CHINA IN THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER

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**Paper outline**

**Aims and objectives**

This paper provides an application of international relations and international political economy theories to the case study of China’s decline, isolation, and rise in global politics and market over the past century and half. Reassessing power transition, economic integration, and institution-building theories developed in the Western historical context, the paper prepares students to take a critical view on one of the most systemic shift of our time – the rise of China as the world’s largest economy with great power aspirations. Combining historical and theoretical perspectives, this course will examine major events and issues that have created pressures and opportunities for China’s foreign relations, market expansion, corporate internationalization, military modernization, and influence in international organizations.

**Mode of teaching**

The paper consists of eighteen lectures by KC Lin plus two guest lectures by Commander Ian Park and Ms Qinyi Xu: with twelve lectures in Michaelmas term (one per week 1-4, and two per week 5-8) and eight lectures in Lent term (one per week). In addition, there will be one revision class in Easter term.

**Supervisions**

The paper organiser will organise supervisions. Students are expected to write six essays for this paper. Each essay is expected to represent 4-5 days of intense work on your chosen topic. Essays should be at least 2,000 words. They should be word-processed, double-spaced, paginated, and include a bibliography and references for citations and quotations. You must proof read your essays thoroughly before submitting them.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any student found plagiarising supervision essays will be reported to his or her college. Students are expected to have read the Faculty’s statement on plagiarism.

**Mode of assessment**

There will be a three hour unseen examination paper in the Easter term, in which students will be required to answer three questions. Students will be expected to apply international relations theories discussed in the first two lectures in answering the questions.

**Readings**

The readings under the lectures are divided into *essential* for the supervision essay, and *recommended* for students who want to explore the weekly topics in greater depth.

When you go through the readings, do so with a critical eye. Always try to answer these (and similar)
questions: What is the question that the author is trying to answer? What outcome is being explained? What factors cause the outcome? How do these factors cause the outcome? What type of evidence is used to support the argument? How good is that evidence? Have some important factors/considerations been left out? Are there alternative explanations that are just as plausible?

The SPS library will have most of the specified readings; others will be available at the UL. Many of the specified books are also available in the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Library and the Department of History library on the Sidgwick site. Many articles can be accessed electronically through the course website on Moodle. It is also possible to get online access to articles by obtaining a password from the University Library (see www.lib.cam.ac.uk/electronicresources).

The following books provide helpful general introductions to the Chinese foreign policy history, economic development, and contemporary issues:

Shaun Breslin, ed., Handbook of China’s International Relations.


Kerry Brown, The Future of UK-China Relations: The Search for a New Model.

Jae Ho Chung, ed. Assessing China’s Power.


Frank Pieke, Knowing China: A Twenty-First Century Guide.

David Shambaugh and Michael Yahuda, eds. International Relations of Asia.


Jonathan Spence, The Search for Modern China.

Robert Sutter, Chinese Foreign Relations.


Reading list

China in the International Order

There are no formal prerequisites for this paper, although students who have taken Pol 2 (International Relations) in Part I of the HSPS Tripos would revisit many theories and themes in a new empirical context. It would be helpful for you to read widely on Chinese history, political economy, diplomacy, and follow current debates. If you could use more background information, or would be interested in further in-depth analysis or an introduction to specialised topics, please alert Dr Lin as soon as possible and he will provide additional readings.

The course starts with two survey lectures on the applications of international relations theories to China’s ascendance in global economy and politics. Thematically, the remaining eighteen lectures are divided into three parts: The Fall of the Traditional Order and Communist Experiment (Lectures 3-6), China’s Incorporation into the American World Order (Lectures 7-13), Defining a Great Power (Lectures 14-20).

Theoretical Perspectives on China as a Rising Power

Lectures 1 & 2: Introduction & IR Theories on Rising China

Essential

• Browse various special issues (mostly edited by Yan Xuetong) of the The Chinese Journal of International Politics for insights into Chinese academic debates on Western IR theories

Recommended


Peter Katzenstein, “China’s Rise: Return, Rupture or Recombination?” in Peter Katzenstein and Takashi Shiraishi, eds., *Beyond Japan, the Dynamics of East Asian Regionalism* (Cornell University 2006).

Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from*...


Essay
Identify the premises of two variants of power transition theories on China’s rise since the end of the Cold War, and propose some evidence that may refute these theories.

