

John K. Fairbank and His Views on Sino-American Relations from the 1940's to the 1970's

JOHN K. FAIRBANK ET SES OPIGNIONS SUR LA RELATION SINO-AMERICAINE DES ANNEES 1940-1970

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Received 5 January 2012; accepted 20 April 2012

Abstract

This paper attempts to evaluate John K. Fairbank's roles in the development of Sino-American relations. It first examines Fairbank's experiences and Chinabound activities, then analyses his perspectives on Sino-American relations from the 1940's to the 1970's, as well as his vacillating views on the Taiwan issue.

Research on this subject reveals that in more than four decades, Fairbank, both as an American historian and as a China specialist, put forward many policy recommendations on Sino-American relations to the American government. Most of his perspectives were based on his understanding of the history of China and her revolution and such perspectives proved to have certain influence on the American public opinion and the American government. Regarding Sino-American relations, his major views are 1) predicting Jiang Jieshi's losing the "Mandate" in 1943; 2) advocating American abandoning Jiang's regime in the Chinese Civil War; 3) advocating recognition of the PRC and her admission into the UN; 4) advocating improving Sino-American relations and normalizing bilateral relations at an early date.

The paper also expounds Fairbank's views on the Taiwan issue in detail, which shows that on this specific matter, Fairbank utterly neglected the sentiments of the Chinese people and considered too much for the interests of the ruling class of the United States before the 1960's. That is why his advocacy of Taiwan's "independence" was destined to failure. In the 1970's, with the thaw of Sino-U.S. relations, Fairbank came to understand the political ideal of unity of the Chinese people. He began to reconsider the Taiwan issue in the framework of One-

China policy. His advocacy of Taiwan's "autonomy" under PRC sovereignty contributed to the official settlement of the Taiwan issue in 1979.

It concludes that in more than four decades, John K. Fairbank, despite his limitations as a bourgeois historian, did his utmost to improve Sino-American relations and his views and perspectives with this regard merit a comprehensive research.

Key words: J. K. Fairbank's views; Sino-US relations; Historical perspectives; Contributions

Résumé

Cet article tente d'évaluer les rôles de John K. Fairbank dans le développement de relations sino-américaines. Il examine d'abord les expériences et les activités de Fairbank Chinabound, puis analyse ses points de vue sur les relations sino-américaines des années 1940 aux années 1970, ainsi que ses vues sur les hésitants de la question de Taiwan.

La recherche sur ce sujet révèle que dans plus de quatre décennies, Fairbank, à la fois comme un historien américain et en tant que spécialiste de la Chine, formuler des recommandations politiques de l'avant de nombreuses sur les relations sino-américaines au gouvernement américain. La plupart de ses points de vue étaient basées sur sa compréhension de l'histoire de la Chine et sa révolution et de telles perspectives prouvé avoir une influence certaine sur l'opinion publique américaine et le gouvernement américain. En ce qui concerne relations sino-américaines, ses principaux points de vue sont: 1) la prévision Jiang Jieshi de perdre le «Mandat» en 1943; 2) préconise américaine a abandonné le régime de Jiang dans la guerre civile chinoise; 3) préconisant la reconnaissance de la République populaire de Chine et de son admission à l'ONU; 4) préconise l'amélioration de relations sino-américaines et la normalisation des relations bilatérales au plus tôt.

Le document expose également des vues de Fairbank

sur la question de Taiwan dans le détail, ce qui montre que sur cette question spécifique, Fairbank totalement négligé les sentiments du peuple chinois et considéré comme trop cher pour les intérêts de la classe dirigeante des États-Unis avant les années 1960. C'est pourquoi son plaidoyer en faveur de Taiwan "l'indépendance" a été vouée à l'échec. Dans les années 1970, avec le dégel des relations sino-américaines, Fairbank est venu à comprendre l'idéal politique de l'unité du peuple chinois. Il a commencé à reconsidérer la question de Taiwan dans le cadre de la politique d'une seule Chine. Sa défense de Taiwan "autonomie" sous la souveraineté République populaire de Chine a contribué au règlement officiel de la question de Taiwan en 1979.

Il conclut que, dans plus de quatre décennies, John K. Fairbank, en dépit de ses limitations comme un historien bourgeois, fait tout son possible pour améliorer les relations sino-américaines et ses points de vue et perspectives avec ce mérite ce qui concerne une recherche exhaustive.

Mots clés: J.K. Fairbank vues; La Relation sino-américaines; Des perspectives historiques; Les contributions

FAN Yangcai (2012). John K. Fairbank and His Views on Sino-American Relations from the 1940's to the 1970's. *Canadian Social Science*, 8(2), 1-20. Available from URL: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/css/article/view/j.css.1923669720120802.2025> DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/j.css.1923669720120802.2025>

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, with more of his works being translated into Chinese and published in China, readers are beginning to show great interest in the works of John King Fairbank (1907-1991), "the church father of American China scholarship" (Evans, 1988, p.64) a pioneer in Chinese studies in the United States. He is regarded as the father of modern Chinese studies in the West and the main academic spokesman promoting positive Sino-American relations (Xu Guoqi, 1994, p.4). John King Fairbank has occupied a unique position in American scholarship and Sino-American relations. In many ways he has been the complete China scholar. As both academic promoter and thinker, he has touched on almost every aspect of modern China. In a comparatively small professional field, he has come into contact with almost all its major figures. This comprehensive involvement in Chinese studies has been matched by a persistent reluctance to detour far into matters outside it. Rather than assume the role of globalist, as did so many of his colleagues in the postwar period, he has been an unabashed and persistent regionalist.

For over fifty years, Fairbank, as a historian, devoted his time and energy to Chinese studies, being a historian, reflecting on the bilateral relations, and establishing the

modern sinology in the United States. (Tao, 1992)

China, its culture area (which includes Japan, Korea, and Vietnam), and its relationship to the west have occupied the full measure of his personal and professional energies since 1929. His accomplishments seem to be insurmountable. However broadly scholarship is defined, Fairbank's contact with China has had other dimensions as well. At various times he has been an employee of the American government, pundit, public figure, as well as policy advisor and advocate. His academic career focuses on three aspects. The first has been as a historian who has investigated the diplomatic and institutional history of Sino-Western contact in the mid-nineteenth century and who has also created broader, synthetic generalizations directed at both the professional and the general reader on the nature of traditional China, the revolutionary upheavals that transformed it, and Sino-western exchange. Apart from studying the modern Chinese history, he has also been a teacher of history, educating thousands of undergraduate at Harvard and sending his doctoral students to teach at more than 100 universities in the United States and abroad (Evans, p.2) The second has been as a tireless promoter of the larger realm of East Asian studies, of which modern Chinese history constitutes only one area. Convincing university administrators, colleagues in other specialties, government and foundation officials and the general public that East Asia demanded greater intellectual and financial attention proved to be a Fairbank specialty. Besides raising funds and consciousness, he occupied center stage in scores of academic projects, the development of Chinese Studies at Harvard, and the construction of an infrastructure for promoting and coordinating the development of the field on both a national and an international basis. While Harvard has been his first love and institutional home for almost all his professional life, he has been an imposing figure across the United States and internationally as well. As entrepreneur, facilitator, promoter and academic broker, he has had no peer in the China field or in any other branch of area studies since World War II.

The third sphere concerns his ongoing efforts to understand and influence the course of Sino-American relations. Fairbank has acted on the assumption that historians are obliged to use their knowledge and position to improve the course of contemporary affairs. He has expressed his notion quite often that Americans must be made aware of China and the history of their relationship with it if they want a more secure future. His specific views and prescriptions have changed, but their underlying purpose remain the same. Popularizing China has always gone hand in hand with efforts to influence American policy. In other words, his punditry has been linked to a consistent political purpose influencing public and governmental thinking. (Evans, p.2)

Upon Sino-American relations, some of his views and

perspectives exerted much influence on the American public thinking and the policy-makers of the United States. He occupied a unique position in American scholarship and Sino-American relations.

John K. Fairbank has become an object of academic studies for his substantial academic achievements in Chinese studies and significant contributions to Sino-American relations.

According to the research done by Xu Guoqi, a visiting scholar at Harvard University, there are at least two writers abroad who have written academic papers on John K. Fairbank. One is George Stevens, a postgraduate in Georgetown University U.S.A., who, in 1973, wrote a MA thesis entitled "John K. Fairbank and Far Eastern Studies in America: the First Forty Years". The other is Paul M. Evans, a Canadian scholar, who in 1982 finished his doctorate dissertation entitled "Fairbank: Intellect and Enterprise in American China Scholarship, 1936-1961." His dissertation was later revised and published entitled *John Fairbank and the American Understanding of Modern China*.

Academic studies on Fairbank in China is still in its beginning stage. In recent years, Chinese scholars have just begun writing articles on Fairbank. There are five research papers on Fairbank published, four in the journal of *American Studies* (formerly *American Studies Reference Materials*), one in the journal of *Wenshizhe* (Literature, History, Philosophy).

Among these five papers, only the article "Fairbank and Sino-American Relation" written by Tao Wenzhao, a research professor of the Institute of American Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, briefly discusses Fairbank's views on Sino-American relations but all the other four deal with other aspects of Fairbank study. They may help us better understand Fairbank's academic views but fail to analyse Fairbank's views on Sino-American relations systematically. Actually reflecting on bilateral relations formed an integral part of Fairbank's academic career, and is also an indispensable part of his understanding of modern China. Henceforth Fairbank's views on Sino-American relations deserve to be further discussed.

What are Fairbank's views on Sino-American relations? Did his views promote the improvement of Sino-American relations, or jeopardize the development of them? This is what the writer attempts to explore in the thesis. Through a careful analysis of Fairbank's views and perspectives related to Sino-American relations at different historical periods, the writer finds that during the course of improvement of Sino-American relations, Fairbank took a long historical view in considering Sino-American relations, and at the same time, put forward his suggestions, many of which are favourable to the normalization of the bilateral relations between China and the United States, though some of them, for instance, the

views on the Taiwan issue before the 1970's, endangered Sino-American relations. So the thesis concludes that in the continuous development of bilateral relations, John K. Fairbank did his utmost to promote the improvement of Sino-American relations.

