

HERTOG 2018 SUMMER COURSES

CHINESE GRAND STRATEGY

Daniel Blumenthal, scholar, American Enterprise Institute

This course is a research seminar in Chinese grand strategy and foreign policy. We will explore major continuities and discontinuities in China's approach to the world from the height of the Qing Empire through 2016 (a period roughly equivalent to the existence of the United States). And we will examine how current Chinese strategy seeks to shape its future.

As the People's Republic of China rises to preeminence in world affairs, it is critical that U.S. strategists have a deeper understanding of how China's strategy and statecraft has developed over its thousands of years of history. What makes Chinese strategy unique is the fact that China is both a civilization and a nation-state – or “a civilization pretending to be a nation-state” as sinologist Lucian Pye has described it. It has a strong sense of how the world should be ordered. It is also the only country in the world that still rules most of its imperial territories.

Throughout China's strategic history, it has faced critical turning points. Given our time constraints, we will begin with an overview of China today under Xi Jinping's leadership. We will then turn to the late Qing China, when the Middle Kingdom was at the height of its power and had organized its foreign relations into what is now commonly referred to as the “Chinese world order.” We will then look at the attempts of the new Chinese nation-state to “reunify” the Qing borders and to contend with a succession of tectonic shifts in world affairs (1911 to 1949). Next, we will study the period of “Maoism,” during which China pursued a revolutionary, Communist foreign policy (1949 to Mao's death). Finally, we will consider the period of “reform and opening,” from 1978 to the present, and discuss whether China's grand strategy faces a new turning point as the post-WWII global order is undergoing severe strain.

The main objective of this course is to develop an analytical framework to assess the merits of the current debates about China's strategy. We will answer some of the following questions:

- 1) What does China see as its place in world affairs, particularly in Asia? What is China's vision of an alternative Chinese-led world order? How is such an order similar/different from Imperial China at the height of its power?
- 2) What strategies is China implementing to advance its ends?
- 3) What are some of the constraints China faces given its embrace of significant parts of the global order and the current balance of power?
- 4) How should the U.S. respond?

Reports. In addition to the reading assignments, there will be written reports that will be addressed by the class.

- The reports will be written in response to a prompt and are to be 1,000-1,800 words long.
- You should consult the reading assignments and supplementary materials for your report.
- They must be turned in by **8 pm the night before** the class in which they will be discussed.
- Copies will be distributed by email and will be part of the reading assignment. You will also receive a physical copy at the session.

Sunday, July 22, 2018

6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Opening Dinner — Hertog Foundation

Dinner Discussion: How do we assess a foreign government's national or grand strategy?

Strategic Culture
Perceptions of Security Environment
Leadership/Regime Structure
Uses of Power

Monday, July 23, 2018

9:00 a.m. to Noon Xi Jinping & the China Dream

Readings:

- Dan Blumenthal, "Xi's Chinese Dream: The Road to Rejuvenation," *Three Chinas*, manuscript
- Excerpt from "Xi Jinping's Report at the 19th CPC National Congress," *Xinhua*, November 3, 2017
- Willy Wo-Lap Lam, "The Agenda of Xi Jinping: Is the Chinese Communist Party Capable of Thorough Reforms?" *Routledge Handbook of the Chinese Communist Party* (London, UK: Routledge, 2018)

- Dan Blumenthal and Derek Scissors, “China’s Great Stagnation,” *The National Interest*, October 2016
- Christopher Ford, “Realpolitik with Chinese Characteristics: Chinese Strategic Culture and the Modern Communist Party-State,” *Strategic Asia 2016–17: Understanding Strategic Cultures in the Asia-Pacific* (Washington, DC: The National Bureau of Asian Research, 2016)

Discussion Questions:

1. The “China dream”: What does it mean? What is the CCP’s grand strategic objective?
2. Does the “China dream” represent a break with past Chinese grand strategy or a continuation of it?
3. How does Xi Jinping envision China achieving its strategic objectives?
4. How has Xi’s strengthening of the CCP impacted strategy?

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

9:00 a.m. to Noon

Key Sources of China’s Grand Strategy, I: China as Empire

Readings:

- Dan Blumenthal, “The Qing Meet the Westphalians,” *Three Chinas*, manuscript
- Odd Arne Westad, “Chapter 2: Imperialisms,” *Restless Empire: China and the World Since 1750*, p. 53–86
- Paul Lococo Jr., “The Qing Empire,” from David Graff, *A Military History of China*, p. 115–34

Discussion Questions & Reports:

1. What was the strategic situation of the Qing Dynasty? How did the Qing respond to that situation? What were their strategic objectives?
2. How did China understand itself in relation to its various neighbors – the Mongols, East Eurasians, Vietnam, and Korea? What policies did it pursue toward those neighbors? What was “Sinification”?
3. Why did the Qing Dynasty fall?