**PART I: The Fall of the Traditional Order and Communist Experiment**

**Lecture 3: From the Tributary System to the Great Divergence**

**Essential**


**Recommended**

Warren Cohen, *East Asia at the Center, Four Thousand Years of Engagement with the World*, (Columbia 2000), Chapters 1-7.


R. Bin Wong, *China Transformed: Historical Change and the Limits of European Experience* (Cornell 2000).


**Essay**

Chinese leaders in recent years have argued that imperial China had typically pursued peaceful diplomacy with its neighbours. Assess this historical generalization by examining the elite philosophy, strategy, and structural relationships of the Middle Kingdom to other suzerainties in the region.

**Lecture 4: Adaptations under Imperialism**

**Essential**

- Suisheng Zhao, “Failed Multilateralism in the Age of Imperialism”, in *Power Competition in East Asia: From the Old Chinese World Order to Post-Cold War Regional Multipolarity* (St. Martin’s Press 1998)

**Recommended**


**Essay**

How did the Chinese foreign policymakers attempt to mediate foreign interests given the country’s position of relative weakness to imperial powers from the late-1800s to 1949?

**Lecture 5: “Leaning to One Side” and Independence during the Cold War**

**Essential**


**Recommended**


**Essay**

What was Mao Zedong’s degree of freedom in foreign diplomacy within the Moscow-led Communist International? Discuss with references to the Korean War, the Taiwan Strait Crises, the Bandung Conference, and/or other major Chinese diplomatic initiatives.

**Lecture 6: Rapprochement via Ping-Pong Diplomacy**

**Essential**


**Recommended**


John Garver, Foreign Relations of the People’s Republic of China (Prentice Hall 1993), Chapter 5.


Zhihua Shen and Danhui Li, After Leaning to One Side: China and Its Allies in the Cold War (Stanford 2011).


Suisheng Zhao, “The Deterioration of the Bipolar System” and “The Dynamics of the Strategic Triangle”, in Power Competition in East Asia: From the Old Chinese World Order to Post-Cold War Regional Multipolarity (St. Martin’s Press 1998).

Essay

Were the causes of the dramatic shift in Sino-American relations in the early 1970s mainly domestic (re: US and/or to China) or regional and international?

PART II: China’s Incorporation into the American World Order

Lecture 7: US-China Relations – Far from the “End of History”

Essential


**Recommended**


https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/b9ad/5c29be85e8e95a3a344e945394e5998fa.pdf.


Zheng, Yongnian, Liang Fook Lye, Gang Chen, et al., *China's Foreign Policy in 2012: Responding to the US Pivot to Asia and Territorial Disputes with its Neighbours* (Singapore, East Asian Institute, National University of Singapore, 2012).


*Bonus readings on the US-PRC trade-war in 2018-9:*


Tai Ming Cheung, “Introduction: The Emergence of Direct US–China Defense Technological Competition”, UC San Diego SITC Research Briefs, 2017:
https://escholarship.org/uc/item/4j31w315


China’s advantages in a protracted trade war (Op-ed article), Global Times, July 15, 2018, http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1110911.shtml

Essay

How has the global financial and economic crisis since 2008 changed the core interests, contentious issues, and relative bargaining positions of the US and China? Discuss with reference to two specific issues.

Lecture 8: Shop Floor of the World: East Asian Developmental States and Deng’s Economic Reform

Essential


Recommended

Giovanni Arrighi, Adam Smith in Beijing (Verso books 2007).


Doug Guthrie, China and globalization: The social, economic and political transformation of Chinese society (Routledge 2012).


Essay

How comparable is China’s export-oriented industrialization strategy in the 1990s-2000s to the developmental experience of the East Asian “tigers” in previous decades?

Lecture 9: Running Surpluses - Trade and Foreign Direct Investment

Essential

• Shaun Breslin, China and the Global Political Economy (Palgrave 2007), Chapters 3-4.
• Wanda Tseng and Markus Rodlauer, ed., China: Competing in the Global Economy (IMF 2003), Chapters 5, 6, 7, 12.

Recommended


Barry Naughton, *The China Circle: Economics and Technology in the PRC, Taiwan, and Hong Kong* (Brookings Institution Press 1997).