1. JOHN K. FAIRBANK AND HIS CONNECTIONS WITH CHINA

1.1 The Profile

John K. Fairbank, better known in China as Fei Zhengqing (Fairbank, 1982, p.224), was born on May 24, 1907, in Huron, South Dakota, U.S.A.. While growing up, he was greatly influenced by his mother, Lorena King Fairbank. As he later confessed, he had no doubt that his attempt to study China resulted from two things she conveyed to him: self-confidence in responding to a challenge, and a sense of security in going off over the horizon (Fairbank, 1982, p.6). At the age of 16, he was sent to study at Philips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire. He received his college education first at University of Wisconsin, then at Harvard College, where he met a visiting scholar, Sir Charles Kingsley Webster, then Wilson Professor of International Politics at Aberystwyth. This peripatetic professor travelled extensively in Far Eastern Asia and had a vivid impression of Far Eastern problems. It was he who encouraged Fairbank to study the modern history of China by using foreign as well as Chinese sources. Under the auspices of Webster, Fairbank began his chosen career as a scholar in Chinese studies. Webster became a major influence on Fairbank's career. Like Webster, Fairbank could feel a pressing sense of social obligation which he later expressed clearly in a letter to his parents. "My idea", Fairbank said, "was that I wanted to have influence on events by informing the public mind so that it could more effectively deal with them". (Evans, 1988, p.16) He regarded history as the handmaid of statesmanship and later, on various occasions expressed this conception through a variety of channels, as policy advocate, government employee, writer, pundit and academic organizer. From this, we find a clue to why Fairbank later became so eager to participate in political affairs.

In 1929, he went to conduct research at Balliol College, Oxford as a Rhodes scholar. Arriving there, on Webster's recommendation, he got to know the third influential person in his life: Hose B. Morse who not only offered steady encouragement but also a wealth of advice on matters related to documents, publication, and persons living and dead. In a sense Morse had already become "something of a spiritual father, or perhaps grandfather". (Fairbank, 1982, p.22) In 1931, Fairbank submitted his B. Litt. thesis entitled, "British Policy in Relation to the Origin of the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs Service, 1850-54 Inclusive" and received acceptance. In the next

year, he came to China for the first time and began work on his Oxford Ph.D. During his three-year stay in Beijing, he got married and finished his doctoral dissertation entitled "The Origin of the Chinese Maritime Customs Service, 1850-58". In August, 1941, Fairbank started working in Far Eastern Section of Research and Analysis Branch of Offices of the Coordination of Information (COI) in Washington D.C. This was the first time that he, as a historian, moved into government service.

In the late summer of 1943, Fairbank was dispatched by COI—in June 1942 renamed Office of Strategic Services (OSS) to Chongqing. At the end of the same year, he returned to Washington and transferred from OSS to Far Eastern Section of Office of War Information (OWI). In September 1945, he returned to China, working for United States Information Service (USIS). This was his last visit to China in the next twenty-six years and from 1945 onward, he resumed teaching at Harvard until 1977.

In the next forty-seven years, Fairbank published many monographs on East Asia, such as *The United States and China* (1948), *Trade and Diplomacy on the China Coast: The Opening of the Treaty Ports, 1842-54* (1953), *East Asia: The Great Tradition* (1960) and the first volume of *The Cambridge History of China* (1966), with *The United States and China* being the most well-known and influential in China and the United States. He also wrote numerous articles on Sino-American relations, which were later compiled into books and published, such as *China Perceived: Images and Policies in Chinese-American Relations*, *China: The People's Middle Kingdom and the U.S.A.*, and *Our China Prospects*.

During the course of his academic career, he founded the Centre for East Asian Studies (Harvard), renamed East Asian Research Center in 1961, then Fairbank Center for East Asian Research in 1977. He served as President of the Association for Asian Studies in 1958, and President of American Historical Association in 1968.

In 1973, he assumed chairmanship of the newly formed Harvard Council on East Asian Studies. In May 1972, upon the invitation by Zhou Enlai, the Fairbanks visited New China for a six-week period and in April of 1979, Fairbank accompanied the then U.S. Vice President Mondale, in his visit to China.

On September 14, 1991, John K. Fairbank died from a heart attack at Mt. Auburn Hospital in Cambridge at the age of 84. It was reported that several hours before his final fatal heart attack, he had sent his last manuscript for a new book to Harvard University Press.

This is a brief survey of the activities of a famous scholar whose soul was always bound with China, which is designed to enable us to better understand his thoughts on China.

1.2 His Links with Modern China

As a China specialist, Fairbank had advantages to watch China over many others. His personal experiences

in China offered him good opportunities to observe the Chinese revolution and, to a large extent, laid the foundation for him to unveil this mysterious Oriental country. Indeed much of his ponderation upon the Chinese politics was formed on the basis of his first-hand experiences in China.

In the 1930's when Fairbank first set foot on China, he was delighted to find that a good opportunity was waiting for him. He could study this ancient country by living in its midst. During his four-year stay in China, he completed his dissertation and the most important was that "he developed the personal contacts and attachments that transformed an academic project into a life's vocation" (Evans, p.25). In Beijing he made the acquaintance of several Chinese scholars including Hu Shi, dean of Beijing University and Tao Menghe, head of the Institute of Social Research. His friendship with Jiang Tingfu, Chairman of the History Department at Qinghua University paid immediate dividends. Jiang Tingfu showed great interest in Fairbank's scholarship on Chinese diplomatic history and offered him assistance, including weekly lunches, introductions to several important Chinese scholars, the offer of a lectureship at Qinghua for the Academic Year 1933-34, as well as much help in having various chapters of his thesis published in the *Chinese Social and Political Science Review*, which Jiang edited, and the *Nankai Social and Economic Quarterly*. Fairbank was so grateful for the generous assistance that he always kept this friendship in his heart. "I couldn't proceed without acknowledging my debt as a student to my teacher T.F. Tsiang (Jiang Tingfu)", (Fairbank, p.91) Fairbank confessed when he visited Beijing in 1972.

While teaching at Qinghua University, the Fairbanks were lucky enough to enlarge their circle of friends and to form deep and lasting relationships with several famous Chinese personages, especially Liang Sicheng, son of the eminent publicist and reformer Liang Qichao, and Lin Weiyin, Liang Sicheng's wife. The Liangs introduced the Fairbanks to other academics, such as Jin Yuelin, philosopher, Qian Duansheng, political scientist and Zhou Peiyuan, physicist. Establishing cordial friendship with these celebrities of the Chinese academic community laid the foundations for a long-term involvement with China's liberal academic elite, who served as a prism through which he could observe China's past and present.

His four-year stay in China and the broad exposure to the Chinese life not only had a significant influence on Fairbank's intellectual development, but also helped to shape a professional career for him. He was greatly rewarded, "emerging from the China's experience not as a diplomatic historian with a speciality in Sino-Western relations but as a fledgeling China specialist with a speciality in diplomatic history" (Evans, p.42). The Fairbanks left China in 1935.

During the Second World War, Fairbank was recruited

to join the buildup of academic resources being converted to war purpose under the American government. In order to carry out the work of securing research materials, Fairbank was sent to China in 1942 as the chief representative of COI. Working in China this time was an extraordinary experience that had a far-reaching impact on his academic life. He observed the miserable conditions of the Chinese liberal academics and made great effort to help them. Meanwhile, the Kunming faculty situation so appalled him that he reported it to Washington. In his report Fairbank urged the United States government to pay much attention to the bad situation of the Chinese academics, mocking at "the view that developments in China could be judged more effectively in Washington than in the field, because the reports are more complete in Washington, and therefore, a good man could be more effective by staying in Washington." (Fairbank, p.195) He concluded that this kind of view would be "one of the most pernicious doctrine in the history of diplomacy." (ibid., p.195) Fairbank's real purpose in making this known to Washington was to directly criticize the American government's China policy for its failure to grasp and deal well with the essentials of the situation in China. In view of the facts, Fairbank called the American government to take some effective measures to protect American-trained faculty of Qinghua University in Kunming, because these professors represented an American investment in China. What Fairbank did for the Chinese academics played an important role in protecting the elite scholars such as Zhang Xiro, Qian Duansheng and Fei Xiaotong. Even today people still remember the fact that there was once a friendly American who in the early 1940's generously offered as much help as he could to Chinese faculty when they were in difficult positions.

During the Anti-Japanese War, Fairbank flew to Chongqing as a special Assistant to the American ambassador in order to find and microfilm Japanese publications for use by the Office of Strategic Services in Washington. While working there, Fairbank had also managed to get many American academic and technical publications allocated among universities in China. These microfilms and books greatly benefited the Chinese academics at universities. His endeavours did help to "aid in reviving the flow of printed matter in both directions between China and the United States." (ibid., p.204)

After living in wartime capital of Chongqing for one year, Fairbank came to the very definite conviction that, "our ally the Nationalist regime was self-destructing and on the way out of power." (ibid., p.241) So he wrote to Washington suggesting that an observer be sent to the North (Red area) and that an American government contact be made with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

His major achievement in Chongqing was to find new friends on the Left among whom were Gong Peng, Zhou Enlai's liaison with the Press Hostel and Yang Kang,

literary editor of the influential *Ta Kung Pao*, from whom Fairbank learned "the springs of revolution." (ibid., p.273) He established good relations with Zhou Enlai, Qiao Guanhua and also became acquaintance with Song Qingling, wife of Sun Yat-sen.

When he left China in 1943, he firmly believed that Jiang Jieshi was beginning to lose the power to lead the Chinese revolution and that another revolution was about to happen.

In 1945, with the Anti-Japanese War over, all evidences pointed to the fact that the civil war might happen at any time. During this political crisis, the American government, having proved incapable of realistic forethought and a rational China policy in the years before the Japanese surrender, improvised the best policy it could and sent General C. Marshall to mediate between Guomindang (GMD) and CCP, in an effort to avert the civil war and negotiate to set up a coalition government. Under these circumstances, Fairbank was sent back again to China to join the buildup of an American information programme and to expand their information offices to main cities. During the Chongqing Peace Talks between CCP and GMD in 1945, Fairbank's contacts with Zhou Enlai, Ye Jianying, Deng Yingchiao deepened their personal relations and mutual understanding. Later Fairbank had a trip to the CCP temporary capital Zhang Jiakou where he talked with several famous Chinese writers and poets such as Zhou Yang, Dingling and Ai Qing. This was his only exposure to a CCP area. He left China in 1946 and didn't return until 26 years later.

In 1972 Fairbank visited New China and went to see North China countryside where he had travelled in the thirties. Meeting Zhou Enlai became the climax of his tour to New China. This time he witnessed the results of the great transformation, which impressed him a lot. So later in an article entitled "The New China and the American Connection" Fairbank reported on the material achievements, appraised the Washington-Beijing conflict of the past, saying that "on the whole the Chinese have the better of the argument." (ibid., p.424)

The above brief review of his experiences in China suggests that Fairbank's later success could not be separated from those valuable experiences in China.

On the basis of his observations in China and largely depending on his "area study", Fairbank took an active part in the public debate over the American China policy. Pondering over Sino-American relations became an indispensable part of his life. Some of his views had an influence on the opinion of the American public and to a certain degree shaped the American China policy. Many of his views played a positive role in the development of Sino-American relations. His viewpoints on Sino-American relations are to be discussed in detail in the next part.

2. FAIRBANK'S VIEWPOINTS ON SINO-AMERICAN RELATIONS

In the course of the continuous improvement of Sino-American relations, "Fairbank had played at least four different roles" (Evans, p.339). On many occasions, he functioned as government official, as expert analyst, and as a tactical advisor, and as a cross-cultural interpreter speaking to American and Chinese audience at the same time. Therefore, his views and perspectives have wide influence on public thinking and the American China policy. His views on Sino-American relations have some keen insights and have often turned out to be correct.