Noon to 1:30 p.m. Lunch Break

1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Key Sources of China's Grand Strategy, II: China as Nation-State

Readings:

- See readings from the morning.
- Dan Blumenthal, "Republican China and Modern Diplomacy," *Three Chinas*, manuscript
- William C. Kirby, "The Internationalization of China: Foreign Relations at Home and Abroad in the Republican Era," *The China Quarterly*, no. 150 (June 1997), p. 433–58

Discussion Questions & Reports:

1. What was China's strategic situation after the collapse of the Qing Dynasty? How did it respond to that situation?
2. What would it mean to "reunify" the Qing Dynasty empire? How successful has China been in reconstituting its historical holdings?
3. Does China still see itself as an empire? Is China's imperial mindset compatible with the Westphalian system of international relations based on "sovereign equals"?

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

9:00 a.m. to Noon

Key Sources of China's Grand Strategy, II: China as Nation-State

Readings:

- Chen Jian, "Introduction," *Mao's China and the Cold War*, p. 1–16
- Christopher Ford, "Chapter 13: Mao and the Middle Kingdom," *Mind of an Empire: China's History and Modern Foreign Relations*, p. 189–216
- Henry Kissinger, "Chapter 4: Mao's Continuous Revolution," *On China*, p. 91–112
- Margaret MacMillan, "Chapter 9: The Polar Bear," *Nixon and Mao: The Week that Changed the World*, p. 124–45

Discussion Questions & Reports:

1. How did Mao understand China's strategic situation post-WWII? How did he respond to that situation? What were his strategic objectives? How did he use alliances to achieve his objectives?

2. Mao is a towering historical figure – part revolutionary, part Chinese emperor, part geopolitician. When it comes to geopolitics and strategy, which was the “dominant Mao?”
3. In what ways has China become a modern nation-state? In what ways is it still a premodern civilization/empire?

Thursday, July 26, 2018

9:00 a.m. to Noon

Key Sources of China’s Grand Strategy, III: China as Globalized Economy

Readings:

- Excerpts from Ezra F. Vogel, *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China*
 - “Chapter 9: The Soviet-Vietnamese Threat, 1978–1979,” p. 266–93
- Excerpts from Henry Kissinger, *On China*
 - “Chapter 13: ‘Touching the Tiger’s Buttocks,’” p. 340–76
 - “Chapter 17: A Roller Coaster Ride Toward Another Reconciliation: The Jiang Zemin Era,” p. 447–86
- Chapters 3, 4, and 6 in Edward S. Steinfeld, *Playing our Game: Why China’s Rise Doesn’t Threaten the West* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2010)
 - “Chapter 3: The Quest for Modernity”
 - “Chapter 4: Taking Industry Global: China as Rising Industrial Powerhouse Versus China as Capitalist Enabler”
 - “Chapter 6: Playing to Win? China’s Advance into High-Tech Research and Development”

Discussion Questions & Reports:

1. How did Deng Xiaoping understand China’s strategic situation? How did he respond to that situation? What were his strategic objectives?
2. What was “reform and opening”? What did Deng hope to achieve with this policy?
3. In what ways has China become a “post-modern,” globalized nation? In what ways does it remain a modern nation-state? An empire?
4. Are Deng’s changes reversible? Is it possible to de-globalize China?

Noon to 1:30 p.m.

Lunch Break

1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Guest Speaker: Derek Scissors, scholar, American Enterprise Institute on the Chinese Economy

Friday, July 27, 2018

9:00 a.m. to Noon

Leadership/Regime Type: The CCP and Threat Perceptions in National Strategy

Readings:

- Michael Pillsbury, “The Sixteen Fears: China’s Strategic Psychology,” *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, October–November 2012
- Daniel Hartnett, “The ‘New Historic Missions’: Reflections on Hu Jintao’s Military Legacy,” *Assessing the People’s Liberation Army in the Hu Jintao Era*, Strategic Studies Institute and US Army War College Press, April 2014
- Maochun Yu, “Marxist Ideology, Revolutionary Legacy and Their Impact on China’s Security Policy,” *Routledge Handbook of Chinese Security* (London, UK: Routledge, 2015)
- Samantha Hoffman, “Managing the State: Social Credit, Surveillance, and the CCP’s Plan for China,” Jamestown Foundation, August 17, 2017

Discussion Questions & Reports:

1. How do Chinese leaders today understand China’s strategic situation? What internal threats do they see? What is their perception of the U.S.?
2. How have Xi and the CCP responded to their strategic environment? What actions have they taken toward internal threats, their neighbors, and the U.S.?
3. What continuities and discontinuities do you see with China’s strategy, past and present? In what ways is it still acting as an empire? A nation-state? A globalized economy?
4. Is there a unique Leninist Party approach to the world?
5. What are the strategic implications of China’s grand strategy for the U.S. and its allies?