To Be an Apolitical Political Scientist: A Chinese Immigrant Scholar and (Geo)politicized American Higher Education

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While educating international students is celebrated as a means of promoting mutual understanding among nations, American higher education has always been entangled with geopolitics. This essay focuses on Tang Tsou, the Chinese scholar who came to the United States as a student in 1941, eventually becoming the nation's leading China expert and producing knowledge about China for the United States during the Cold War. It analyzes how Tsou navigated a complex political terrain in which his Chinese identity was both a professional asset and a liability. Examining Tsou's personal and professional decisions as well as his response to the politicization of his Chinese identity reveals the (geo)politicization of higher education more broadly.

Keywords: geopolitics, American higher education, Chinese identity, objectivity, Cold War, Tang Tsou, international students

In January 1955, Tang Tsou, a Chinese graduate student who came to the United States in 1941 and earned his PhD in political science of the

Note on transliteration: The pinyin romanization system is widely used, and Tang Tsou should be converted to Dang Zou, or Zou Dang (following the Chinese practice that given names follow the surnames). Because Tang Tsou completed his career in the United States, he is identified accordingly. Out of respect for his own choice, this essay uses Tang Tsou as a transliteration of his name. In instances when other Chinese names are mentioned, I use the pinyin romanization system. For consistency, I follow the American practice of placing their given names first, as with Yizhuang Lu and Yelong Han. Exceptions include those whose personal names are familiar in the West. Thus, Chiang Kai-shek is used instead of Jieshi Jiang and Deng Xiaoping rather than Xiaoping Deng.

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University of Chicago in 1951, received a job offer. The Center for the Study of American Foreign and Military Policy at the University of Chicago, then under the direction of Hans Morgenthau, invited Tsou to study American wartime and postwar policies toward China. Although Tsou was not trained as a China expert or an expert on international relations (his PhD training was in political science methodology), he accepted the position as a research associate, thus beginning a thirty-year career in American academia. After his arrival at Chicago, he launched a series of influential studies of Sino-American relations and modern Chinese politics, becoming "an expert on modern China" in the United States.[1]

Tsou was one of more than a thousand Chinese scholars who came to the United States as students during the 1940s but ended up teaching and participating in research at American academic institutions after World War II.[2] Contemporary readers who have observed large numbers of international students studying in the United States and working as faculty members in American colleges and universities might consider Tsou's story unsurprising, but the popular narrative of international students who become motivated immigrants and then succeed in American higher education and public life masks the unusual timing and the particular (geo)political circumstances of Tsou's integration into the American academy.[3]

Tsou came to the United States while the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was still in effect and the civil rights movement and immigration reforms of the late 1960s were still decades away. So how did Tsou make his way to the United States? Why did he remain there instead of returning to his home country? Why did he shift from focusing on political science methodology to becoming an American "China expert"? Like other minoritized communities during this period, both inside and outside scholarly circles, Tsou had to negotiate difficult questions about whether, or how, others' assumptions about his

[1] "Expert on Modern China Tang Tsou Dies at 80," *University of Chicago Chronicle* 19, no. 20 (Aug. 12, 1999), https://chronicle.uchicago.edu/990812/tsou.shtml; Eric Pace, "Prof. Tang Tsou, 80, Authority on Modern China," *New York Times*, Aug. 16, 1999, Sec. B, 8; Andy Davis, "U. of C. China Expert Tang Tsou," *Chicago Tribune*, Aug. 12, 1999, Sec. 2, 9; and Stuart R. Schram, "Obituary-Tang Tsou: A Memorial," *China Quarterly* no. 160 (Dec. 1999), 1057-59.

[2] Chinese Advisory Committee on Cultural Relations in America, *Directory of Chinese Members of American College and University Faculties, 1956-1957* (New York: Chinese Advisory Committee on Cultural Relations in America, 1957), 1-66.

[3] See especially Ross Bassett, *The Technological Indian* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016); Bangcheng Pang, "Higher Education: A New Immigration Path to Chinese Students and Scholars" (PhD diss., Arizona State University, 2001); and Kevin Yang Shih, "Skilled Immigration, Higher Education, and Labor Markets" (PhD diss., University of California, Davis, 2015).

Chinese identity might affect his academic work. For him, this negotiation presented both obstacles and opportunities for professional advancement and political influence. His personal and professional decisions, as well as his response to the politicization of his Chinese identity, illuminate the (geo)politicization of higher education more broadly.

Examining Tsou's story reveals that Chinese immigrant scholars who became stranded in the United States during the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s were also some of the first to visit China in the early 1970s after American rapprochement with People's Republic of China (PRC). They later played a crucial role in renewing university exchanges that made possible a long period of cooperation in the following decades. In doing so, however, they also set the stage for current debates regarding a perceived imbalance of intellectual trade. Situating Tsou and Chinese immigrant scholars in the broader arc of mid-century Sino-American relations stresses the historical continuity of transpacific intellectual partnerships and reveals the key role Chinese diasporic scholars played in sustaining international academic relations.

