the international playing field over the long term.

The psychological impact of China's presumed rise adds a volatile dimension to U.S.-China state relations. For China, the possibility of this change in power relations presents an intoxicating opportunity, which has eluded China for well over a century, to gain a dominant position within the Asia-Pacific region and the world. For the United States, such a change in the power relationship with China raises an uncertain, if not fearsome, specter of major change, even loss, in terms of international influence, prestige, and possibly way of life. This psychological dimension, I think, is at the heart of the current China threat and U.S. threat arguments in each country.

This paper primarily examines the psychological dimension of U.S.-China state-to-state relations. It argues that the primary reason for the lurching nature of bilateral policies (on both sides) is a corrosive perceptual gap between the United States and China, that the policy debates reflect, and which dominates bilateral relations in the absence of countervailing bilateral or strategic interests. The paper will examine this perceptual gap from cultural, historical and ideological aspects, and correlate it to the role perceptions and misperceptions played out in political-military aspects of U.S.-China relations. As a historical U.S.-China example, the paper will discuss the outbreak of the Korean War in terms of mutual misperceptions. In conclusion, it offers some suggestions to break the paradigm and help establish normal state-to-state relations between the two countries.

PART ONE:
U.S.-CHINA PERCEPTUAL GAP

PHILOSOPHICAL AND CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

> I had learned enough about Americans to treat them as ordinary human beings.
>
> Liu Zongren[6]

> The experience of China means that you will never again see singly; the contrary of every idea in your life and culture looks as sane and reasonable as the idea itself. Your consciousness is bifurcated once and for all . . . Every old truth is half a new lie, every perception half a deception.
>
> Bill Holm[7]

The perceptual gap between the United States and China is a by-product of their philosophical and cultural differences, historical experience, and residual ideological differences. People who work in business, academic, cultural, and government relations between the two countries are frequently challenged to unravel miscommunications and misunderstandings that arise from this baggage. Often there is a complete break in understanding what is important to the other party and why. For example, in official meetings, it is common for the Chinese to measure their success in handling the Americans on the basis of form, while Americans will often define success in terms of the substance discussed or agreed upon by the Chinese.

When Americans fail to satisfy the Chinese need for form, they risk offending the Chinese and undermining feelings of goodwill, thus further degrading opportunities (however slight) for progress on issues of substance. When the Chinese fail to satisfy the American need for substance, they risk disappointing the Americans, fueling distrust and

also undermining goodwill. Underlying this form-substance gap is the Chinese emphasis on personal relations. Even in sensitive official relationships, such as military-to-military relations, the Chinese resist establishing institutional ties, preferring informal contacts and relying on trusted intermediaries. While useful to some degree, this informal relationship has clear limits to the U.S. military where normal, non-adversarial relations with foreign militaries are characterized by regularization, institutional ties, and reciprocity, all of which help build mutual trust, communication, and cooperation, and help mitigate the possibility of misperception of intentions and capability.

The Chinese preference for form versus the American preference for substance can be better understood by looking at the philosophical roots which formed the world view of the Chinese and the West more than 2,000 years ago. David Hall and Roger Ames[8] have traced the earliest philosophical differences between the West and China to the period from 800-200 B.C., by which time dramatically different world views had developed. China's world view became based primarily on analogical or correlative thinking, while the West's became based on rational and causal thinking,[9] though each culture still retains recessive elements of the other's thought process.

Western thinking presupposes the beginning of things arising from chaos; a single-ordered world; the priority of stasis over change (being over becoming); and, the belief in some agency of construal, such as the Will of God, and that the agency of construal ultimately determines the state of affairs of the world.[10] In contrast, Chinese thinking does not presume:

> an initial beginning nor of the existence of a single ordered world. This mode of thinking accepts the priority of change or process over rest and permanence, presumes no ultimate agency responsible for the general order of things, and seeks to account for states of affairs by appeal to correlative procedures rather than by determining agencies and principles.[11]

These differences give rise to very different perspectives of time, for example, that often negatively affect dealings between the two countries. For the Chinese, time is an open-ended process with no beginning and no end. In a sense, time has "no value" to the Chinese because it is eternal.[12] While the Chinese tend to take the long view, looking backward to over 5,000[13] years of continuous civilization with special pride, Americans tend to look more to the future and emphasize how fleeting time is. Consequently, the American tendency to be impatient for change often clashes with the seemingly eternal patience of the Chinese.

I frequently encountered this view of time in 1988-89 in discussions with Chinese, even among students who were toying with the idea of democracy in China. Contrary to popular views in the United States, these students demanded greater democracy (specifically the vote) for themselves as intellectuals, but they had a much different view of what was appropriate for the majority—the peasants. Most argued that the "backward" and "uneducated" peasants were not yet ready for democracy and would first need time to develop culturally. When I asked how long this would take, it was not unusual for the students to suggest that 50-100 years, or one or more generations, would be required.[14]

The main elements of the perceptual gap between the United States and China can be depicted as in Figure 2. Although both cultures can and do occasionally cross the line to selectively adopt elements of the other culture's world view, both the United States and China tend to stay within the boundaries of their own preferences. These fundamental philosophical differences, which are imbedded within each culture and are largely diametrically opposed to one another, help explain why miscommunication often arises between China and the United States.

Ames and Hall suggest further that the American tendency to universalize Western values is a direct outcome

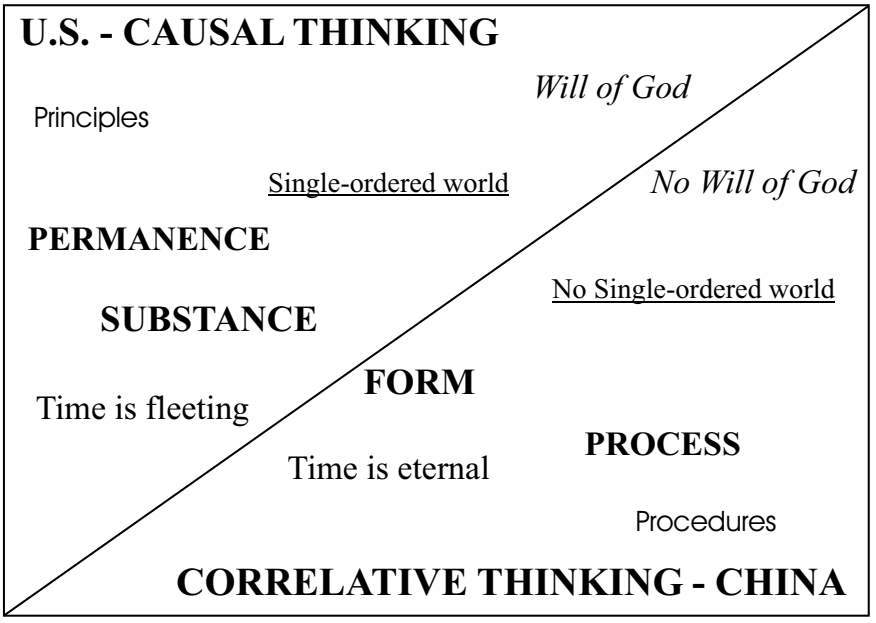


Figure 2. U.S.-China Perceptual Gap.

