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Rosemary Foot. *The Practice of Power: U.S. Relations with China Since 1949.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995. viii + 291 pp. $35.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-19-827878-8.

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Rosemary Foot, who has written two books on the Korean War, tries to explain why, after years of hostility, the United States reached a rapprochement and normalized relations with the People's Republic of China (PRC) in the 1970s. The origins of both U.S.-PRC hostility and rapprochement were influenced by their perceptions of one another's power.

In the post-1945 period, the United States was clearly the hegemon in the international system because of its hard (military and economic strength) and soft power resources (American culture and institutions). America's resources far outweighed those of the Soviet Union. Borrowing from political scientists, Foot writes that the United States also possessed "cooptive power" in which the United States determined the rules of the system and coerced other powers to internalize American norms: "Such an internalization of norms could come about as a result of a hegemon's repeated ability to dominate events and situations, or more indirectly because of its ability to control the structure of values and meanings in a given social system" (p. 6). For example, the United States used this cooptive power as hegemon to deny the PRC legitimacy and equality of status.

Why did the United States use its power in the 1950s and 1960s to deny the PRC legitimacy and equal status? The crucial event was the Korean War in which the PRC became directly involved, throwing American forces into a humiliating retreat. Although many in Washington despised Chiang Kai-shek, the United States recognized his Republic of China (ROC), now in Taiwan, as representing all of China, and blocked PRC representation in the United Nations. As hegemon, the United States willingly and reluctantly made political concessions to its allies, some of which recognized or leaned toward recognition of Beijing, in order to secure their backing for its policy of PRC exclusion. The United States imposed and maintained a trade embargo against the PRC even though the measure was opposed by its allies and President Eisenhower, who believed the effort futile and harmful of Japan (who needed the China market) and the American taxpayer (who had to subsidize Japan's economy). Eisenhower, however, refused to rescind the trade embargo out of fear of angering Congressional leaders, especially the powerful China Lobby, who gave their full support to Chiang Kai-shek. As Foot shows, American public opinion in the 1950s overwhelmingly supported nonrecognition of Beijing, the PRC's exclusion from the United Nations, and the trade embargo because of Beijing's intervention into the Korean conflict.

In addition to Beijing's direct involvement in the Korean War, Americans were troubled by Beijing's policies which were designed to enable China to have great power

status. When the PRC was established in 1949, Chinese leaders believed that the Chinese people had finally stood up after years of foreign oppression and humiliations. As Foot correctly notes, when the Chinese Communists came to power, they brought with them "a concern with concepts of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and status in the global system, a strong desire to right past wrongs, and a powerful need to be treated as an equal by the major powers" (p. 10). They also brought with them a belief that China had "to form a united front" against the power they perceived as hegemon and "contain its ambitions and ensure its decline" (p. 9). The United States was such a country since it was the power that encircled the PRC with its forces and denied China legitimacy and equality of status.

In order to fight power with power, Mao Zedong made the decision in 1949 to "lean to one side," that is, toward the Soviet Union, and soon after signed an alliance with Moscow which provided China with military assistance and Soviet advisers. China tried to play the role of a great power by increasing its international status, becoming a model of political and economic development for Third World countries as well as sending aid to African and Asian countries. Beijing was intent on increasing its power and influence in order to win legitimacy and equality. The results were mixed. On the one hand, the United States did perceive China as having "considerable military power potential" and as a "candidate great power" (p. 143). On the other hand, the PRC's increase in power only intensified American fears that China would use that power against the United States. Although America's allies increasingly wanted to recognize and engage in trade with the PRC and although there were signs that some Americans were changing their opinions of China, Foot argues that "Kennedy personally seemed to view China as a more aggressive and dangerous foe than a Soviet Union increasingly interested in detente…" (p. 96), especially when it was clear that Beijing was intent on building its own nuclear weapon. So concerned was Kennedy that he sought and failed to secure Soviet cooperation (the Soviets and Chinese had parted ways by this time) in halting China's nuclear program.

In 1964, China exploded its first atomic device. Much like the reactions of Indians and Pakistanis of late, the Chinese reaction was one of euphoria. China was now a major power to be treated with respect and not to be threatened with nuclear blackmail. Indeed, China's successful atomic test produced a number of positive effects for the semi-isolated country. Nearly all of America's allies called for the PRC's entry into the United Nations and were ready to push ahead with greater trade ties. Although initially the Johnson administration opposed flexibility toward China in light of the test, by 1967, Johnson was speaking of the "free flow of ideas and people and goods" between the United States and China. Americans increasingly supported recognition of China out of fear of Chinese power, and they wanted to reduce the Chinese threat to world peace by establishing closer ties. And in his famous 1967 Foreign Affairs article, Richard Nixon wrote that China could not remain outside the family of nations forever nor left in angry isolation.