2.1 Advocating the Bilateral Cultural Exchanges

In the development of Sino-American relations, Fairbank had consistently made great efforts to enhance the cultural exchange between the United States and China, because he, as "a man of the cultural frontier," (Li Yan, 1991, p.9) believed that "Sino-American relations are best seen in light of cultural differences." (Evans, p.339) In interpreting the universal relations between different countries, Fairbank first considered the cultural differences. He offered us a new outlook in considering Sino-American relations. He didn't deny the influence of military and economic factors on bilateral relations, but he thought these two factors were of secondary importance. In 1965 Fairbank made his cultural view clearer by stating that, "our real problem with the Chinese is in the realm of our different institutions, values and ideas of the good, the true and the beautiful." (ibid., p.339) In view of this we should find it natural that he was so engrossed in cultural exchange projects.

During World War II when he was working in Kunming as special assistant to the ambassador, representative of the Library of Congress, and as a director of the American Publications Service, he did his utmost to appeal to the American government to attach great importance to China cultural relations and he also took an active part in Sino-American cultural exchanges. He obtained many microfilms and books from his country and distributed them to universities in China. Protecting and offering financial assistance to the Chinese liberals, such as Qian Duansheng, Liang Sicheng and Fei Xiaotong, became a preoccupation at that time. He thought that American-trained liberals would "form the bridge between the U.S. and China." (Fairbank, p.238)

2.2. Predicting Jiang Jieshi's "Losing the Mandate" in 1943

When the Pacific War was only half over, Fairbank came to China in September, 1942 for the second time as an employee of OWI and as a special assistant to the American ambassador. This time, he travelled to many places and made wide contacts with a variety of people, most of whom were leading miserable lives because of

GMD's political corruption and economic deterioration. Fairbank also noticed that "in the second half of 1943, the ineffectiveness of Chiang Kai-shek's (Jiang Jieshi's) government became widely apparent despite his efforts at tighter control and personal leadership." (Fairbank, p.244)

Fairbank's mood toward the Chinese political scene at that time progressed through the following stages: "distrust of the KMT (GMD), disillusion as to liberal potentialities, and admiration of the local leftists." (ibid., p.244)

His abhorrence of the Nationalist regime found full expression in the following taken from his manuscript:

By August 1943, I saw little hope in the present regime because it cannot trust the mass of people emotionally and is too inefficient to help them much practically. It may stagger along with appalling suffering and calamities dogging its trail just because there are not enough people with guts to do something about it. (ibid., p.244)

Through his careful examination, he came to the conclusion that the Nationalist regime was self-destructing and accordingly on the way out of power. Thus by late 1943, Fairbank concluded that Jiang Jieshi, as the symbol and forefront of the Nationalist regime, had lost the "Mandate of Heaven".

The longer he stayed in China, the more disappointed he felt about the Jiang's regime. As a result, he gradually shifted his attention to some new friends on the Left in Chongqing, and in a few months established good relations with some communist friends such as Zhou Enlai, Qiao Guanhua and Wang Bingnan. From then on, he began to understand the revolutionary cause of the Communists.

"Yenan (Yan'an) glowed in the distance." (ibid., p.266) In order to know more about the leftists, Fairbank suggested that the American government put a consul in Yan'an. But until then, the American government made no sound efforts to do so. "This is a serious failure in American policy, since Yenan (Yan'an) is a major observation post" (ibid., p.272), Fairbank wrote in his memoir. He further stressed the importance of America's contacting with Yan'an, by saying that he expected "some modern imperialist" to go to China and "meddle in" Chinese affairs instead of taking a ringside seat for the catastrophe, and that the United States should have consuls and observers in "the North", a plane service, and air bases. His appeal for getting in touch with "the North" supported by many others including John Stewart Service and John Davies resulted in the American government adopting their proposal and the American Army military observer group, or so-called "Dixie Mission" settling in Yan'an in July, 1944. Such was his views and in a sense, they were something of foresight and sagacity.

As the end of the Second World War drew near, the Chinese Communist Party had grown stronger. Without a question they would take the lead in the Chinese revolution. Jiang Jie-shi's regime had already shown the symptoms of decline, because of its economic

deterioration and political reaction. The American government was reluctant to acknowledge this, for they still had illusion about Jiang's regime and continued to stand by the side of the Nationalist regime. Fairbank thought it was unwise for the American government to do so. In a letter to Alger Hiss, official of the U.S. State Department, Fairbank made clear his practical judgment of the Chinese situation, which shows how disappointed he was about the Jiang's regime. He wrote:

The regime now in power has got itself into a situation which can be described as "proto-fascist", in the sense that a small political group hold tenaciously to power in the government with hopes of using industrialization as a tool of perpetuating their power and with ideas which are socially conservative and backward-looking rather than aiming to keep up with the times. (ibid., p.282)

Furthermore, Fairbank also found that the politicians of the Jiang's government were too busy to start a program of mass education and frankly didn't believe it and that they even distrusted the people. In one word, the Jiang's regime underestimated the power of the masses and was divorced from them, which proved to be its fatal weakness and main factor of Jiang's defeat. So the Nationalist regime could not match with the Chinese Communist Party in many aspects. Hence in 1944 when Fairbank came back to Washington, he brought back with him the primary conviction that the revolutionary movement in China was inherent in the conditions of life there; and that it could not be suppressed by the provocative coercion of the CC clique headed by the Chen brothers (Chen Lifu, Chen Guofu) and Dai Li police; and that the ideals of liberation for the peasantry and of science and democracy inherited from the May Fourth era twenty years before were patriotic and kinetic, but Jiang Jieshi had nothing adequate to oppose these ideals. Jiang's fate could not be harder to predict. "We must wait for the Great Chinese Revolution which may some day eventuate," (ibid., p.284) Fairbank concluded.

2.3 Opposing American Support of Jiang Jieshi in the Civil War

During his nine-month stay in postwar China between October, 1945 and July, 1946, as China director of USIS, Fairbank witnessed the Nationalist government with its American arms spread itself out to the major northern cities while its carpet-bagging politicians despoiled and alienated the reoccupied areas of East China. The normal upper-class support for the GMD was even eroded by corruption and inflation. After Wen Yiduo's assassination in broad daylight in July, 1946, Fairbank realized that shooting down such a figure signified escalated Dai Li-CC efforts to intimidate dissent by force and to eliminate both the liberals and the CCP. Fairbank strongly condemned such barbarous actions. With the collapse of the Marshall mediation, it was evident that civil war might break out at any time. But the American public were deluded and

knew little about the real situation in China. So Fairbank felt it urgent to immediately warn the American public not to back Jiang Jieshi and his right-wing GMD, who were so busily digging their graves. Greatly shocked by the assassination of Wen Yiduo and Li Gongpu, Fairbank wrote an article entitled "Our Chance in China", which had a certain amount of influence in the United States at that time. This article published in the *Atlantic Monthly* was regarded as a policy-relevant document in which Fairbank vehemently denounced the perverse acts and banditry of the GMD rightists. This article, therefore, became a symbol of Fairbank's open condemnation of the reaction of the GMD and opposition to America's support of the Jiang's regime. In this article he maintained:

He [Wen Yiduo] was killed by agents of those who hold the real power in the Chinese National Government which the United States recognizes and has been supporting, the same diehards who have been using American planes, gasoline, supplies, arms and ships in civil war against the Chinese Communists. (Fairbank, 1974, p.4)

Furthermore, Fairbank pointed out the dilemma of the American China policy in the postwar period; that is, the Americans should know how to foster stability without backing reaction, how to choose between authoritarian extremes of communism and incipient fascism, and how to nurture in a backward country both the economic well-being which only a strongly centralized control could ensure and the individual freedom which went with representative government and civil liberties.

According to his rational analysis and observations on the spot, Fairbank confirmed that the Jiang's regime was incompetent to give the masses economic security and real freedoms to express their thoughts. So he had much doubt whether it was wise for the American government to continue supporting the GMD reactionaries. He warned the American government that "revolution will endanger our liberal interest, yet reaction is even now destroying it; the liberalism in which we believe may be crushed between two authoritarian extremes." (ibid., p.4) But the American people and government seemed to prefer the known evils of reaction to the unknown dangers of revolution. (ibid., p.4) As Fairbank saw it, such a conservative stand would be harmful either to the Americans or to the Chinese people, and that the Americans should know that the Chinese Communist Party was the only force to lead the Chinese people in improving their economic conditions and political freedom.

When analyzing the Chinese revolutionary situations, Fairbank expressed his understanding of them by stating that "economic security comes before political freedom in the wants of mankind; a man will think of food before he thinks of free speech." (ibid., p.9) What he seemed to be stating was that if China's economy was expanding and the individual's standard of living was rising, the tradition of political liberty could grow to maturity. But

the fact was that under Jiang's reactionary regime, the economy was becoming increasingly worse and that most people found it hard to keep their body and soul together. So the GMD reactionaries as the core of the Nationalist regime, had already lost the power to lead the Chinese revolution and to keep the masses, especially peasants, secure economically and politically. But as Fairbank saw it, the Chinese Communists were the most effective protagonists of the economic well-being of the peasant. By helping the peasant to meet his economic wants, the Communists gained his political support. The revolution to be led by the Chinese Communist Party was in keeping with the aspirations of the peasant wishing to change. The CCP drew wide sustenance from the masses by living in the villages, working with the peasant, eating their food, leading their lives and thinking their thoughts. Besides, their Party leaders also had the virtue of unselfishness, so the communist movement was widely supported by the Chinese people. In Fairbank's terms, the Chinese Communist Party had "won the Mandate of Heaven to rule the empire".