of Western causal and linear thinking.[15] Americans tend to see the spread of Western values as a sacred mission, based on universal principles which are guided by a higher order than the mere will of man. America's own national interests are often linked to the attainment of universal principles. The 1996 U.S. *National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement* (NSS),[16] for example, explicitly linked U.S. national interests and global conditions:

> This national security strategy . . . is premised on the belief that the line between our domestic and foreign policies is disappearing - that we must revitalize our economy if we are to sustain our military forces, foreign initiatives and global influence, and that we must engage actively abroad if we are to open foreign markets and create jobs for our people.[17]

The urgency which the 1996 NSS attached to promoting democracy and market economies rested on the belief that:

> Secure nations are more likely to support free trade and maintain democratic structures. Free market nations with

> growing economies and strong and open trade ties are more likely to feel secure and to work toward freedom. And democratic states are less likely to threaten our interests and more likely to cooperate with the United States to meet security threats and promote free trade and sustainable development.[18]

The 1997 report, *A National Security Strategy for a New Century*,[19] retained the concept of engagement, but dropped direct reference to enlargement. Nonetheless, the promotion of democracy and human rights[20] remained a core objective of the NSS:[21]

> We seek international support in helping strengthen democratic and free market institutions and norms . . . This commitment . . . is not only just, but pragmatic, for strengthened democratic institutions benefit the U.S. and the world.[22]

In China, the U.S. commitment to globally spread democracy and human rights, which are based upon Western values, is seen as a threat to China and to things Chinese. This runs much deeper than simply the views of a minority Communist Party, which would be directly threatened by the democratic order that America seeks to promote in China. Even ordinary Chinese citizens, including Chinese students, bristle at the missionary-like U.S. vision of how to change China for its own good. Like those of the Christian missionaries of the 19th and early 20th centuries, U.S. goals for China (and other countries, as well) are based on the fundamental assumption that U.S. values are not only applicable to China, but also must be promoted regardless of the domestic consequences, such as revolution or widespread violence.

The conflict that can arise between U.S. causal thinking and Chinese correlative thinking can be seen more clearly by comparing both countries' national security strategies (Figure 3). Although China and the United States both seek security, stability, and greater prosperity, the criteria for attaining these goals are vastly different. The U.S. NSS

Figure 3. Comparison of U.S. and Chinese National Strategies.

defines security, stability, and prosperity in terms of the mutually reinforcing aspects of democracy, free market economy, and the promotion of American values. China adheres to the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, a product of its border confrontation with India, as its foundation for state-to-state relations. These principles promote its national interests and limit outside interference in Chinese internal affairs. As a basis for its security, China further seeks sovereignty over all of its claimed territory including not only Hong Kong, which was reunited with China earlier this year, and Macao, which will be reunified with China in 1999, but also with places where its sovereignty is contested, such as the Spratly[23] and Senkakus (Diaoyutai) Islands, and Taiwan, which has been separated from Beijing since 1949 as an unresolved legacy of the Chinese civil war.

The Chinese ambivalence toward the West, which is often marked by a rejection of foreign influence as well as interference, combined with a need for foreign capital and technology to help China modernize and thereby resist the

West, has been a recurring dilemma for China since the 19th century. In a series of essays, the scholar Feng Guifen argued that although "the intelligence and wisdom of the Chinese are necessarily superior to those of the various barbarians,"[24] China must strengthen itself *(ziqiang)* by adopting some foreign methods in order to meet the Western challenge.[25] Feng's ideas helped inspire the Self-Strengthening Movement of the late 19th century as an attempt to restore the power of the Qing Dynasty by seeking foreign aid and investment, machines, weapons, and technology to strengthen China against the West in the belief that "China would first learn from foreigners, then equal them, and finally surpass them,"[26] and fundamentally "emphasize[d] China's autonomy and initiative."[27]

Deng Xiaoping's formula for building socialism with Chinese characteristics,[28] which he articulated in the opening speech of the Twelfth Party Congress on September 1, 1982, remains true to much of the sentiment of the self-strengthening concepts of the 19th century. Deng first rejected "the mechanical copying and application of foreign experiences and models" and urged listeners to base China's development on "the concrete realities of China, [and] blaze a path of our own."[29]

From its unique perspective, China today seeks to build its comprehensive national strength from a strong economic foundation. "National wealth achieved through economic development" is the "core of China's national interest."[30] Priority is given to the development of economic power, since to be sustainable over the long term, other elements, such as the military and political power, must be based on a strong economy. To support these goals, peace and stability are viewed as "a guarantee for China's economic development."[31]

The goals of the U.S. NSS conflict in at least two fundamental ways with China's own goals for maintaining national security.[32] First, the United States sees its national security irrevocably dependent upon the

promotion of global democracy and market economies. China has accepted the value of market economy, but it is market economy with Chinese characteristics. China seeks to protect and channel its internal energy in ways that are advantageous and supportive of its own interests. Democracy is even more problematic to Chinese leaders, who view it as a direct attack on their power and as a threat to the stability of the nation that could potentially throw the country into the chaos of internal revolution, once more depriving China of its century-plus dream to recapture past glory and power regionally and within the international community. Economic development is thus firmly linked to Chinese nationalism, and those who would thwart China's development can be easily cast as opponents of China.

Second, China does not necessarily buy into the universality of Western values, many of which conflict with Chinese values in the same way that core philosophical differences conflict. As shown in Figure 4, these main value differences include the American emphasis on the individual versus the Chinese stress on the group; the American preference for the rule of law versus the Chinese reliance on personal relationships; and a fundamentally different view of human rights. Although largely dismissed as Chinese Communist Party (CCP) propaganda by pro-human rights proponents in the West, many common Chinese people do have a different view of human rights, based more on the collective good (stability) than on the rights of the individual. The American emphasis on "inalienable" and "self-evident" rights embodied in the U.S. Bill of Rights often does not seem as compelling to those who are trying to achieve basic human needs, such as food and shelter, and when the cost of such individualism may be internal chaos and national weakness.

U.S.	CHINA
Individual	Group
Rule of Law	Rule of Man
Human Rights: Bill of Rights	Human Rights: Basic Needs
Progress, Principles Democracy	Stability

Figure 4. Values Comparison.

HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE

> American policies toward China display a fatal flaw: their lack of . . . history. This deficiency alone destines them to be devoid of long-term, enlightened strategic thinking. It also dooms Sino-U.S. relations to periodic collisions.
>
> *China Can Say No*[33]

> The importance of history does not lie in what happened, but in what people think happened and in the significance they ascribe to that image of past events.
>
> Dennison I. Rusinow[34]

The complex history of U.S.-China relations adds some concrete and mythological dimensions to the perceptual gap between the two countries. The pattern of relations, as previously shown in Figure 1, has largely been a love-hate pattern since the 19th century. In his 1958 work on American views toward China, the journalist Harold Isaacs[35] describes this cyclic pattern as a series of six different periods (ages) in state relations until 1949: respect (18th century); contempt (1840-1905); benevolence (1905-1937); admiration (1937-1944); disenchantment (1944-1949); and hostility (beginning in 1949).[36]

Building on Isaacs' chronology, Steven W. Mosher extended the Age of Hostility from 1949 to 1972, when President Richard Nixon and Mao Zedong brokered the historic reopening of relations. He also added three phases up until 1989: The Second Age of Admiration (1972-1977); the Second Age of Disenchantment (1977-1980); and the Second Age of Benevolence (1980-1989).[37]

Relying on extensive documentary evidence, Warren Cohen more succinctly divided American perceptions of China into five eras: deference (1784-1841), contempt (1841-1900), paternalism (1900-1950), fear (1950-1971), and respect (beginning in 1971).[38] This division loses visibility over some of the internal ups and downs within each period that Isaacs and Mosher more clearly identify, but retains the major American perceptions of China today. As reflected in the ongoing policy debates and analysis of China and its rise as a great power, one can see emotions ranging from contempt of Chinese human rights practices to fear of China's long-term intentions. There are also persistent elements of paternalism as Americans seek to transform the Chinese system along Western and U.S. lines, with only furtive and grudging signs of respect.

Arkush and Lee correlated Chinese images of the United States to Cohen's periodization of American perceptions of China. Beginning in 1841, about the time when Chinese officials, such as Xu Jiyu, the governor of Fujian Province, began publishing accounts of the United States,[39] Arkush and Lee identified four different periods that reflect the inherent ambiguity of Chinese perceptions of the United States: exotic wonderment and fear (1841-1900); admiration of the American model, combined with criticism of flaws in its values (1900-1950); rampant anti-Americanism in mainland China, combined with "friendly familiarity" in Taiwan (1950-1971); and "rediscovery and respect" (1971-1989).[40]

Of these different periods, the time frames between 1841 and 1950 are especially useful in providing historical

perspective on mutual perceptions between China and the United States prior to the Cold War. The ideological influence of the Cold War is a separate dimension to the perceptual gap. It not only polarized and bifurcated relations between the United States and the two China's until 1971, but also provided the rationale for the reopening of relations in the 1970s. It therefore should be considered as an important, but separate, component.

Such cyclic and emotionally-charged swings in the history of bilateral relations have left a mutual legacy of old resentments and disappointments, as well as recurrently unrealistic hopes and expectations that haunt mutual perceptions and misperceptions today. Within the context of the persistent aftermath of Tiananmen, this historical legacy has rebounded with an astounding resilience. It has helped feed nationalistic anger in China, albeit manipulated and exploited by the leaders of a largely irrelevant communist ideology. In the United States this legacy is manifested in repeated attempts to moralize, condemn, and change China on behalf of the Chinese people and perceived universal norms of behavior. Underlying both these perceptual extremes has been the resurgence of negative views which dominated during the Cold War.

1841-1900: American Contempt versus Chinese Wonderment and Fear.

When reviewing the history of U.S.-China relations before 1989, several patterns (and not a few ironies) stand out. The extreme anti-Chinese sentiment that the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 (and subsequent laws) reflected until it was repealed in 1943 is instructive in that it was the first and only time U.S. law singled out a nationality for exclusion from America, even after the United States paternalistically sought to save, protect, and transform China after 1900, and even after China and the United States became allies against Japan in World War II.

The Chinese Exclusion Act and subsequent laws, in the words of John King Fairbanks, "made racism our national policy" and prompted the Chinese to initiate their first anti-foreign boycott of U.S. goods.[41] These discriminatory laws expressed American beliefs of the time that the Chinese people were "culturally and racially unassimilable."[42] Scores of Chinese immigrants were murdered in the western United States during anti-Chinese riots in the 1870s and 1880s. The prejudice and violence inflicted on the Chinese people was caused not only by domestic economic competition and uncertainty, but also by the fundamental American perception that the Chinese immigrant, beset with "unspeakable vices,"[43] represented a cultural, moral, and religious threat.

When viewing press coverage of China in the United States since 1989, one can see unfortunate parallels to the negative views of the late 19th century. With notable exceptions, American journalists have focused on such "unspeakable vices" as cannibalism during the Cultural Revolution, buying and selling of women and children, and female infanticide, thus presenting a negative and narrow view of China.[44]

American negative views of China in the late 19th century were reinforced by conditions in China itself. Many Americans, as "fresh apostles of progress" after the end of the Civil War and the opening of Western territories, saw the Qing Dynasty as one in "decay, actually sunk in poverty, filth, disease, corruption, thievery, and disorder, and apparently unwilling to do anything about it."[45] America's western expansion helped fuel the belief that anything is possible if people help themselves. This "self-help" ethos sharply contrasted with American perceptions of China in the late Qing era. China's defeat in a series of disastrous and humiliating military confrontations with Western powers during the 19th century beginning with the first Opium War of 1840 may have raised sympathy for China in the United States, but did not earn respect for a country in decline and

unable to respond to the challenge of Western trade and modernization.

The Chinese Exclusion Act not only reflected prejudices of the times, which most would condemn today, it also reflected a "Yellow Peril"[46] fear, which sometimes resurfaces even today and overshadows perceptions of China's rise in economic, political, and military power. This irrational fear of the Chinese was shaped in the 19th century by the enormity of China's population, vast cultural differences, and a perception of "unfair" domestic competition from Chinese immigrants in America. Although this fear was based on distorted views of China's role in the invasion of Europe in the 13th century by the Mongols,[47] it was also kindled by the anti-foreign Boxer Rebellion of 1900, which John Fairbanks has described as "one of the best known events of the 19th century because so many diplomats, missionaries, and journalists"[48] were involved. Like Tiananmen in 1989, this event had enduring effects on U.S.-China relations and mutual perceptions.