Min Ye, *Diasporas and Foreign Direct Investment in China and India* (CUP 2014).


**Essay**

What are the fundamental causes of China’s export-dependency? What kinds of vulnerability do they cause, and what measures are the Chinese policymakers taking to move on to an alternative basis of growth?

**Lecture 10: China in the Post-WWII Liberal Economic Order**

**Essential**

Available at:


**Recommended**


Nina Hachigian, with Winny Chen and Christopher Beddor, *China’s New Engagement in the International System: In the ring, but punching below its weight*. Centre for American Progess, November 2009.


Ann Kent, “China and International Organizations: From Alienation to Integration,” in *Beyond*


Helen Thompson, China and the Mortgaging of America: Economic Interdependence and Domestic Politics (Palgrave 2010).

Luolin Wang, China's WTO Accession Reassessed (Routledge 2015).


Ka Zeng and Wei Liang, eds., China and Global Trade Governance: China’s Ten Year Experience in the WTO (Routledge 2013).


Essay

Has China thus far largely conformed to the norms and practices of international organizations led by the US and its allies? Discuss with respect to at least one global economic governance institution.

Lecture 11: Coping with Regional and Global Financial Crises

Essential

- Andrew Sheng, From Asian to Global Financial Crisis (CUP 2009), Chapter 11.
• Gregory Chow, *China as a Leader of the World Economy* (World Scientific 2011), chap 13

**Recommended**


How had China’s domestic policy responses to global and regional financial crises affected the stability of global goods and financial markets?

**Lecture 12: Sino-Russian Relations since the end of the Cold War**

**Essential**

- Updated commentaries at theasiadialogue.com

**Recommended**


**Lecture 13: China-Southeast Asia Relations**

**Essential**


Recommended


Amitav Acharya, Constructing a security community in Southeast Asia: ASEAN and the problem of regional order (Routledge 2014), Chapter 2.


CSIS, Power and Order in Asia, and Decoding China’s Emerging “Great Power” Stratgy in Asia. 2014.


Nicholas Khoo and Michael L.R. Smith, David Shambaugh. “Correspondence: China Engages Asia?


Akira Suehiro, “China’s offensive in Southeast Asia: regional architecture and the process of Sinicization”, *Journal of Contemporary East Asia Studies* 6:2 (2017): 107-131,


**Essay**

What is the role of narratives in international relations? How do regional responses affect China’s rising to great power status and power competition (i.e. US-China relations) in the Asia-Pacific?

*PART III: Defining a Great Power*

**Lecture 14: “The China Model” as Global Discourse**

**Essential**

- The China Model debate in *Journal of Contemporary China* Volume 26, Issue 1, Jan 2017

**Recommended**


Daniel Slater and Joseph Wong, “The Strength to Concede: Ruling Parties and Democratization in Developmental Asia,” *Perspectives on Politics* 11/3 (September 2013:717-733

https://www.ecfr.eu/publications/summary/grands_designs_does_china_have_a_grand_strateg y


Essay

Why is the China Model or Beijing Consensus a threat to the West? Does the model/consensus need to be coherent and sustainable to provide a challenge to Western liberalism?

Lecture 15: “Going Out” – Internationalizing Chinese Companies

Essential

• Kōichi Sakamoto, Japan and China: A Contest in Aid to Sub-Saharan Africa (Singapore, World Scientific Publishing Co. Pte Ltd, 2018). Chap 1

Recommended


Ian Taylor, *China’s New Role in Africa* (Lynne Rienner Publishers 2009).


**Essay**

What are domestic market and policy causes for Chinese firms to invest abroad? How important is Beijing’s economic and security diplomacy in affecting firm investment and operational decisions?

**Lecture 16: The New Silk Road - Energy Security and Transport Connectivity**

**Essential**

- Aaron L. Friedberg, ”’Going Out’: China’s Pursuit of Natural Resources and Implications for the PRC’s Grand Strategy”, *NBR Analysis* 17(3), September 2006.

**Recommended**


Francois Godement, “One Belt, One Road, China’s Great Leap Outward”, *China Analysis*, ECFR June 2015.


**Essay**

China’s pursuit of energy security abroad and its strategic approach to great power competitions are two foreign policy objectives in tension. Discuss with reference to at least one Asian region.