Fairbank was fully aware that the American support of the Jiang's regime and the lack of tolerance of communists were largely due to the close ties between the Chinese Communist Party and the Soviet Union, but to what degree they attached to the Soviets? Fairbank had reached the conclusion that "the Communist Party regime is plainly not a Moscow puppet" (Fairbank, 1974, p.15). He said the Chinese Communist Party's affinity with Soviet Russia was only "doctrinal and theoretical, not practical and procedural." (Fairbank, p.4) The Chinese Communist Party were genuine communists for they were composed solely of Chinese, who for twenty years had faced Chinese conditions without appreciable outside aid and had painfully worked out a program suited to the Chinese soul. Therefore, Fairbank affirmed that if the Americans could not know these Chinese realities better and saw only the "specter of Russia at North China," (ibid., p.10) they could not make out realistic policy toward China; and if the Americans didn't change their current attitude toward the Chinese people and kept on carrying out their current China policy, what they were doing did not seem any different from "cutting our own throats in China." (ibid., p.7)

At the end of that article he warned the American government and the American public:

We should never forget our limitations. We can hinder or accelerate the revolutionary process in China, but we can not stop it. In any case we cannot erase communism from the Chinese political scene, however many tanks and planes we give to Chiang (Jiang Jieshi). If we oppose the revolution blindly, we shall find ourselves eventually expelled from Asia by a mass movement. (ibid., p.16-18)

In view of his comprehension of the Chinese revolutionary scene, Fairbank asserted that the United States should fully develop and maintain contact with the

People's Government led by Chairman Mao, and that the American government should not continue a policy of quarantine or cutting adrift. Instead, Fairbank suggested that "relief supplies go where they are most needed, regardless of politics, and the technical, financial and other assistance should be available freely to all sides." (ibid., p.18)

Such were his suggestions which at that time were far-sighted and sagacious, but regrettably, the policy of supporting Jiang Jieshi in its fight against the CCP was America's set policy. After the failure of Marshall's mediation, there was a heated discussion between the Executive branch and the Congress on the American China policy. The divergence between the two sides lay in the dilemma of supporting Jiang's regime with or without conditions, or only economically, or fully. In this discussion, Fairbank, as well as other pundits vehemently opposed the American policy of aiding Jiang in the Civil War. In his 1947 article, "China's Prospect and U.S. Policy", Fairbank warned the American government that judging from the actions of the parties in China, the far future belonged to the people fighting for the well-being of the Chinese people and that the Americans were destined to failure if they continued to give support to the Jiang's regime to fight against communism. He concluded that "after setting out to fight communism in Asia, the American people will be obliged in the end to fight the peoples of Asia." (Evans, p.131)

From what is presented above, we can clearly see Fairbank's attitude of opposing the support of the Jiang's regime. As a historian and expert analyst, he did what he could, but the American government at that time appeared to turn a deaf ear to his views. Eventually the United States was driven out of China in 1949.

2.4 Advocating the Recognition of the PRC

John K. Fairbank's friendliness to New China was born out in the fact that he actively advocated that the United States recognize the new government on the basis of correct judgment of the communists' political power.

A few months before the People's Republic of China was founded, the outcome of revolution in China was a foregone conclusion. The Chinese Communist Party had won the Civil War and was about to establish a new regime. Under such circumstances the policy-makers of the American government knew clearly that they had failed to attain their hope pinned on the Jiang's regime, and thus they attempted to withdraw from the Chinese civil war by taking steps such as evacuating their military advisory group, refusing to give new aid to the GMD's regime, and drafting a White Paper on American China relations. Nevertheless the American government did not change its hostile stance towards the Chinese revolution. In the United States there were heated discussions about the American China policy. In the summer of 1949, an academic seminar on the American East Asian Policy was

held at Harvard University. In the monograph submitted to the conference, Fairbank pointed out that the Chinese Communist revolution was a genuine social movement in which the Chinese Communist Party had undertaken a revolutionary movement to rebuild China "for the common people." It was not merely a fight for power or a change of dynasty. To the Chinese common people, communism was a good thing because it liberated the peasants and gave them a multitude of rights so that they could become the masters of their country. The leaders of the Chinese Communist Party were real communists, who were undertaking many kinds of fruitful reforms including improving public health, literacy, emancipation of women and giving economic aid to farmers. All these had won immense popular support from the masses. "From the point of view of the Chinese common people", he boldly proclaimed, "the Chinese Communist regime, judging it in Chinese terms by its record to date, now offers promise of being the best government which China has had in modern times." (Fairbank, 1949, p.3) In one word, as Fairbank saw it, the communist victory in China was unavoidable, and the "Mandate of Heaven" was transmitted from GMD to CCP. With this in mind Fairbank advised the United States to abandon Jiang's regime in Taiwan. If the Americans went on supporting Jiang Jieshi and attempted to use their force to keep Taiwan out of Chinese Communist hands, they would have more to lose than to gain; if the Americans accorded a new Chinese central government some sort of *de facto* recognition if the Chinese sought it, the Americans "have more to gain than to lose." (ibid.)

In October 1949, the State Department's roundtable conference, which included twenty-four academics and businessmen, produced a general agreement about the desirability of quickly recognizing the new communist government. At this conference, Fairbank advocated recognition as soon as administrative steps could be worked out. (Evans, p.128)

In the fall of 1949, Fairbank felt that conditions in Washington had been ripe for first steps toward normalization of bilateral ties. The reasons of his advocacy of recognition of the People's government were: first, Fairbank thought that the victory of the CCP in China was proved to be an inevitable outcome of the typical Chinese revolution; the Chinese Communist Party was the only leading force which could bring economic assurance and real happiness to the Chinese people; secondly, the Jiang's regime backed by the American imperialists constantly did unpopular things such as appeasing Japanese aggression, and waging civil war, so that it could not represent the interests of the whole Chinese people, who were the main force of the revolution. As a result, the GMD lost the "mandate of Heaven". Thirdly, if the American government failed to recognize the PRC, China would be pushed deeper into the Soviet orbit, which was

not something that the Americans would want to see; and finally, an American presence in Beijing would benefit its interests including mission and business. So in Fairbank's view, giving recognition to New China would be good for both countries.

With the founding of the People's Republic of China, because of mutual misunderstanding, it was more difficult for the two countries to keep ties with each other. The policy-relevant prescription he wrote for the American government was to contact with New China:

We must strive to maintain contact with the Chinese people as best we can, preserving educational and cultural activities whenever possible, cooperating with United Nations agencies, developing whatever commercial and cultural exchange the new Chinese regime will permit and we ourselves consider desirable. (Fairbank, 1949, p.23)

Fairbank himself was also active in these activities. Beginning from the spring of 1949, the virtues of maintaining contact with the PRC dominated his public statements and private agenda. For example, in November, 1949 he circulated a letter to some American writers and high officials such as Pearl Buck, Leighton Stuart and Arther Dean to invite them to a private meeting at the Ding Ho restaurant in New York. The Ding Ho meeting was convened in the hope "that we should not let China be consigned to the Iron Curtain without making an effort to prevent it." (Evans, p.128) The most important thing of the meeting was that it produced "The Committee of Continuing Contact with the Chinese People". This was the result of his direct effort.

Fairbank not only appealed to the American government for recognizing the PRC but also advocated admission of the PRC to the United Nations. His advocacy was undoubtedly a sort of heresy in the eyes of some Americans at that time because they were frightful about the PRC. In the subsequent McCarthy era, Fairbank was persecuted and labeled as a Communist propagandist because of his pro-communist judgements of the CCP and his friendly attitude toward New China.

Although Fairbank was unfairly treated by his countrymen and even suspected by his communist friends, as he noted in *The United States and China*, that he was considered as an "imperialist spy" and "the number-one cultural secret agent of American imperialism" in Beijing, (Fairbank, 1983, p.352) he still stuck to his views and was never slack in his effort for the improvement of Sino-American relations.

2.5 Standing for Improving Sino-American Relations

In the 1950's two major events happened which seriously affected the relations between China and the United States. One was the Korean War, lasting three years. With its outbreak, the two countries became belligerents. There was no possibility of further publicly discussing the Chinese issue in America. It seemed that any topic related

to China had become a forbidden zone that no one would dare to step into without much trouble. What was more serious was McCarthyism, which ran rampant from 1950 to 1954. In the McCarthy era, many China specialists including Fairbank, Owen Lattimore, John S. Service, and John Davies, were blacklisted and some of them were even purged from their working posts. These two events made it hard for those China experts to publicize their views and it was out of the question to make any effort for the improvement of the bilateral relations. In such hostile circumstances, what Fairbank could do was to concentrate his energy on Chinese studies. Fairbank said in his memoir, "the answer to McCarthyism in the case of China had to be education". (Fairbank, 1982, p.355) So the 1950's witnessed his most productive period as a historian, during which time, he authored, co-authored or edited 10 books. Therefore it was only natural that his involvement in public debate declined noticeably in the 1950's, just as his student and biographer Paul Evans said, "during the Eisenhower years (1950-1961), Fairbank contributed little on contemporary developments in China or American Far Eastern Policy; his writings on China policy between 1952 and 1960 totalled less than 75 pages." (Xu Guoqi, 1994, p.89)

But by the spring of 1966, China and its southern neighbour loomed as central issues in American foreign policy. The reason for concern was quite obvious: 200,000 American soldiers were fighting in Vietnam. The war was escalating and the Americans feared that there was a growing danger that it would precipitate an even larger conflict, Korea-style, with China. Thus the discussion on China, China policy and Vietnam had come to a boil by the spring of 1966.

In March 1966, the Foreign Relations Committee of the American Senate chaired by Senator J. William Fulbright held a series of hearings about relations with China, and the American China policy. Fourteen witnesses, most of whom were academics, appeared. The list included John K. Fairbank, Doak Barnett, David Rowe, Benjamin Schwartz, Hans Morgenthau and George Taylor. (Evans, p.252) During these hearings, most of the witnesses held the view that the American China policy be changed toward the road of improvement of the bilateral relations; only a few diehards such as Walter Judd, stubbornly clung to their hostile attitudes toward the PRC. When Fairbank gave his testimony on May 20, he expressed disapproval of the United States' involvement in Vietnam and asserted that some practical effective steps should be taken to improve Sino-American relations. He maintained that while reviewing the China problem, the Americans needed a historical perspective on China, on America and on Sino-American relations.

Who was the real destroyer of world stability, China or America? To this question, Fairbank offered his answer. He said:

The Chinese, while verbally bellicose and threatening the

world with revolutionary takeover, have in fact kept almost all their troops at home, while the generous Americans, seeking international stability, have sent large forces to fight close to China in Vietnam. (Fairbank, 1967, p.92)

Obviously here, Fairbank spoke out the fact that it was the United States, not China that was the real source of world instability, which, as Fairbank saw it, the Americans should know clearly. We can see that the United States that often posed as the defender of world peace was actually the destroyer of it.

In expounding the history of Sino-American relations, Fairbank said "the Americans were generally conscious of having long befriended China and recently been kicked in the teeth for it." (ibid., p.96)

Were the Americans sincerely kind and friendly to the Chinese people? Fairbank further stated that by coming up with the Open Door doctrine, the Americans prided themselves on championing China's modernization and self-determination, so they considered themselves above the nasty imperialism and power politics of the Europeans. But in fact, Fairbank continued, the Americans enjoyed the fruits of aggression and got the benefits, letting the British and others fight the dirty colonial wars. "We [the Americans] were and are involved in East Asian power politics at least as much as in those of Europe." (ibid., p.98)

Fairbank believed that the Americans were an integral part and the major representative of the western world that was the nineteenth century agent of traditional China's downfall. "Stuck in a dirty war today, we would do well to lower our self-esteem, not be so proud, acknowledge our western inheritance of both good and evil, and see ourselves as hardly more noble and not much smarter than the British and French in their day," (ibid., p.98) he concluded.