The Chinese perceptions of America during the late 19th century largely incorporated the United States in the general Chinese view of Western oppression (colonialism and imperialism) and exploitation of China's weakness. "Gunboat diplomacy" achieved by use of force what political diplomacy had failed to—the opening of China to trade with the West. Beginning with the Opium War of 1840-42,[49] a series of "unequal treaties" were imposed on China, which granted special extraterritorial privileges to foreigners and took away Chinese sovereignty over Hong Kong Island and elsewhere. Protected foreign enclaves were established throughout China beyond the rule of Chinese law. Popular symbols to represent this period of humiliation include signs, such as that posted outside the waterfront park on the Bund in Shanghai, which declared "no dogs or Chinese" allowed.

Within this bitter context of weakness and humiliation in China's encounter with the West, the Boxer Rebellion of

1900 is seen by the Chinese as a benchmark in its "anti-imperialist and patriotic" struggle against foreign oppression.[50] But the Boxer Rebellion is only the best known and most violent[51] display of an anti-foreignism that has repeatedly manifested itself in China since the 19th century. Often this anti-foreignism has been intertwined with Chinese nationalism and the quest for modernization,[52] as well as with the need for demonstrations of standing up to the West.[53] This anti-foreign element can be seen today in such comic heroes as "Soccer Boy," who in a CD-Rom version can fight and win the Opium War,[54] or in the popular television soap opera, "Foreign Babes in Beijing," built on "the most negative Chinese views of foreign women."[55] The runaway bestseller of the summer of 1996, "The China That Can Say No," written by five co-authors[56] who have never traveled outside of China, reflects what the authors call a "post-colonial sentiment" that resents "American demonization of China over issues ranging from arms proliferation to human rights and family planning"[57] and "abstract struggles [with China] over ideology and politics,"[58] which ultimately seek to contain China's growth and development as a strong competitor of the United States.

1900-1950: American Paternalism versus Chinese Admiration and Criticism.

The foreign (including the United States) military suppression of the Boxer Rebellion devastated parts of northern China where the uprisings occurred. The ruins of the Old Summer Palace (Y*uanmingyuan*), even today, almost 100 years after the sumptuous imperial grounds were occupied and razed by foreign troops, remain for the Chinese a potent symbol of a time when China was impotent to expel foreigners from its soil.

Heavy compensation was demanded of China in the Boxer Protocol of 1901 in retribution for the loss of foreign property and personnel. The debt, which was not amortized until December 31, 1940, with interest amounted to $333

million, a tremendous sum considering that the Qing government's annual income at the time was estimated to be about half that amount.[59]

Despite great internal suffering and disorder, China successfully survived imperialist pressure during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In the end, "the 'breakup of China' did not occur . . . partly owing to Chinese dexterity . . . in balancing one imperialist power against the other."[60] Nonetheless, the trauma of this period of Western aggression in China left a wellspring of anger and resentment for past wrongs which reflexively permeates Chinese nationalistic views of the West today.

The U.S. role in China during the late 19th and early 20th centuries was at best ambiguous. Throughout the period the United States was proud that it did not try to establish any colonies in China. However, the United States readily took advantage of the most favored nation (MFN) clause, what Fairbanks characterized as a "me-too policy,"[61] which gave each treaty power all privileges that any other power acquired in China beginning from the initial treaties established between 1842-44, following the Opium War.[62] The United States participated in the violent suppression of the Boxer Rebellion, as well as the imposition of indemnities, but remitted part of these indemnities in 1908 and the remainder in 1924[63] on the provision that these funds "would continue to be made available by China mainly for educational purpose."[64] The U.S. Open Door policy toward China, which became the traditional basis of U.S. policy for decades, helped preserve China's unity by constraining dismemberment by foreign powers, but was intended not to protect China, but rather to ensure equality of access among the contending foreign powers.[65]

By the beginning of the 20th century, the United States had developed a paternalistic view of China, seeking to save China by transforming it along American lines in religion, politics, economics, and technology. During this time, support for the Nationalist Party (*Guomindang* or

Kuomintang) under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi) who, along with his wife, Song Meiling, embraced Christianity, developed in the United States, setting the stage for U.S. involvement in the Chinese Civil War.[66]

The United States supported the Nationalist government in its resistance to the Japanese invasion and occupation, and became openly allied after Pearl Harbor. As the war in the Pacific came to an end, however, Americans became disillusioned with the corruption and inefficiencies of the Nationalists. Some U.S. military officers familiar with China, such as Marine Captain Evans F. Carlson[67] and Colonel David Barrett (the head of the first contingent to the Yenan Observer Group, the "Dixie Mission"),[68] as well as other China observers such as Edgar Snow, advocated some cooperation with the Chinese Communists, but they were never supported.

During the Chinese Civil War, the United States provided support and assistance to the Nationalists, who fled to Taiwan in 1949. This U.S. involvement hardened into Cold War polarization with the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950. This Cold War legacy and continued U.S. support of Taiwan still complicate and threaten bilateral relations.

IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES

> Americans really understand little about Chinese society and tradition and they readily pass judgment on China according to their own history and culture, and their prejudice against communism.
>
> Liu Zongren[69]

> Some senior Chinese Communist Party leaders still see U.S.-China friction in terms of Cold War struggle between political systems—a perception which is mirrored by many in Washington.
>
> David Shambaugh[70]

After World War II, Sino-U.S. cultural differences and historical experience were intensified through an ideological prism which pitted Western democracy and capitalism against communism. The founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949 was a turning point. In the United States, the victory of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) resulted in a largely ethnocentric political debate, infected by extreme anti-communist sentiment,[71] over how the United States "lost China," which targeted some of America's best experts on China.

Despite the fall of the Berlin Wall, the reunification of Germany, and the disintegration of the former Soviet Union, ideological differences remain germane to present and future relations between China and the United States. The Chinese often criticize the United States for remaining ideologically oriented, while claiming China has moved beyond ideology to pursue a pragmatic modernization agenda devoid of Cold War ideology. They emphasize the socialist rather than the communist nature of post-Deng China, using the cumbersome, but politically correct phrase—"socialism with Chinese characteristics"—to describe the political nature of the present Chinese state. Further, they point out that China dropped its pursuit of global communism, while the United States continues to pursue global democratization.