**Lecture 17: Sovereignty at Sea - Regionalism and Maritime Disputes (guest lecture by**
Commander Ian Park of the Royal Navy

Essential


Recommended


CSIS Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative: https://amti.csis.org/


Wu Shicun and Nong Hong, ed., *Recent Developments in the South China Sea Dispute* (Ashgate 2014).

**Essay**

What are the fundamental interests driving China and its neighbours to attempt cooperation over maritime issues?

**Lecture 18: Being a Responsible Power – Peacekeeping**

**Essential**


**Recommended**


Jochen Prantl and Ryoko Nakano, “Global norm diffusion in East Asia: How China and Japan
implement the responsibility to protect”, *International Relations* 25.2 (2011): 204-223.


**Essay**

What general lessons have the Chinese taken away from China’s participation in multilateral peacekeeping missions?

**Lecture 19: Being a Responsible Power – Climate Change (guest lecture by Qinyi Xu)**

**Essential**


**Recommended**


Samuel Corwin and Timothy L. Johnson, “The Role of Local governments in the Development of
• Yan Xuetong, “From Keeping a Low Profile to Striving for Achievement,” The Chinese Journal of International Politics 7:2 (Summer 2014).
• David Shambaugh, China’s Future. Polity 2016.

Recommended


Yong Deng, China’s Struggle for Status: The Realignment of International Relations (Cambridge 2008).


Kai He, *China’s Crisis Behavior: Political Survival and Foreign Policy after the Cold War*. CUP 2016.


David Kang, *China Rising: Peace, Power, and Order in East Asia* (Columbia 2007).


**Essay**

Does China have a grand strategy for overtaking the US? And if so, what are its inspirations/sources?

**End of Lectures**

**One Revision Class**

In this class, the lecturer will address questions from students.
Past Exam Papers and Reports

2019

1) How might different schools of international relations theory explain the current trade war between the United States and China?

2) How did the Sinocentric worldview of the Qing elite shape their reactions to the European imperialist threat in the 19th Century?

3) What caused the critical change in Beijing’s perception of threat from the US and USSR in the 1960s?

4) Describe American strategies to integrate China into the Western-centric international global order in the 1980s and 1990s, and offer your assessment of the outcome.

5) How closely does China conform to the post-World War II experience of economic development in the East Asian developmental state?

6) What are the economic and political logic behind renminbi (Chinese yuan) internationalization?

7) Why has China become more assertive of its maritime sovereignty and territorial claims since 2009?

8) It has been argued that the US has undermined international organisations and agreements on trade, climate change, and weapons proliferation through unilateral actions. Evaluate this view and explain the impact on China’s rise in global politics.

9) Has China been a constructive partner in Asian regionalism? Discuss with reference to specific issue areas.

10) Is more outward direct investment always good for China’s national interest?

11) Is China’s increasing commitment to UN peacekeeping consistent with its core principles in international relations? Discuss with reference to either non-interventionism or anti-hegemony.

12) Can China be a credible leader of a political bloc of less developed countries in global affairs?

2017

1) Suggest how the United States could accommodate China’s military modernization in the Asian region with reference to realist or international society theories of International Relations.

2) Assess China’s approach to regional economic governance and diplomatic relations around the middle of the 19th century.
3) Identify two important lessons of Western imperialism and ‘one hundred years of humiliation’ for China’s long-term state-building and economic development.

4) How did US-USSR relations during the Cold War shape Mao Zedong’s options in international affairs in the 1950s and 1960s?

5) Who benefited the most strategically from the Sino-American rapprochement?

6) How was China’s rapid economic development in the 1980s and 1990s seen by its neighbours in Asia?

7) How did the 2008 global financial and economic crisis affect China’s assessment of its own developmental model?

8) Are interest group conflicts within the US and China destabilising US-China trade relations?

9) To what extent are political conflicts and military build-ups in the South China Sea since 2011 a direct consequence of President Obama’s policy of the ‘US pivot to Asia’?

10) Is the concept of ‘revisionism’ applicable to China’s approach to multilateral agreements on trade and finance? Analyse with reference to ONE of the following regimes: 1) the World Trade Organisation; 2) the World Bank; 3) the International Monetary Fund; 4) the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum and the ASEAN–China Free Trade Area (ACFTA).

11) How closely do increasing economic ties align with China’s national interests in EITHER African, OR Latin American, OR South Asian developing countries in the 21st century?