The situation in the middle of the 1960's was that there were cognate Sino-American resentments. In such case, what should America do? Fairbank suggested that the United States change its China policy of isolation and adopt roundabout ways to improve the bilateral relations step by step. Here, it is worth mentioning his suggestions, which is summarized as follows:

- 1) We [the Americans] should take the long way around and expect our own relations with China to improve only after others' relations have done so;
- 2) We can hardly take the lead, but instead should acquiesce in the effort to get Peking (Beijing) to participate in the international order rather than try to subvert and destroy it;
- 3) We should open the door for China's participation in the world scene and get Peking(Beijing) into a multitude of activities abroad. (ibid., p.99)

Fairbank concluded that a new American attitude could catalyze rather than obstruct the stability of Beijing's relations with the international world, isolating Beijing could only worsen America's problem, and it was time to change this out-of-date American China policy.

Since the American policy of "containment" was

an already set plan, Fairbank could do little to undo it. So he had to receive it as it was given, but he had his own understanding of the “containment” policy, as is elucidated in an article: “If military containment is not to trigger major war, it must be explicitly and credibly limited, ‘containment’ should aim simply to contain, not to terrify, confuse, or least of provoke.” (ibid., p.101)

Fairbank also emphasized that “containment” alone was a blind alley; only a policy of contact would work in both directions. In this case both countries could give and take. In order to push the two countries into a two-way street of contact, Fairbank advised that the first step the Americans should take in their thinking was to abandon the fear of Chinese military menace. The reason why he warned the Americans to dispel the horror of the Chinese military threat was that he was fully aware that the military force of China has always been defensive not aggressive, and that in the Chinese political tradition there was hardly any element of aggression or expansion. So he said, “China will not fight us unless we get too close to its frontiers and ask for trouble”. (ibid., p.102)

By saying this, Fairbank had only one purpose, that is, to urge the United States to get a better understanding of the situation and to take concrete measures to improve bilateral relations. He thought the most important step the United States should take was to enlarge contact with the PRC. “Containment” and “isolation” could only aggravate the Sino-U.S. antagonism. Only through contact with the Chinese people, could the cultural differences between China and the United States eventually be comprehended by the two peoples. In 1966, in an article when writing again about “containment”, Fairbank said the word “containment” should mean resistance to aggression, not to the expansion of all Chinese influence. “Containment”, as he saw it, was only half a policy for the United States and that it had to be balanced and accompanied by programs of peaceful intercourse, by non-containment; “containment” of China must be balanced by encouragement of China’s peaceful participation in the international world of diplomacy, trade, travel, information, disarmament negotiations, and technical and cultural exchange; without contact, informational, commercial, cultural and diplomatic, there would be more occasions on which the two countries would be misled by their respective misunderstandings.

To sum up, his view of contact and understanding has some enduring significance and he had done his best for the improvement of Sino-American relations.

2.6 Promoting the Normalization of Sino-American Relations

When Henry Kissinger’s secret trip to Beijing and the plans for a presidential visit to follow was announced to the world on July 15, 1971, Fairbank was delighted to hear the news for he had not thought that the news could come so quickly. But in fact this was what he and others

had expected long before.

Early in 1966, at the Senator Fulbright’s hearings, Fairbank vigorously advocated *detente* with the PRC by contact and in later 1967, as a member of China Advisory panel of the State Department, Fairbank argued for unilateral American moves toward more normal relations with China, especially at the time in 1967-68 when China was weak from domestic turmoil. He was convinced that the Cultural Revolution in China and the American military escalation in Vietnam had created a good opportunity and a need for diplomatic initiatives to reduce China’s isolation. In an article in the *New York Times*, Fairbank pressed for the necessity to end China’s isolation and to create an opportunity for her to enter into the world order. When some third parties resold American goods to China, Fairbank urged the United States to lift the anti-China trade embargo and abolish it as a useful gesture to relax the tension of the bilateral relations. In his opinion there was no need to hold out against Beijing’s entry into the United Nations. (Fairbank, 1982, p.398)

The changes of the world atmosphere in the 1960’s suggested to Fairbank that it was time for both China and the United States to normalize their relations. On the Chinese side, the splitting from the Soviet Union and the officially curbing of the Cultural Revolution offered the chance for the Chinese leaders to turn their attention outward. On the American side, the military failure in the Vietnam War, suggestive the failure of “containment”, compelled the Americans to adjust their global security strategy so as to ally the PRC to check the Soviet Union. Under such conditions, both countries could grasp the opportunities to open the door of Sino-U.S. *detente*.

Before Nixon became President in 1969, public opinion in America apparently tended to swing in the direction of favouring the improvement of Sino-American relations. After Nixon took office in the White House, Nixon and his assistant Kissinger committed themselves to opening relation with Beijing, and to orchestrating a succession of signals aiming at reconciliation. The PRC responded actively to such signals. Consequently, Kissinger’s secret trip to the PRC was successfully realized in 1972.

According to Fairbank’s memoir, even before Kissinger’s trip to China, he, on one occasion, had apprised Kissinger of the virtues of a presidential trip, which could take advantage of the tradition of China’s receptivity to bearers of tribute. Later Kissinger reminded Fairbank of the talk they had had, with the unstated implication that it changed history.

As Ping-Pong diplomacy germinated in the spring and summer of 1971, Fairbank flatly refused to join the Committee for a New China Policy, led by some of the more radical members of the Asian Studies profession, but alternatively supported a lobby group—Citizens to Change American China policy. In June 1971, along with

sixty colleagues, Fairbank signed a letter to the *New York Times*, calling for the immediate admission of the PRC to the United Nations.

The PRC's entry into the UN as he advocated became a reality in October, 1971.

Two months later, buoyed by the relaxation of the trade embargo, the much-heralded exchange of athletes, and President Nixon's new designation of China as the "People's Republic", rather than "Red China", Fairbank had sensed that conditions were ripe for the United States and the PRC to take diplomatic reconciling moves aiming at normalizing the bilateral relations.

In an article entitled "The Time is Ripe for China to Shift Outward Again" in the *New York Times* on April 18, 1971, Fairbank said that "our contact with Beijing was less surprising than the fact that it was so long delayed". He further pointed out in the same article that from 1950 to 1971, Washington had officially sent more men to the moon than to China, even though China was closer and more populous, and the trip less costly and dangerous. He sensed that changes in Beijing were creating a special opportunity. Following 1965, "the year of failure in China's attempted leadership of world revolution," (Fairbank, 1987, p.127) the Cultural Revolution had absorbed Chinese attention while producing a domestic stalemate. The PRC had failed, both in its efforts to assume leadership of the Third World and, later in its attempt to opt out of foreign relations. The PRC would continue to use its tactics to influence the world, but Fairbank thought it likely that a turn outward would soon occur. On the American side, the apparent readiness to withdraw most of the American soldiers from Vietnam, coupled with the Nixon administration's long continued overtures toward contact with Beijing, indicated that the time was ripe for China to shift outward again. What happened later was that the PRC really did shift outward with the Nixon visit, as Fairbank had predicted.

Fairbank greeted the 15 July White House announcement with undisguised joy. In an article in the *Washington Post*, July 19, 1971 entitled, "It's an Old Chinese Custom: Peking (Beijing) has Received Potentate for a Thousand Years", he tried to fit the Nixon trip into the context of the voyages of earlier western potentates to the Middle Kingdom [China], suggesting that "Mr. Nixon will not stay long enough to suffer culture shock or sinicization but the Chinese view of reality may have gotten to him even if briefly." (Fairbank, 1987, p.128)

He also warned those including Nixon who would go to visit China that "Peking (Beijing) is the center of a different world not concerned about the Dow Jones average, the hemline, the World Series, or the next election," (ibid., p.128) where people might have different concepts of values and anyone who would stay for long would feel reoriented — called upon to respond to a different part of the globe and accept the values of a

different way of life.

Fairbank firmly believed that by contact, the two different peoples could understand each other better, no matter how wide the differences were.

Fairbank better realized the importance of Sino-American *detente*, pointing out that "Mr. Nixon's journey for peace from Washington to Beijing no doubt succeeded roughly in proportion as the rest of our troops in Vietnam had already made their own journey for peace for Saigon to San Francisco." (Evans, p.290)

In China, he cautioned, dignity preceded advocacy. In order to avoid causing unhappiness on both sides, the best precaution would be careful preparation and strict observance of the rules of decorum, which would preclude a reenactment of Nixon's famous kitchen-exhibit debate with Chairman Khrushchev. (Tao Wenzhao, 1992, p.392)

In another article, Fairbank praised the visit as hopeful and creative in bringing "our East Asian policy more in line with diplomatic realities". (Evans, p.290) Its implications would be wide-ranging, puncturing the Taiwan fantasy of a return to the mainland, offering Beijing the option of pursuing active negotiations with the United States, and making it unlikely that the United States would continue to oppose the admission of the PRC to the United Nations.

As Nixon's February journey was drawing near, Fairbank concentrated on the related problems of what could be expected from the visit and what could be done to improve its chances of success.

He pinned big hopes on the Nixon visit, describing it as "the best thing that has happened in ten years—and probably twenty—in American policy toward East Asia". (Evans, p.230) The historic meeting would be valuable to both sides.

From February 21 to February 28, 1972, U.S. president Richard M. Nixon paid a successful state visit to the PRC, and the Shanghai Communique's declaration became an historic turning-point in Sino-American relations, which indicated the beginning of the process of the normalization of relations between the two countries. Nixon's trip also set a good foundation for the further improvement of the bilateral relations. Although the Nixon's trip created the "thawing" of relations between the PRC and the U.S.A., the normalization was not realized quickly.

In such circumstances, Fairbank urged the United States to put an early end to the stalemate as quickly as possible. He knew that the major obstacle to endanger the normalization was the Taiwan problem. It was true that Taiwan remained the timebomb in Sino-American rapprochement. Fairbank devoted far more attention to this problem than any other questions, trying to defuse the "bomb" in a reasonable and acceptable way. In the article, "American Intervention and the Chinese Revolution" in November, 1976, Fairbank stated that the best reason for the United States' accepting the doctrine of One China in

the Chinese realm was that there are millions of Chinese believing in it; and that Taiwan has been part of China for three hundred years, first as a prefecture of Fujian Province in early modern times, then as a province of the Chinese empire. But in American current policy, there still existed a contradiction between theory and practice, between the acknowledged ideal of China's unity and the obvious reality of their dealing with two regimes. In view of these facts, Fairbank warned that if the Taiwan issue couldn't be resolved properly it would be a time-bomb, which might carry with it the potentiality of another Chinese-American War; and Americans should realize that the setting up by the PRC of a liaison mission in Washington in 1973 was a concession in the spirit of going at least with the United States. But if such state of the reactions last too long, the Shanghai Communiqué of 1972 was likely to be called into question and the Beijing-Washington rapprochement might retrogress. Conclusively, Fairbank urged the American government to take prompt steps to realize the normalization of Sino-American relations.