Even though communism in China today lacks substance as a guiding ideology, it still retains the authoritarian domination of a tiny minority of communist party members. The CCP, which represents only 4.5 percent of the population, dominates over 50 percent of the positions in the Chinese government, and retains control over the commodities, regulations, and investment funds, which fuel the market economy.[72]

Further, as John W. Garver has argued, the CCP cadres, like the aristocratic Junkers of pre-World War I Germany, are ideologically anti-capitalist. The CCP pursues economic norms only to improve socialism, not transform it, and to

keep it firmly under the CCP dictatorship.[73] The CCP cadres, like the Junkers, form a closed elite system. New members are added, not based on open competition or merit, but "via a rigorous, top-down process of recommendation and sponsorship by existing members, together with . . . review of candidates' ideas, activities and social origins."[74]

In the United States, no new post-Cold War paradigm has emerged that would permit a dramatic abandonment of the goal to transform residual communism. If anything, the objectives of U.S. policy have been broadened to target all other nondemocratic authoritarian forms, such as Islamic-dominated states. Whether communism holds minority power over a tiny and impoverished island such as Cuba, or an unpredictable but fast declining country such as North Korea, or the fastest growing economy and one quarter of the world's population in China, the ultimate goal for the United States is to encourage the development of democracies and market economies.

The "change or die" attitude toward the CCP reflected in American policy has been characterized by the Chinese as the threat of Peaceful Evolution. Some American officials would take this goal even further, as Senator Jessie Helms has in his sponsorship of Radio Free Asia, by seeking nothing less than the speedy overthrow of the CCP, regardless of the consequences. Until and if Communist Party rule in China and/or the U.S. anti-communism paradigm are abandoned, ideology will likely persist as an important dynamic of the relationship.

PART TWO:
POLITICAL-MILITARY PERSPECTIVES

> On the American side . . . [a] lesson of the Korean War is that *ethnocentrism* assumed a vital role in U.S. strategic thinking on Korea. American officials demonstrated a strong tendency to see 'the other' through their own myths and values . . . American strategists emphasized U.S. technological superiority. American history itself fostered the perception of military invincibility . . . Trapped by its own self-image, the U.S. military hardly paid attention to the strategy and tactics of the Chinese Communist force.
>
> Shu Guang Zhang[75]

> With the decisive duel between China and the U.S. imperialists being inevitable, the question is where to do it . . . Korea as a battleground chosen by the imperialists is favorable to us . . . Here, we have the most favourable terrain, the closest communication to China, the most convenient material and manpower back-up . . . .
>
> Zhou Enlai[76]

Despite recent improvements, particularly since the October 1997 Presidential Summit, relations between the United States and China remain troubled and precarious. Potential problems over such issues as proliferation, human rights abuses, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and allegations of illegal Chinese influence buying hang over bilateral relations, threatening to precipitate another phase of isolation and hostility. At this juncture, and within the context of the two countries' opposing national security strategies (discussed above), it is instructive to review the outbreak of the Korean War as a case study of misperceptions between the United States and China leading to direct military conflict.

In his classic study, Robert Jervis[77] discussed the influence that perceptions and misperceptions have on international relations. He identified common mispercep-

tions in relations between state leaders, such as perception of centralization or overestimating one's importance as influence or target. He also discusses the influence that desires and fears can have on perceptions, and the effects of cognitive dissonance on international relations. He argued that greater awareness by leaders of common misperceptions may help minimize their negative effects on decisionmaking, which "often lead to an overestimation of the other's side's hostility."[78]

Jack Levy directly linked misperceptions to the causes of war[79] in their ability to lead to critical miscalculations. Foremost among these are misperceptions of an adversary's intentions or capabilities.[80] Others, such as misunderstandings of an adversary's perceptions, the nature of his decision-making process, and the "likely behavior and impact of third states,"[81] contribute to misperceptions of an adversary's intentions and capabilities.

Levy concluded that the most important misperceptions are "military overconfidence," which is based on an underestimation of an adversary's capabilities;[82] and "overestimation of the hostility of the adversary's intentions," which could lead to a "preemptive strike."[83] The outbreak of conflict between the United States and China in the Korean War provides an example of both these misperceptions, as well as misperceptions of third states, specifically China and the former Soviet Union.

The invasion of South Korea by North Korea in June 1950 shocked U.S. leadership. After the end of World War II, the United States remained focused on Europe, and, while the desperate need for reconstruction assistance to Korea was recognized, it was given a lower priority. U.S. forces were withdrawn from Korea in 1949, leaving behind ill-prepared South Korean forces to meet the threat from the better trained and better equipped North Korean People's Army (NKPA). Inattention was transformed overnight into a major commitment of combat forces to a conflict that

would last until 1953, as Korea became the test case and proving ground for East-West confrontation.

The Korean War helped reinforce the U.S. threat perception of the Soviet Union as a hostile power set on global domination and willing to employ any and all opportunities to exploit Western weaknesses. It also reinforced a belief that the Soviet Union, as the leader of the world communist movement, exercised direction and leadership over other communist states, including North Korea and the newly-established People's Republic of China (PRC). This U.S. perception of communist unity under Soviet leadership remained largely unquestioned throughout the early Cold War. Not until armed conflict broke out on the Sino-Soviet border in the late 1960s did the United States seriously reassess this view, thus paving the way for President Nixon's 1972 visit to China.

In Korea, the United States remained overwhelmingly concerned with the intentions and capabilities of the USSR, but failed to recognize how China, as an independent actor, might perceive and react to U.S. forces approaching the Yalu River in late 1950. With the benefit of analysis[84] of telegrams exchanged between Mao Zedong and Joseph Stalin that were released in the 1980s, as well as recent access to Soviet archives, we can assess that even though Mao Zedong and Joseph Stalin were aware of the planned North Korean invasion,[85] neither likely initiated the attack. Both appear to have had their own reservations about the plan.

In retrospect, we can determine that while the United States overestimated the USSR capability and intentions in Korea, it seriously underestimated those of the PRC. Even before the first Chinese offensive in November 1950, American intelligence officers in both Tokyo and Washington agreed on "three core propositions." First, they recognized that the Chinese were massing forces in Manchuria on the border with North Korea. Nonetheless, they concluded that the Chinese would not likely provide a

massive effort to the war, because, finally, they evaluated that the optimum time for Chinese forces to intervene to help the North Korean People's Army (NKPA) had passed because these forces were no longer combat effective.[86]

U.S. misperceptions of both Chinese capability and intentions, as well as a misperception of the role of the USSR, led to critical miscalculations on the battlefield. General Douglas MacArthur, Commander in Chief of the United Nations forces, jeopardized his stunningly victorious push north after the Inchon Landing when in November 1950 he ordered his forces to continue to push north to the Yalu River (the international border between Korea and China) and liberate all of North Korea. MacArthur believed (consistent with the intelligence assessments, as discussed above) that the Chinese would not "intervene in force . . .[he thought] the Chinese threats were purely diplomatic blackmail. All evidence that they were in Korea broke against this preset belief."[87] General Walton W. Walker, Commander Eighth Army, expressed the miscalculated confidence of American forces in November 1950 when he said, "We should not assume that Chinese Communists are committed in force. After all, a lot of Mexicans live in Texas."[88]

Conversely, based on recent analysis of telegrams and other documents released in the 1980s, Mao Zedong appears to have also misperceived U.S. intentions toward China, because he assumed war with the United States was inevitable.[89] At a CCP Politburo meeting on August 4, 1949, Mao concluded: "If the U.S. imperialists win [the war in Korea], they may get so dizzy with success that they may threaten us. We therefore must come to [North] Korea's aid and intervene in the name of a volunteer army."[90] Consequently, Mao ordered a counterattack in Korea to preempt expansion of the war into China.