12) To what extent and why has China’s approach and commitment to global climate change mitigation negotiation changed over the past two decades?

2016

1. Discuss how the different schools of realism inform the foreign policy of the United States towards China.

2. How did the tributary system up to the 19th Century structure China’s diplomatic and external economic relations?

3. What is the legacy of Western imperialism on Chinese national interests in the 20th century? Discuss with reference to one or two of the following areas: a) economic development, b) sovereignty and territorial integrity, c) legal and political development, and d) international cooperation?

4. Was being a Communist country a major constraint on China’s foreign policy from 1949 to 1972?

5. Analyse the strategic objectives of Mao Zedong and Richard Nixon, respectively, in entering into the US-USSR-PRC “strategic triangle”.
6. How did the first Gulf War (1990-1) and 9/11 (2001) affect China’s strategic interests and military doctrines?

7. Discuss developmental and political problems with China’s increasing dependence of economic growth on exports since the late 1990s.

8. Is China playing by the existing “rules of the game” in participating in international society? Discuss with reference to one or two of the following multilateral regimes: a) the World Trade Organisation, b) the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, c) UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, and d) UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

9. Is China’s economic development after 1978 characterised by exceptionalism or can parallels be drawn with the developmental experience of other nations?

10. Are the motivations of the Chinese government and firms different in investing in developed and developing countries?

11. Explain China’s contribution to UN peacekeeping through realist and/or liberal institutionalist theories.

12. According to power transition and/or international society theories, is the United States likely to be accommodating of China’s rise? If so, how would accommodation be achieved?

Examiner’s Report 2019

Pol 21 – The nineteen exam takers as a whole performed admirably well for a course that covers historical and contemporary issues, and spans regional and theoretical perspectives. Students averaged 66.96 on their final exam, which falls within the range of expected average for HSPS Part II modules. The highest mark was 75; lowest was 56. Five students received First Class marks. Students in the 2.1 cohort demonstrated strong empirical knowledge and aptitude in reference to theories and authors. The main issue for them was incomplete arguments, neglecting to cover important aspects of the topic raised in lectures. Two questions out of twelve were answered by a majority of students, and two received no response, other responses reflected the diverse interests of students in the topics and approaches in the syllabus.

Examiner’s Report 2017

Pol 19 – The twenty-two students as a whole performed admirably well for a course that required them to develop regional expertise and apply theories of international relations and political economy. Responding to changes in the syllabus and examination requirements from the first/last year of the course, students averaged 68 on their final exam with six of them scoring over 70. The standard deviation is low at 4.5 reflecting a relatively equally motivated student body and quality of supervision. The examiner and assessor were largely in agreement over marks, which is an encouraging sign that the students are tested on core knowledge that can be validated by non-China specialists. There remains some unevenness in the distribution of questions answered, with Q6 showing no taker – however, again, it shows an improvement over last year’s distribution.
Examiner’s Report 2016

We marked thirty (30) scripts. Students were free to choose four out of twelve questions on the exam. This is the inaugural year of this module and the final exam. The average mark was around 66. Eight scripts received an agreed mark of 70 or above, and no one failed. The standard deviation was initially below the expectation of 6, due to what we perceive to be a fairly uniform level of general competence of the answers. Questions 5, 9 and 10 received disproportional numbers of answers, while question 6 had no taker. The scripts were stronger in the historical analysis of Chinese foreign policy orientation during the Cold War, China’s recent positions in international regimes, and in determinants of Chinese overseas direct investment and contribution to UN peacekeeping operations. While generally capable of relating to international relations theories, most students seemed to have avoided questions that directly asked for applications of main schools of IR theories to a specific issue (Q1 on US-China relations and Q12 on hegemonic power transition). The most common criticisms for the exam scripts centered on two problems: 1) a superficial understanding of realist, liberal-institutional, and constructivist theories and associated hypotheses. We sense that students have forgotten quite a bit of the fundamentals of Pol 2 despite reminders in lectures. 2) A lack of specificity in identifying foreign policy actors and their interests in relations to the context of the questions. As a result the explanations veered toward being static and oversimplified. This problem was found in the 2.2 exams, and may derive from a lack of attention to the required readings, or inadequate reflections on how countries’ strategic calculus and policy options evolve over time.