Two years later, Sino-American rapprochement became true as he had wished. Fairbank was full of hope about the bright future of the Sino-U.S. coexistence and kept on making more efforts to promote the development of the bilateral relations until his death.

2.7 Comments on His Viewpoints

As a historian, Fairbank observed the realities of the two different countries from historical and cultural perspectives. On the basis of his careful observations, Fairbank put forward his views on how to deal with relations properly. In retrospect, we can see that his viewpoints outlined above had significant keen insights. First, he discovered that the negligence of cultural exchange between the two different countries would lead to isolation, which in turn would bring about misunderstanding; and that mutual misunderstanding, to a larger extent, hampered the normal course of the bilateral relations, though it was not the main reason for more than two decades of hostility. Bearing this in mind, throughout his life, Fairbank maintained a position of promoting cultural exchange between China and the United States, both of which have their own respective cultural backgrounds and historical traditions. Only through exchanges—an important way of contact, can the two sides be well understood and then cultural differences would eventually reduce. Therefore, the two countries could peacefully coexist. This was the goal that Fairbank had diligently striven after for scores of years, to create understanding and desolve the cultural conflicts existing between China and the U.S.A.. Here he offered us a new angle of interpreting the universal relations between two different cultures.

Secondly, as an American historian, Fairbank could take a rather practical and realistic stand to make a

deep study of the history of Sino-American relations. By pursuing the history of China with emphasis on the Chinese political, diplomatic and cultural traditions, Fairbank acquired a better understanding of China and its revolution, which led to the transition of his ideological thoughts. This is precisely the reason why, in the 1940's, he changed his position from advocating and supporting Jiang Jieshi to later criticizing him, and eventually to appealing to the American government for abandoning Jiang's regime.

At the same time, by comparing all the previous regimes, Fairbank concluded that "the Chinese Communists (CCP) are genuine communists", and "the communists regime...now offers promise of being the best government which China has had in modern times." (Fairbank, 1949, p.3) It can not be denied that his conclusion is based on the facts of the Chinese revolutionary reality. There is no doubt that history has entrusted the Communist Party with the task of leading the Chinese Revolution in taking the socialist road. We Chinese want to know whether Americans, always flaunting the banner of liberty and freedom, should have any reason to oppose the Chinese people of making their own choice? Every nation should have a right to choose its own way, free of outside interference, which has become an international convention. But the United States always attempts to break with it. Power politics doesn't always have its final say, just as Fairbank said in one article that the Americans should "realize that for some time to come we must be content with a very minor role in Chinese affairs." (Fairbank, 1949, p.19) History proved his words; the collapse of Jiang's regime on the mainland and America's being driven out of China were good examples.

Thirdly, Fairbank always stuck to his political conviction that history must contribute to current affairs. So utilizing his historical knowledge, Fairbank became very active in propagating the virtues of the Chinese Communist Party and its revolution in the United States and managed to influence the American public as well as Washington so that they could know more about China and establish the American China policy on a rational and practical base. For example, since the CCP's victory over the mainland, the United States made irrational judgement that the Chinese were expansionists and warlike, so it tried to "contain" the PRC by many means. But the fact, as Fairbank pointed out, is that it was the United States not China which sent its troops to fight in alien lands. Americans should introspect their own doings. Containment, as Fairbank saw it, was only a dead-end from the long-term point of view; American government should carry out the policy of "contact" and "competition", not "containment". Partially due to his new concept of "containment", the United States progressively adjusted its China policy, which made it possible for the two countries

to develop their bilateral relations. There is no doubt that the reversal of the American public opinion and the American China policy toward the normal development of Sino-American relations was in part the reciprocation of his strenuous efforts. Fairbank realized his political dream at last.

While we appraise Fairbank's positive viewpoints on Sino-American relations, we should not fail to note his limitations and drawbacks. In spite of his pro-China views and suggestions, he never changed his beliefs. While showing sympathy to the Chinese people and promoting bilateral relations, he was not a fellow traveller of the Chinese Communists, but was an American "bourgeois historian", who served the interest of the ruling clique of the United States. He more than once reiterated that the American China policy should be made to protect the interests of the United States. So his pro-China views on Sino-American relations did not mean a transition of his beliefs and ideals. Of course at the same time we can not deny that he was a far-sighted historian and China specialist; that his political wisdom and courage contribute a lot to the rapprochement between the two countries. Without those contributions he made to the mutual relations, his fate would have been just like those of many other historians, who were just transient figures in history. People will remember him for his glory rather than his notoriety.

As part of his reflections on Sino-American relations, Fairbank's views on the Taiwan question seemed rather changeable and disputable among the Chinese people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait, because his views in this regard were directly related with the status of Taiwan and, in a sense, reflected America's attitudes toward the Taiwan issue. Therefore, as an integral part of his reflection on Sino-American relations, his views on the Taiwan issue will be discussed in the next part.

3. FAIRBANK'S REFLECTIONS ON THE TAIWAN ISSUE

In the following pages, as a deepening part of the analysis of Fairbank's perspectives in the area of Sino-American relations, the writer's focus will be upon Fairbank's views on the Taiwan issue. From the 1940's to the 1970's, Fairbank had shown much concern over the Taiwan issue, about which he offered many policy-recommendations to the American government. During this long period, influenced by what had happened internally and externally, Fairbank's viewpoints on the Taiwan issue had changed several times but eventually he came back to the basic fact that there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of it. His perspectives on Taiwan had much impact on both sides of the Taiwan Strait; and thus became rather controversial among the Chinese as well as the Americans. However in the 1970's, his conclusive

advocacy of "one China policy", in a sense, paved the way for the breakthrough of Sino-American relations.

3.1 Advocating the P.L.A.'s Liberation of Taiwan in 1949

As a China specialist, Fairbank's historical knowledge made him see quite clearly about the Chinese revolutionary situation. From an early time, he had, as outlined in a previous part, predicted that the victory of the Chinese Communist Party was inevitable as he became more disappointed in Jiang's regime. His understanding of the CCP and sympathy for the Chinese Communists made him very active in trying to persuade the American government to adjust its China policy so as to be beneficial to the two countries. Around 1949, when the Chinese Revolution was on the way to its final victory with the P.L.A. liberating much of the mainland, Americans realized that they were plunged in a dilemma: it was hard for the Americans to decide whether they should make an accommodation with the People's Republic or whether they should continue to keep an alliance with Jiang's regime in Taiwan. The revolutionary situation in China was quite clear that, in the summer of 1949, the Chinese people led by the CCP had "mopped up Kuomintang (GMD) stragglers" (Cohen, 1990, p.166) on the mainland. The question of what to do about Taiwan was debated heatedly in the United States. There was a considerable divergence of opinions about the status of Taiwan. Fairbank, as well as other informed Americans, proposed that the American government wash its hands off Taiwan, leaving it to be liberated by the Communists. Fairbank suggested "The United States should refuse to take responsibility for Taiwan, but could continue economic assistance without military aid, as part of her attempted disengagement from China." (Fairbank, HUP, 1982, p.354)

In the summer of 1949, at an academic forum on the American East Asian policy, Fairbank said "we probably have more to lose than gain by any further support of Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi), or by the use of American force to keep Formosa (Taiwan) out of Chinese Communist hands." (Evans, p.129) Here, apparently, he was advising the United States to abandon Jiang's government-in-exile in Taiwan.

On other occasions, he recommended that "in the long run we should not even rule out the possibility of letting Formosa (Taiwan) be joined to Communist China as part of a general settlement in the Far East" and elsewhere he noted that "in the long term Formosa (Taiwan) is less valuable to us than peace with China." (Evans, p.129)

Such recommendations to the American government at that period would sound unreasonable today, but they might have been feasible in the 1940's. If we recall the situation then, we could accept that Fairbank's suggestion were not impossible at that time. Around 1949, the situation in China seemed considerably

subtle and the American government could not make an explicit assessment of the Chinese revolution. The Chinese revolutionary trend became irresistible, while Jiang's regime would quickly meet its doomsday. With the proclamation of the establishment of the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1949, and the collapse of the Jiang's regime on the mainland, the Americans had to face the toughest problem, how to deal with Taiwan. This problem suddenly rose to the surface and became a crucial obstacle between the PRC and the U.S.A.. In America, the divergence of views on Taiwan was so wide that the Truman administration seemed unable to make any proper decisions on the Taiwan problem until the beginning of the 1950's.

At the end of 1948, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) recommended that the United States militarily occupy Taiwan and its immediately adjacent islands, including the Pescadores (Penghu) for their strategic implications to U.S. security, but later the JCS ruled out the possibility of direct U.S. military involvement in Taiwan for two interlocked reasons: the strategic importance of Taiwan was not so vital as to justify such an action; there existed also a disparity between the actual military strength of the United States and its global obligations. (Gene T. Hsiao, and Michael Witunski, 1983, p.32)

Earlier in 1949, Truman and his National Security Council had concluded that the best way to deny Taiwan to the CCP was "to foster the Formosan (Taiwan) Independence Movement," (Cohen, 1990, p.166) initiated by the natives on the island. Because of this, the United States had no intention to meddle in a manner so obvious as to offend the international community or drive the Chinese Communists into an alliance with the Soviet Union. But Dean G. Acheson, Truman's Secretary of State, disagreed with Truman on this policy by stating that such doings would only create Chinese irredentism against the United States. He further suggested that "if our present policy is to have any hope of success in Formosa (Taiwan), we must carefully conceal our wish to separate the island from mainland control." (Hsiao, 1983, p.32) Moreover, George Kennan's vision of Taiwan was worth mentioning here for it represented another different attitude towards the Jiang's regime in Taiwan. As Acheson's policy planning director, Kennan went so far as to advocate the use of American forces to throw Jiang's army out of Taiwan and Penghu, and to substitute an American protectorate---an independent Taiwan regime, free of both GMD's control and of mainland's CCP control. His ideas proved too extreme and impractical. Some radicals, including some congressmen, retained an emotional commitment to Jiang Jieshi's regime. Casting Jiang's government aside was equal to delivering the final blow. So in November, 1949, several prominent Republicans, Senators William Knowland, and Robert Taft, joined by former President Herbert Hoover, called

on the American government to "protect Formosa (Taiwan)." Even General Douglas MacArthur and the Joint Chiefs joined in the call for action to deny Taiwan to the CCP. In all these confusions on Taiwan policies, Fairbank's views, like other liberals', seemingly provided a reasonable way for the American government to deal with the issue. These views helped President Truman walk out of the "maze." On January 5, 1950, in the hope of quieting things down, President Truman supported by Acheson, issued a statement, the major content of which was that the United States was determined to stay out of the Chinese civil war, had no interest in Formosa (Taiwan), and would offer no military aid or advice. (Cohen, 1990, p.167) With respect to the designing of this statement, Acheson made important certain contributions, for he persisted in abandoning the United States' effort to hold Taiwan and diminished the importance of the Taiwan Island. Acheson's main concern was in Europe, not in Asia. Like it or not, the Communist triumph in China was a reality. So in the late 1940's and early 1950's, the American administration and the American people had to accept the inevitable result and learn to live with the People's Republic. To the United States, bidding farewell to Taiwan seemed to be its most sensible choice. Taking all the above into consideration, we can see that Fairbank's advocacy of the P.L.A.'s liberating Taiwan in the late 1940's was not his own fantasy at all. It was the Korean War that changed everything. Fairbank's interest in Taiwan never decreased. He continued to make his own comments on Taiwan. After the outbreak of the war, he quickly adjusted his positions. This time his views were not favourable to China and thus his views could be seen as jeopardizing the bilateral relations of the PRC and the United States.