Two additional miscalculations should also be examined. These occurred after the Chinese decision to intervene in the Korean War with the Chinese People's

Volunteers (CPV) forces. First, the U.S. forces failed to correctly assess the initial contact with the CPV. After their initial unexpected attack, the CPV suddenly withdrew during their first campaign on October 21-25. This withdrawal was either a tactical move to lure the enemy deeper as the commander, General Peng Dehuai claimed,[91] or (possibly) a last opportunity to cause the U.S. forces to pull back. Instead, the United States interpreted the withdrawal as a retreat and continued advancing to disastrous results in November. A second major miscalculation, similar to this, but made by the Chinese, occurred during the third Chinese campaign beginning in December 1950, when Chinese forces attempted to push further south in spite of overextended supply lines and exhausted forces. They were thrown back, and the war eventually settled into a series of see-saw, positional battles along the 38th parallel.

Some scholars,[92] as well as Chinese official pronouncements, have persistently argued that China's strategic culture is essentially nonthreatening. According to this argument, China was historically and will remain anti-imperialist in the future and will never seek hegemony, and will not likely seek to project global power beyond its normal sphere of influence within Asia. Alastair Johnston refutes this assumption,[93] demonstrating that there are actually two strategic cultures in Chinese tradition. One, the symbolic or ideal, is peaceful and nonviolent. The second, however, "argues that the best way of dealing with security threats is to eliminate them through the use of force."[94] What Johnston calls the "*parabellum* approach to conflict" in Chinese strategic culture offers an important perspective to consider when assessing Chinese strategic intentions and capabilities.

In the PRC's brief history it has demonstrated a willingness to use force when its national interests are threatened. Since its founding on October 1, 1949, the PRC has resorted to force no less than 12 times: takeover of Tibet (October 1950 - October 1951); Korean War (1950-53);

Taiwan Strait Crisis (1954-55); Second Taiwan Strait Crisis (1958); Sino-Indian Border War (1962); Vietnam War (1964-70); Sino-Soviet Border Clash (1969); Parcel Islands (1974); Sino-Vietnam Border War (1979); Sino-Indian Border Skirmishes (1986-87); Spratly Islands (1988); and Taiwan (1995).[95] To this list we must add two recent instances of the use of force by the Chinese: the Mischief Reef incident (in the fall of 1995) and the anti-Taiwan election exercises (March 1996).

The United States, however, has shown an even greater propensity to use military force or the threat of it to promote its own interests. During the March 1996 Chinese military exercises, which resulted in the effective blockade of north and south Taiwan ports, the U.S. military dispatched two aircraft carrier battle groups to the vicinity of Taiwan to demonstrate U.S. concern. One listing claims the United States has intervened militarily at least 114 times since 1890.[96] Interestingly, this list includes 12 domestic interventions and 6 separate incidents[97] of the use or threat of military force in China or against the Chinese military. The 1995 National Military Strategy (NMS) claims that the U.S. military has deployed about 40 times since 1989 to "assist in security or humanitarian crises."[98]

Since both countries have shown a willingness to use force to protect and promote their national interests and, at the same time, have also demonstrated an ability in both peace and war to miscalculate the other's intentions and capabilities, it makes the matter of national security between the two countries all the more serious and potentially dangerous, particularly as China's own comprehensive power provides it the means to stand up to the United States.

PART THREE:
PROSPECTS - A NEW PARADIGM?

> History tells us that both will reap the benefit from our cooperation while neither can escape the harm of our confrontation. Our people do not want to see stagnation or retrogression in bilateral relations. The right choice for us to make is to proceed from the reality of China-U.S. relations, take a global perspective and look into the next century, expand common ground, and overcome disturbances and difficulties in pushing the relations forward. Only in so doing can we bring benefits to our two peoples and make new contributions to world peace and development.
>
> Jiang Zemin[99]

> We have at times in the past been enemies. We have great differences . . . As we discuss our differences, neither of us will compromise our principles. But while we cannot close the gulf between us, we can try to bridge it so that we may be able to talk across it . . . What legacy shall we leave our children? Are they destined to die for the hatreds which have plagued the old world, or are they destined to live because we had the vision to build a new world?
>
> Richard Nixon[100]

Both sides periodically argue (as if they are trying to convince themselves and/or domestic audiences) that there are important bilateral interests that bind the United States and China. Theoretically, these common interests should transcend negative factors in state relations, and eventually lessen the tendency toward a boom-bust cycle. The development of mature, cooperative relations, however, will remain protracted and doubtful for the foreseeable future. Quick fixes and major breakthroughs are largely self-delusions and will be few and far between without a common enemy or other factors to submerge the negative elements of U.S.-China relations.

As the new century approaches, both China and the United States remain locked in their respective perceptions of the past and how U.S.-China relationships are or should be. U.S. policy and special interest groups present a shifting and confusing mixed bag of approaches and concerns, which, with no small amount of patronizing, hope to "save" the Chinese people from their own authoritarian government, protect them from human rights abuses, provide them with freedom of religion, protect them against coercive abortions without providing any alternative to a crushing population problem, and promote independence for minority groups, such as the Tibetans, regardless of the consequence to internal unity. There are still many who would like to expunge communism once and for all from China. These people only see that the Chinese Communist Party remains in power. They do not appreciate the Party's historic link to Chinese independence and its ability to stand up to the West after over a century of failures. They also do not appreciate that, although the CCP retains power, it already lacks ideological meaning having been discredited by the Cultural Revolution and, since the successful modernization drive began in 1979, co-opted into the socialist market economy, which in substance, if not form, is essentially a variant on capitalism.

For their part, the Chinese leadership, beset with internal problems and the seemingly endless issue of leadership succession, is only too willing to blame the United States for its problems, recalling 19th century Western oppression and victimization whenever pressure is applied. At the same time that they demand special treatment and consideration, they also demand respect and regard commensurate with all great powers. They see conspiracy, plots, and grand designs on the part of the United States, even when a coherent U.S. policy is lacking.

Both China and the United States frequently resort to warnings, ostracism, and threats of punishment when frustrated by their dealings with one another. Both even willingly neglect relations, viewing state-to-state contacts

more as a reward for good behavior than part of normal bilateral relations.