If China's possession of nuclear weapons influenced perceptions abroad, so did the PRC's decline in power change the perceptions of American policymakers. By 1970, Washington no longer feared the PRC as a political-economic model after the failure of the Great Leap Forward in which Mao Zedong attempted to industrialize China overnight contributing to the starvation of millions of Chinese. Moreover, China's break in relations with the Soviet Union in 1960 moved the Russians to withdraw their advisers and cut off military aid, leading American military analysts to conclude that the PRC's conventional military was not that advanced and would need U.S. assistance in fending off the Soviet Union, which almost went to war with China in 1969. And China went into political isolation as a result of Mao's Cultural Revolution, which sent the country into turmoil.

By 1972, the United States was interested in seeking rapprochement. After years of expending political capital to keep the PRC out of the United Nations, the Americans were defeated in 1971 when the PRC replaced the ROC on the security council. Foot argues, though, that while this defeat reflected hegemonic decline in that the United States no longer could coerce its allies on the issue, the PRC's presence in the United Nations actually worked in America's favor because the Chinese were anti-Soviet, did not support Third World militancy, and, despite its previous revolutionary rhetoric, were quite passive (p. 51).

Then in 1972, President Nixon, who had already lifted restrictions on travel as well as the trade embargo on nonsecurity goods, made his historic visit to China, the former enemy, with a view to getting an ally against their common foe, the Soviet Union. For the Americans, taking on China as an ally meant that "U.S. containment policy had shifted from the containment of communism to containment of the Soviet Union" (p. 141). Because the PRC was a regional power, Foot argues that the alignment with Beijing "helped to return the United States to

a central place in the global system" (p. 142). She concludes that China did much for American power. The United States was no longer isolated by its China policy, which had undermined many postwar norms, including the viability of the United Nations, but was now brought "into line with the approach of its major allies," which had all along wanted to grant the PRC legitimacy and equality of status (p. 263). The alignment also enabled the Americans to pull out of Vietnam with much of their prestige and many of their bilateral ties to the region intact (p. 142).

For their part, the Chinese were willing to seek rapprochement as well because they believed that the Soviet Union had replaced the United States as hegemon. And after years of trying to become a self-reliant nation with only mixed results, the PRC's leaders could see that a relationship with the United States would enhance their country's power, prestige and security.

In 1979, President Carter, ignoring American public opinion which supported Taipei, switched recognition to Beijing. In the years that followed, Americans generally had a favorable impression of China even though there was still apprehension over the cutting of ties with Taiwan. Deng Xiaoping dispensed with many of Mao's policies in favor of market reforms, increased bilateral trade and expressed support for Western norms and rules for regulating international behavior. Then in 1989, the Tiananmen Square Massacre occurred as student democracy movement was literally crushed by tanks of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). Although Americans were generally appalled by these events, the Bush administration refused to isolate China, a policy that paid off during the Gulf War when the Chinese cast their votes in favor of American initiatives brought before the United Nations. However, Iraq's defeat at the hands of an American-led coalition with their high-tech weapons struck fear in some Chinese leaders "that the United States might arrogantly bestride a unipolar world, making China the special target of its displeasure" (p. 248), especially with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990. As in the 1950s and 1960s, the Chinese feared the hegemonic power of the United States, forcing the country to seek to increase its own power as a balance to American power.

The strengths of this book is its thematic treatment and synthesis of secondary interpretations. The book does not rely solely on secondary sources but includes manuscript collections and other primary source materials, including a smattering of Chinese language works. One weakness of the book is its reliance on state-to-state analysis. Foot brings in the other allies when she can, but with her analysis focusing on China and the United States, she cannot take into account all the changes in the international system that affected U.S.-PRC relations after 1949. And by relying on state-to-state analysis, there is little flesh and blood on the Americans and Chinese that appear in the reading. Another weakness is Foot's use of power to understand U.S.-PRC relations since 1949. Although an important concept, one would have liked to have seen more discussion of the role of ideology and culture in the calculations of policymakers. However, Foot probably worked under publishing constraints to keep the book tight, which may account for why she makes certain conclusions at the end of several chapters without ever discussing them in the text. For example, on page 164, Foot mentions Peng Dehuai's removal as Defense Minister in 1959 and its effect on American assessments of the PLA, but this goes unmentioned earlier even though she discusses the importance of Peng's attempts to professionalize the army. Despite these weaknesses, *The Practice of Power* is a highly readable account that is a very good starting place for students who want to understand the high politics of two countries whose coexistence has not always been amicable.

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