3.2 Advocating Taiwan's "Independence" in the 1950's

After the Korean War broke out in June, 1950, the status of Taiwan was held to have strategic importance to the United States, since it could be used by the Truman Administration as a base to contain the so-called "spreading of Communism" in Asia. So on July 27, 1950, the United States launched an armed aggression against Taiwan and Korea. From the standpoint of the Chinese people, the America's military action was obviously a kind of overt imperialist aggression into the Chinese territory. The America's aggressive action was strongly condemned by the then Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai on behalf of the Chinese government and its people. (He Chunchao *et al.*, 1988, p.194) However, even as a China specialist, Fairbank received no real information upon which to make out correct judgment about the features of the Korean War. He made an incorrect assessment that it was the Communists who waged the war. So he quickly changed his former position on Taiwan and stiffly supported the use of the Seventh Fleet to protect Taiwan

from the mainland's liberation, thus totally abandoning his earlier suggestion that the United States avoid intervening in the last act of the GMD-CCP struggle. His direct reason was that "the North Korean aggression of 1950 led to our Seventh Fleet patrolling the Formosa (Taiwan) Strait, to keep the island out of the war and protected from mainland attack". (Fairbank, HUP, 1983, p.355) Later he even presented more extensive reasons for the American intervention, saying that the fall of the Republic of China would alter the strategic balance in the Far East, jeopardize the security of Taiwan, and erode the confidence of America's allies in the remainder of non-communist Asia. He also made an appeal to the United States not to desert its ally, Taiwan. His real purpose was to promote Taiwan's independence.

In the second edition of his *The United States and China*, he confirmed that the United States should ensure Taiwan's independence and that Taiwan should be treated "as a single country, if the native people want to be independent". (Fairbank, 1958, p.322)

Fairbank even insisted that an "independent Taiwan" was the primary achievement of the American China policy since 1949. Yet, his view of "two Chinas" was strongly opposed by both Beijing and Taipei. By the late 1950's, his stand on Taiwan was once again changed from "two Chinas" to "one China, one Taiwan."

By 1957, Fairbank began looking for an alternative, on the pragmatic grounds that neither Beijing nor Taipei would accept the view of "one China, one Taiwan". He saw the dispute over Taiwan as a deep-seated cultural conflict between what he called the western principles of "self-determination" and "freedom of movement" and the traditional Chinese principle of the unity of the Chinese culture. In the late 1950's, he tried to observe the clash through Chinese eyes, attempting to find a way to change the Chinese perspective. In hard-boiled fashion, he claimed that if neither Chinese party would accept the idea of an "independent Taiwan", then the only solution was to overcome their resistance. So in this case, he preached his new way of resolving the Taiwan problem by using "self-determination" or "choice by plebiscite".

"Self-determination and choice by plebiscite are not merely Western but are world-wide ideals --- the Chinese Imperial tradition is out of date on both sides of the straits of Taiwan" (Evans, p.185), Fairbank said in one of his articles in the 1950's. By saying that, his real motive was to turn Taiwan into an independent country, by using different terminology. In order to convince Jiang's and Mao's governments to accept these so-called "worldwide ideals" and the "*de facto* independence" of Taiwan, Fairbank advocated taking the middle road strategy and urged formal contact with the People's government in Beijing to facilitate negotiations between China and the United States. His explicit middle of the road strategy translated into immediate negotiations with the PRC,

but he added that recognition would be given only under terms favourable to the United States. At the same time, he argued that Jiang's government should be convinced of the virtues of independence, of accepting the PRC into the United Nations and renouncing its claims to the mainland. However, Fairbank's advocacy of Taiwan's "independence" ended in vain because neither Beijing nor Taipei accepted his doctrine. He had to find another alternative.

3.3 Advocating Taiwan's "Autonomy" in the 1960's

In the 1960's, the White House changed its host, but the American government's policy toward Taiwan remained the same: they were still carrying out the "Two-China" policy. This American position was vehemently opposed by both Beijing and Taipei. "Self-determination" and "Choice by plebiscite" were also a fantasy. They were not applicable to Taiwan. The reasons were quite obvious: 1) Taiwan is an integral part of China from ancient times, a fact which anyone can find by merely glancing at the maps; 2) it is a province of China, so it has no right to determine its status to stay in or out of China; 3) Jiang Jieshi had never given up the ideal of one China doctrine; and the last that Beijing will never acquiesce in Jiang's secession from the mainland.

So in the early 1960's, with John F. Kennedy's taking the reins of the American government, the American policy toward China became rather hostile. Its China policy was to further isolate CCP's regime, and to keep close ties with GMD's regime. In spite of this, the American government had to deal with the People's government, because the Americans thought that their interest would be served best by an international community living according to accepted rules of behavior; but the PRC, in the Americans' view, was the one major state in the middle of the 1960's that stood outside that order. However, leading China into the world community and allowing her to contact with the outside world, such as admission into the United Nations, was, to a large extent, determined by how the United States dealt with the Taiwan issue. It was quite clear that the PRC would never accept any policy aimed at separating Taiwan from the mainland; nor would Jiang Jieshi. Under these circumstances, Fairbank preached Taiwan's independence in another form. In an article on November 2, 1960, when talking about the relations between the PRC and Taiwan in U.S. policy, Fairbank said that in the nuclear age, the United States would need entirely new principles for this unprecedented epoch to defend its overriding national interest---to avoid surrender ;while at the same time avoiding nuclear disaster. In order to protect her interest, Fairbank thought the American regional policy for East Asia should be part of a global policy aimed at building up the institutions and practices of a war order and at the same time maintaining the boundaries and the political

health of the non-communist part of the world. To be specific, in East Asia, he insisted that America, first of all, defend a boundary to keep Japan from Communist absorption; therefore defense of South Korea and of Taiwan were related to the problem of defending Japan; secondly, in East Asia, the United States had to get Beijing sooner or later into a system of arms control as part of her aim of building up institutions for international order. To achieve the overriding purpose of arms control, the Americans should allow Beijing's admission into the United Nations. These proposals sounded favourable to the People's government, but Fairbank added that getting Beijing into the United Nations should be based on some so-called "constructive terms", which in fact meant, "we (the Americans) would have to get both Peking (Beijing) and Taipei (Taipei) willing to accept international status for Taiwan as an independent republic." (Fairbank, 1967, p.54) He also purported that the PRC "could not be given any kind of status" in the international world without Taiwan's being given a new status, too. Here Fairbank's real intention was that the United States should put pressure on Beijing "to acknowledge Taiwan's independence". (Fairbank, 1967, p.54) To support his view, Fairbank drew reasons from two main aspects. He said the American immediate Cold War aim for supporting Taiwan was "defensive", to avoid "losing another area to Communism" and also military, for intelligence work and maintenance of an armed base on the flank of any Chinese Communist expansion southward. He also employed a moral criterion, that the Americans could not "abandon thirteen million Taiwan Chinese to the lower living standard, reprisals and remolding process which they could inevitably suffer under Chinese Communism. (Fairbank, 1967, p.56)

Fairbank knew clearly that his "self-determination" doctrine would not be imposed due to opposition from both Beijing and Taipei. His open preaching of Taiwan's independence was strongly objected by both sides of the Taiwan Strait. Therefore, he changed his former views and asserted that "the fact of Taiwan's independence is our object, not the name," (Fairbank, 1967, p.63) and "the American interest is to preserve the substance of Taiwan's independence." (Fairbank, 1967, p.78) The implication of his words was that the United States should change its former strategy on the Taiwan issue and find another way to keep Taiwan's "independence" in substance. In an attempt to achieve that goal, Fairbank insisted that the United States continue to leave the Seventh Fleet in the Taiwan Strait and to keep the Taiwan-Mainland relationships ambiguous without any neat definitions.

Later in the same article entitled "Myth, Dream and Nightmare", Fairbank made a further prediction about the trend of Taiwan's development, saying that "Taiwan's independence could be called 'autonomy' the way the *de facto* independence of Tibet and Mongolia was

labeled after 1915." (ibid., p.78) In view of the historical development, "independent" Tibet didn't survive, but Outer Mongolia became a reality. Therefore, he concluded, "from 'autonomy' one could move either way." (ibid., p.78) By saying so, what Fairbank actually meant was that Taiwan could go the way as Outer Mongolia to be an independent country, though it still could be called "autonomy". Here the connotation of his so-called "autonomy" really meant Taiwan's "independence" in disguise. He understood that neither Beijing nor Taipei would accept "two Chinas" policy. So he warned the American government to change its tactics by not using the term "two Chinas", but by calling the idea of "two Chinas" "dual representation". The meaning of his "dual representation" was that China could be represented in the United Nations both by Beijing and Taiwan. He even asserted that China would have two votes in the UN Assembly. This time his prediction again availed to nothing. The fact that Taiwan was finally kicked out of the United Nations provided Fairbank with the lesson and he had to alter his stand on Taiwan. So in the 1970's, there was a big transition in his views on Taiwan, which will be discussed in the following sections.

3.4 Advocating "One China" Policy in the 1970's

With the thawing of Sino-American relations in the early 1970's, Fairbank sensed that further insistence on the position of Taiwan's independence was unrealistic and any policy aimed at separating Taiwan from the mainland would be unfavourable for the on-going *detente* of Sino-American relations; and that the Taiwan's status was the chief obstacle of the rapprochement of the relations between the two countries. Instead of advocating the policy of "one China, one Taiwan" and "Taiwan's independence", he envisioned that Taiwan should become a special "autonomous region" of China, and advocated that the Taiwan issue be dealt with on the premise of "one China". Even before Nixon's trip to the PRC, Fairbank successively published monographs on the Taiwan issue in the *New York Times* on August 12, 1971 and February 19, 1972, arguing for the historical feasibility of "Taipei's (Taipei's) autonomy under Peking's (Beijing's) sovereignty." (Fairbank, 1982, p.409) He called on Taiwan's regime to coexist with Beijing, and urged the Americans to create such a situation where Taiwan would not be a threat to Beijing and be related to Beijing in a way satisfactory to the bulk of the people on Taiwan.