Although many would blame the latest disruption in U.S.-China relations on Tiananmen, mutual uncertainty had already crept into the relationship by the late 1980s, if not earlier, as *detente* between the United States and the former Soviet Union undermined the rationale for U.S.-China rapprochement. Prior to Tiananmen, some Chinese even lost sight of common interests that would make relations with the United States important. In 1988, for example, when the translation of Paul Kennedy's *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers* became a best seller in China, it was common to hear how the United States "needed" China far more than China needed the United States. Those who hold this view argued that the United States, as a declining power, needed China's cheap labor and investment opportunities in order to help prop up its economy and help pay for its massive national debt. According to this argument, China could certainly make use of U.S. technology and investment, but if the United States would not provide them, China could turn to other sources.[101]

The list of mutual interests often cited by both sides includes such idealistic interests as world and regional peace, stability, and prosperity, as well as specific common interests, such as trade and promoting peace and stability in Korea. The United States has spelled out in the NSS its own separate addendum of such diverse national interests as nonproliferation, protection of individual property rights, human rights, and environmental protection. The list of reasons for contacts with the United States on the Chinese side is more focused. China primarily seeks U.S. technology, investment, enforcement of the Three Joint Communiques,[102] an end to U.S. arms sales and other support to Taiwan, and American respect for China. Unfortunately, none of these interests, whether or not recognized by both parties, resonates in the same way that a common enemy did in the past. None of these has yet been

sufficiently strong to set relations on a stable and enduring foundation.

As we find ourselves in yet another period of improved atmospherics and high expectations for change, it is sobering to remember that nothing has fundamentally changed in the relationship. Recent improvements may prove to be only the lull in the storm rather than a manifestation of fundamental change in the bilateral relationship. But is it realistic to expect fundamental change? What, if anything, can be done to break out of the boom-bust paradigm?

Of all the issues dividing the two countries, Taiwan offers the greatest potential for near-term military conflict. Another Taiwan crisis could directly lead to hostilities, entangling the United States in dangerous ways. The Chinese military, for example, could perceive that a preemptive strike in the form of a missile attack, blockade, or internal sabotage is vital to the preservation of China's national sovereignty. The basis for the military attack may already exist. Taiwan's relentless drive for "international space" and its recent abolition of the position of governor effectively removes the remaining pretense that Taiwan is a province of China, rather than a *de facto* country.

Under these circumstances, Beijing could conclude, as Mao did in 1950 in Korea, that China has no choice but to intervene militarily in Taiwan. Chinese leaders could assume that striking quickly to punish Taiwan would be an acceptable risk, because the United States would not likely intervene when presented with a *fait accompli.* Although it is impossible to predict what would happen in such a crisis, there is good reason to believe that a preemptive military strike, blockade, or sabotage against Taiwan would lead to miscalculation on China's part, and that military action against Taiwan would likely precipitate a military reaction from the United States, as occurred in March 1996.

On the other hand, American misperceptions, specifically underestimation of China's military capability

and intentions toward Taiwan, could lead to miscalculation, which could precipitate conflict. America's strong support of the Taiwanese government, continued arms sales, and recent statements by high-ranking political figures that the United States would defend Taiwan[103] could inadvertently encourage increasingly provocative actions by President Lee Teng-hui. These actions could become the catalyst for Chinese military preemptive action against Taiwan, even though many American analysts judge China ill-prepared, or assume that such action would be counterproductive to China's national interests, and, therefore, least likely in the near term.

Although prospects for good relations between the United States and China are questionable at this point, conflict can still be avoided. Unforeseen events and incidents could even shift the United States and China closer together, once more submerging differences in much the same way as the strategic convergence China and the United States achieved in the 1970s to counterbalance the former Soviet Union. A resurgent Russia or other power, or the spread of a Muslim-fundamentalist revolution through Central Asia into China's western Xinjiang Province, for example, could provide the basis for renewed strategic cooperation.

Even without compelling outside strategic forces to bind them closer together, the United States and China have the opportunity to avoid conflict and reshape Sino-American relations into the next century. For this to happen, peace over the long term must be a genuine goal of both countries. Both must recognize the risks of conflict and the benefits of enduring peace. The efforts of one country, no matter how well orchestrated or sophisticated, are insufficient to ensure peace between China and the United States. Pursuit of genuine peace must not be, nor must it be perceived to be, merely a near-term objective used as a tactical ploy by either country to prepare for future confrontation. Such a strategy could be a self-fulfilling prophesy, exponentially

fueling distrust and precipitating conflict over the long term.

If China, for example, uses (or is perceived to use) near-term peace with the United States only as a means to develop more comprehensive power and military projection capability in order to promote national interests directly hostile to the United States over the long term, such as military enforcement of sovereignty over Taiwan or the South China Seas, it would likely undermine peace. Conversely, if the United States uses (or is perceived to use) peace as a guise to evaluate China's intentions and capabilities, in order to hedge its bets against a future China threat by attempting to enmesh China within the international system before it achieves peer power status, this also could undermine peace.

China's intense secrecy over all national security matters, a historical view of itself as the only injured party rather than a contributor to problems in state-to-state relations, as well as a deep suspicion of malevolent plots and grand strategy on the part of the United States, help feed distrust, miscommunication, and misperceptions between the two countries. China's sometimes petulant demands for international respect, combined with demands for special or compensatory treatment, make it difficult for many in the United States to regard China with a level of respect that characterizes U.S. relations with European countries, for example.

For their part, U.S. leaders should recognize that the U.S. *National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement* directly threatens non-Western cultures. The United States should at least recognize that many, including the Chinese, perceive the promotion of democracy and human rights as low cost containment by another name. Although there may be convergence of international agreement on human rights, the U.S.'s failure to embrace other world views now will only undermine its position, particularly if its power declines in relative terms over the

long term. Further, the unquestioned assumption that enmeshing China in the Western international order, to influence its behavior, has yet to prove to be more than wishful thinking.

Both countries need a better understanding of one another's world views and political nature. When China sees the United States as a conspiratorial, unified actor, ruled by an anti-Chinese press, it fails to understand the complexities of the American balance of power system, the role of special interest groups, and the romantic (if somewhat hypocritical) American notion of international norms and Western values. Consequently, the United States tends to project its values on China, expecting "normal, rational" and Western behavior from the Chinese, when the Chinese value other things (such as stability).

Although it is wrong for the Chinese or the Americans to project each country's own views on the other, it is equally wrong to assume both countries are too different. If both countries are ever to break the boom-bust cycle in U.S.-China relations, state relations must mature to a level of mutual respect. Greater knowledge and experience can help, especially if they cut across a wider range of the public.