Furthermore, he said, "the Chinese civil war can die away if the United States will stop backing one side; Taiwan need not be a rival of Peking, nor need it be governed from the mainland...; we should maintain our Taiwan defense commitment but otherwise not to try to unscrew the inscrutable". (Fairbank, 1982, p.409) Such were his assumptions which were soon incarnated in the "Shanghai Communiqué", of which one part related to Taiwan reads:

The United States acknowledges that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is part of China. The United States government does not challenge that position.” (Gene T. Hsiao, and Michael Witunski, 1983, p.32) From the above statement, we can see that Taiwan’s veil was not rolled up just as Fairbank said. And it was explicit that the real solution to the Taiwan problem was sidestepped and the ambiguity respecting Taiwan still remained. Obviously Fairbank favoured such statement on Taiwan because the implicit interpretation of the Taiwan issue embodied wisdom, for the three major players in the game, Washington, Taipei, and Beijing, all had different interests that felicitously coincided: China wanted sovereignty, Taiwan autonomy and the United States stability.

But it was clear that the United States still treated Taiwan as a separate government. Just as Fairbank said, there was a gap between theory and practice, between the acknowledged ideal of China’s unity and the obvious reality of the United States’ dealing with two regimes. Bearing this in mind, Fairbank suggested to the United States that a double standard be adopted to deal with the Taiwan problem. He said:

For Taipei (Taipei) the essential goal, we may imagine, is to maintain the integrity of the island as an economic concern administrated on its present lines and not controlled by a security system from the mainland; for Peking (Beijing) we may imagine that the chief aim is political, or perhaps one should say diplomatic; to encompass the end of the Nationalist government as an international agency with embassies abroad; in short, to create a situation in which the regime on Taiwan claims no more than be a province of the China that heads up in Peking (Beijing)” (Fairbank, 1974, p.137)

From the above quotation of his views on Taiwan, we find that ultimately, Fairbank acknowledged that Taiwan be governed by the PRC. This was a bold suggestion to the American government which had headaches about Taiwan.

He told the American public that “Taiwan historically is part of China’s expansion overseas...part of Maritime China, a growth largely independent of the mainland in politics.” (Fairbank, HUP, 1982, p.461) What he meant by this was that either China or the United States could treat Taiwan separately. He observed within the Chinese realm where existed normally various degree of autonomy, so “some degrees of autonomy (local government) may well make sense for a region as different as Taiwan.” (ibid., p.461) Such Fairbank’s envision on Taiwan was not unlike that of Deng Xiaoping’s “one country, two systems”.

He further explained the essence of regional autonomy by stating that “an autonomous area may have its own local political order, but it must not be a threat to the sovereignty and ruling power of the central Chinese State.” (ibid, p.461) This time Fairbank’s advocacy of Taiwan’s “autonomy”, meant “a quite different situation of actual local self-government within an acknowledged framework of being a Chinese province under PRC sovereignty.” (Fairbank, 1982, p.419)

Coincidentally we find that his bold conception of the Taiwan issue was rather like the arrangement worked

out by the Joint Communiqué on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between the United States of America and the People’s Republic of China on December 15, 1978.

In sum, with the improvement of Sino-American relations and through a long process of ideological transition, Fairbank came to admit that the United States should stick to “One China” policy. But in reality he was still confronted with conflicts between theory and practice in America’s dealing with China. In order to make it reasonable for the U.S. either to acknowledge the ideal of “One China” or to deal with two regimes, Fairbank again put forward a historical traditional theory called “Continental-China and Maritime China Theory,” (Fairbank, 1987, p.131) which meant Maritime China symbolized by Taiwan inherited the long maritime tradition from ancient China and is still a symbol of it, while Continental China is today a nation of farmers crowded upon the arable land which has inherited the great Chinese imperial tradition of government by a bureaucracy controlled from the capital.

Although Taiwan’s economy is part of Maritime China its political ideology is still that of Continental China. So Fairbank thought, in dealing with PRC and Taipei regimes, the Americans first had to acknowledge the “One-China” theory. However, the United States seemed quite reluctant to tear itself away from the Chinese political scene, and cut off the countless ties with Taiwan. They should find some excuses to support them to do so, so Fairbank’s so-called “Historical Traditional Theory” filled the blank.

In all, in the 1970’s, Fairbank’s views on Taiwan were much closer to the reality and more practical. As a historian, he could stick to “One China” policy in dealing with the Taiwan issue, after a long period of ideological struggle, which is commendable to an American.

3.5 Comments on His Vacillating Views

In the special field of the Taiwan issue, Fairbank’s views had changed several times, but one point remained the same, that is, his starting point of considering the Taiwan question in the interest of ruling class had never changed.

Regarding Taiwan, the first thing occurred to his mind was its strategic importance in protecting the interest of the ruling clique of the U.S.A.. So in the late 1940’s, when the Chinese people with the CCP in the lead had won the great victory in the Chinese revolution, Fairbank warned the American government to leave its hands off Taiwan and not to stop the liberation of it by the CCP. He sensed that only by doing this could America win over the Chinese Communists from the Soviet’s domination. In one word, abandoning Taiwan under that condition was in keeping with America’s interest in East Asia, of course we could not deny the advantages brought by his advocacy to the PRC objectively.

Fairbank’s views on the Taiwan issue changed with the international political situations. After the outbreak of the

Korean War, Fairbank suddenly sensed the importance of Taiwan in America's East Asian strategy as a part of its global strategy to contain Communism. Taiwan became one of America's never-sunk "aircraft carriers". To adapt to the changes of world politics, Fairbank changed his previous attitude, and began preaching Taiwan's "independence" in the 1950's. Superficially it seemed that he had to make some adjustments to his views owing to the changed international climate; but in reality, he was utterly prompted by his careful consideration for the interest of America's ruling class. The alternation of his viewpoints totally incarnated the nature of American pragmatism because Fairbank thought an "independent" Taiwan, worshipping American values, was a strong force to "contain" the Communist China's revolutionary "expansion", and a "safeguard" for Japan.

In the 1960's, however, there were enormous changes in the international situation with China becoming a nuclear power, Soviet's expansion in East Europe and signs of Sino-Soviet split and America's deep involvement into the Vietnam War. All these had influenced Fairbank's views and he had come to know that openly standing for Taiwan's "independence" was unrealistic, and further, such a practice was strongly opposed by both Beijing and Taipei. Therefore, he took a rather roundabout attitude toward the Taiwan problem. Instead of supporting Taiwan's "independence", he began to peddle "one China, one Taiwan" doctrine. Later he further made his preach clear by calling for Taiwan's "autonomy"—another form of "independence" in essence. He openly confessed that the aim of the United States was to preserve the substance of Taiwan's independence without caring about its name. He even called for a seat for Taiwan in the U.N.. Eventually, all his attempts proved futile.

In the 1970's, he had again to reconsider the perennial problem in the framework of the bilateral relations between the PRC and the U.S.A.. He realized at last that the PRC would completely supplant Taiwan and play a major role in World affairs. This time his arrangement for Taiwan was that Taiwan could be called local self-government as a province of China under PRC sovereignty.

Through all the changes of his views we can see that his viewpoints on the Taiwan issue reflected the essence of American pragmatism, and they were not based upon realities, nor historical facts. As a China specialist and historian, Fairbank, in many ways, respected historical facts. But on the Taiwan question, his eyes were blindfolded by the interest of the ruling clique of the United States. To a historian, this is a perfect irony.

While advising the U.S. on the Taiwan question, Fairbank seemed to neglect one important factor in forming his views on the Taiwan issue, that is, the sentiments of the Chinese people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait to fulfill their political ideal of unity. Due to his lack of deep understanding of such sentiments,

Fairbank could not see clearly the substance of the Taiwan problem. So most of his views aiming at splitting China were frequently opposed by the Chinese people. As a result, Fairbank wavered constantly on the Taiwan issue. Anyhow Fairbank finally took a more realistic attitude and acknowledged that the resolution of the Taiwan question should be done in the framework of "One China" policy. His advocacy of "One China" policy to some extent contributed to the final settlement of the Taiwan question in 1978.

CONCLUSION

The above analyses of Fairbank's views on Sino-American relations reveal:

1) In the 1940's Fairbank's prediction of Jiang Jieshi's losing the Mandate would help the American public and the American government know better about the political corruption and economical incompetence of the Jiang's regime in its failure to lead the Chinese revolution and in the struggle against the Japanese aggression. Although his prediction of Jiang's fate could not reverse the American pro-Jiang policy against the Chinese Communist Party, it played an important role in making more American people better understand the situation in China and in drawing the American public attention to the cause of the CCP.

2) His view of opposing American supporting of Jiang Jieshi in the civil war was congruent with his deeper understanding of the virtues and potentiality of the CCP. His experiences in wartime capital Chongqing convinced him of the incompetence of the Jiang's regime in improving the living standards of the people, who were the main force of the Chinese revolution. On the contrary, the CCP, being a genuine communist party, were the ardent advocate of the economic security of the peasant, so the CCP drew wide sustenance from the masses. In many aspects, Jiang Jieshi had nothing to compete with the CCP. Therefore, Jiang's government had lost popular support of the masses. In this case Fairbank openly opposed American government's policy of supporting Jiang against the CCP in the civil war. The aim of his perspective on American China policy was in keep with the principles of CCP's policy at that time.

3) With the founding of the PRC, Fairbank further expounded the traits of the new Chinese government, stating that the people's government was considered to be a best government in modern times in China. He advocated recognition of the PRC and abandonment of Jiang's "government-in-exile" in Taiwan. In order to reach this goal, his prescription for the American government was to contact with New China and allow the PRC into international organizations. His advocacy of contact and understanding helped the American people and government to have a better idea of the PRC.

4) In the 1960's and 70's, Fairbank called for the

improvement of Sino-American relations. He sensed that the Sino-Soviet split and the Cultural Revolution in China and escalation of the Vietnam War offered a turning point for the two countries to improve their bilateral relations. He maintained that "containment" was a blind alley and vehemently appealed for America's taking a roundabout strategy to improve Sino-American relations. After Nixon's visit to Beijing, the normalization of bilateral relation could not be realized as quickly as possible. In these circumstances, Fairbank urged the American government to take concrete steps to end the stalemate and to realize the normalization of Sino-U.S. relation as early as possible. He showed much concern over the Taiwan issue and his stand of Taiwan's "autonomy" under PRC sovereignty contributed to the final settlement of the Taiwan issue.

All in all, we can conclude that from the 1940's to the 1970's, John K. Fairbank did his utmost to promote the improvement of Sino-American relations and that "he played a major part in the 30-year drama which began with World War II and ended with U.S. recognition of the PRC in 1979". (Evans, p.337)

Although his views and prescriptions changed from time to time and in different situations, their underlying purpose has not. Making China better known to the Americans and influencing Sino-American relations were always his final aim. And he had achieved his aim. The significant contributions which he had made to the improvement of Sino-American relations will be remembered forever by the Chinese people as well as the American people.

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