One lesson of history is clear—the world is continually changing. The polarization of the Cold War era obscured this principle. Power relationships will shift:

> so far as the international system is concerned, wealth and power, or economic strength and military strength, are always relative . . . and since all societies are subject to the inexorable tendency to change, then the international balances can never be still, and it is a folly of statesmanship to assume that they ever will be.[104]

Both the United States and China will have to build a mature and cooperative relationship within the reality of change in the future.

ENDNOTES

1. Roberto Suro, "Hill Panels to Probe China Influence-Buying Allegations," *The Washington Post*, February 17, 1997, p. A6.

2. The elements of power can be distinguished between

> . . . natural determinants (geography, resources, and population) [which] are concerned with the number of people in a nation and with their physical environment. The social determinants (economic, political, military, and national morale) concern the ways in which the people of a nation organize themselves and the ways in which they alter their environment.

David Jablonsky, "National Power," *Resident Course 2*, Vol. 1, Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1993, pp. 50-82, quoted on p. 2-23, *Non-resident Course 2*, Vol. II.

3. See, for example, Jack S. Levy, "Misperception and the Causes of War: Theoretical Linkages and Analytical Problems," *World Politics*, Vol. 37, No. 1, p. 76-99.

4. China faces profound domestic problems, such as poverty, overpopulation, resource shortages, restructuring of unprofitable state enterprises, and internal instability (from Muslim and Tibetan minorities), for examples, that will affect China's rise as a great power in the 21st century.

5. China's military remains generations behind the United States and will unlikely be able to achieve parity with it within the next 50 years based on current projections. See Allen, Caldwell, Eikenberry, and Henley for these assessments.

6. Liu Zongren, *Two Years in the Melting Pot*, San Francisco: China Books and Periodicals, Inc., 1988, p. 208.

7. Bill Holm, *An Alphabet of China Essays: Coming Home Crazy*, Minneapolis: Milweed Editions, 1990, p. 20.

8. David L. Hall and Roger T. Ames, *Anticipating China: Thinking through the Narratives of Chinese and Western Culture*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995.

9. *Ibid*., p. xvii.

10. *Ibid*.

11. *Ibid*., p. xviii.

12. Ching-ning Chu, author of *The Chinese Mind Game—The Best Kept Secret of The East*, interview on The Learning Channel's Great Books Series, "Sunzi - The Art of War," 1996.

13. The Chinese commonly say they have over 5,000 years of continuous history, which coincides with the earliest known dynasty, the Xia (2200-1750 BC). Westerners often use 3,000 years as a benchmark, which is up to the Shang Dynasty (1750-1040 BC), which followed the Xia.

14. Personal interviews, 1988-89.

15. Ames and Hall, p. 182.

16. White House, *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement*, February 1996.

17. *Ibid*., p. i.

18. *Ibid*., p. ii.

19. The White House, *A National Security Strategy for a New Century*, May 1997, p. 19.

20. *Ibid*.

21. The other two objectives being to enhance U.S. security with effective diplomacy and with military forces that can fight and win, and to bolster America's economic prosperity. *Ibid*., p. i.

22. *Ibid*., p. 19.

23. The Chinese government claims sovereignty over four island atoll groups in the South China Sea—the Pratas Islands and Reefs, the Paracel Islands, the Macclesfield Bank, and the Spratly Islands. Claims of Chinese sovereignty first appeared in Western records in the late 19th century, during the late Qing Dynasty. Marwyn S. Samuels, *Conquest for the South China Seas*, New York: Methuen, 1982.

24. Quoted on p. 197, Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1990.

25. *Ibid*.

26. *Ibid*.

27. John King Fairbanks, *The Chinese Revolution: 1800-1985*, New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1986, p. 100.

28. Deng Xiaoping, *Building Socialism With Chinese Characteristics*, Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1985.

29. *Ibid*., p. 3.

30. Zhang, Ming, *Chinese Foreign Policy in Transition*, Washington, DC: 1995 Topical Symposium, National Defense University, November 1995, p. 2.

31. *Ibid*.

32. I would like to thank David Finkelstein for his insights on this discussion.

33. "Breaking a Spell," *Asiaweek*, September 27, 1996, p. 29.

34. Dennison I. Rusinow, "Whatever Happened to the 'Trieste Question'?—Defusing a Threat to World Peace," American Universities Field Staff Inc., 1969, quoted on p. 201, *Army War College Class of 1997 Conflict Termination and Military Operations Other Than War Directive and Lesson Book*, January 1997.

35. Harold R. Isaacs, *Scratches On Our Minds: American Views of China and India*, New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1980. For American views of China during the 1930s and 1940s, see T. Christopher Jespersen, *American Images of China, 1931-1949*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996.

36. *Ibid*., p. 71.

37. Steven W. Mosher, *China Perceived: American Illusions and Chinese Reality*, New York: Basic Books, 1990.

38. Referenced in R. Arkush and Leo O. Lee, eds., *Land Without Ghosts: Chinese Impressions of America from the Mid-Nineteenth Century to the Present*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989, p. 301.

39. *Ibid*., p. 19.

40. *Ibid*., p. 302. Xu, who never visited the United States, was a great admirer of George Washington for his leadership of the successful

revolution against British rule and his decision to retire to private life after office, which appealed to Chinese meritocracy ideals. He wrote favorable accounts of the American political system, based on information he gathered in China, which remained highly influential for decades.

41. Arkush and Lee, p. 8.

42. John King Fairbanks, *The United States and China*, 4th ed., Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976, p. 319.

43. *Ibid*.

44. In the early 1990s in Beijing, it was common to hear reporters complain that editors did not want to publish positive stories about China. Even reports of budding grass roots democracy did not interest editors. Although the media have finally picked up on village elections, the trend toward negative and exotic reporting still is prominent. In 1996, however, the Chinese official press matched, if not exceeded, negative reporting in the United States.

45. *Ibid*.

46. John W. Dower investigates this racial element in *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific,* New York: Pantheon Books, 1986. Examining the racial aspects of the war between Japan and the United States, he observes the negative racial stereotyping that occurred on both sides, and notes how quickly and easily these

> patterns of thinking . . . were transferred laterally and attached to the new enemies of the cold-war era: the Soviets and Chinese Communists, the Korean foe of the early 1950s, the Vietnamese enemy of the 1960 and 1970s, and hostile third-world movements in general.

Ibid., p. 14.

47. The Mongols invaded China and established the Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368).

48. John King Fairbanks, *The Great Chinese Revolution, 1800-1985*, Philadelphia: Harper and Row, Publishers, Inc., 1986, p. 138. Also see Peter Fleming, *The Siege at Peking*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.

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