Significantly, looking at Tsou's story illuminates the agency of a group of Chinese students and professionals who have been marginalized, if not totally absent, in past scholarship.[4] Of the few studies that have noted Chinese scholars in America, the focus typically fell on formal policies that structured academic "immigration." Historians such as Madeline Hsu, Yelong Han, and Benjamin Zulueta described the changes in legislation that allowed Chinese immigrants to enter and reside permanently in the United States, but these scholars did not explore the day-to-day experiences of Chinese academics, including their often fraught encounters with the racial politics of American universities at mid-century.[5] Similarly, while other historians have

[4]David Hollinger noted that before 1945 a professorate in the humanities and social sciences was overwhelmingly male and Anglo-Protestant. He argued that scholars of Jewish origin were the first group of nontraditional scholars who broke this barrier and entered the academic community in the two decades after 1945. Asian Americans and Hispanic Americans were absorbed into American academia only late in the twentieth century, especially in the wake of the civil rights movement and the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965, which revolutionized the population's demographic base. Hollinger obviously did not notice the presence of this group of Chinese immigrant scholars in American academia during the 1950s. See David A. Hollinger, *The Humanities and the Dynamics of Inclusion since World War II* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006).

[5]Yelong Han, "An Untold Story: American Policy toward Chinese Students in the United States, 1949-1955," *Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 2, no. 1 (April 1993), 77-99; Benjamin C. Zulueta, "'Brains at a Bargain': Refugee Chinese Intellectuals, American Science, and the 'Cold War of the Classrooms'" (PhD diss.,

investigated the formal policies of the United States, the People's Republic of China, and "free" China in Taiwan toward Chinese immigrant intellectuals—noting that all three governments sought to use scholars to achieve their foreign policy aims—they gave little attention to Chinese scholars' own voices, presuming that Chinese academics were merely pawns in the chess game of Cold War geostrategy.[6]

Examining Tang Tsou's lived experience and intellectual pursuits shines a different light on the intersection of American higher education and geopolitics. Historian Paul Kramer used the concept of the "geopoliticization of international students" to call for more research on international students as foreign relations actors.[7] Scholars have noted how American-educated foreign students who returned to their countries after completing their education in the United States participated in the process of "modernization" or "Americanization" of their home countries by adapting and using the social, economic, and technical models they encountered in the United States.[8] Others also examined how the US government or philanthropic organizations initiated educational and cultural programs in order to craft a loyal and pro-American elite in other countries.[9]

University of California, Santa Barbara, 2004); Madeline Y. Hsu, "The Disappearance of America's Cold War Chinese Refugees, 1948-1966," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 31, no. 4 (Summer 2012), 12–33; and Madeline Y. Hsu, *The Good Immigrants: How the Yellow Peril Became the Model Minority* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015). While Hsu considered the academic experiences of scholars such as Yifu Tuan, she placed the bulk of her attention on selectively inclusive immigration policies. Benjamin Zulueta, in one article, examined the experience of a Chinese American scientist, but his story focused on how the life trajectory of this scientist was influenced by the convergence of science, migration, and race during the 1930s, 1940s, and early 1950s. See Benjamin C. Zulueta, "Master of the Master Gland: Choh Hao Li, the University of California, and Science, Migration, and Race" *Historical Studies in the Natural Sciences* 39, no. 2 (Spring 2009), 129-70.

[6]Nick Waldrop, "Educating the Enemy: Chinese Students and the Sino-American Cold War, 1948-1955" (master's thesis, Iowa State University, 2016); and Meredith Oyen, *The Diplomacy of Migration: Transnational Lives and the Making of US-Chinese Relations in the Cold War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015).

[7]Paul A. Kramer, "Is the World Our Campus? International Students and US Global Power in the Long Twentieth Century," *Diplomatic History 33,* no. 5 (Nov. 2009), 775-806.

[8]Weili Ye, *Seeking Modernity in China's Name: Chinese Students in the United States, 1900-1927* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001); Y. C. Wang, *Chinese Intellectuals and the West, 1872-1949* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1966); Jerome Ch'en, *China and the West: Society and Culture, 1815-1937* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979); and Thomas LaFargue, *China's First Hundred: Educational Mission Students in the United States, 1872-1881* (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 1987).

[9]Liping Bu, *Making the World Like Us: Education, Cultural Expansion, and the American Century* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003); Hongshan Li, *US-China Educational*

However, these studies all assume that international students returned to their home countries after completing their education in the United States. Tsou's story complicates our understanding of the relationship between student immigration and geopolitics by investigating a student who remained in the United States and entered US academia. It also draws upon "Cold War university" research, which analyzed dozens of disciplines and their close relationship with American Cold War pursuits in ways that expanded Kramer's conception.[10] It uses the "(geo)politicization of American higher education" to highlight not only Tsou's immigration but also his identity and the ways in which his professional trajectory, as well as his knowledge production, shaped and was shaped by geopolitics.

Studying Tsou's personal and professional identities also adds a new layer to our understanding of scholarly identities and academic objectivity in the mid-twentieth century. Several scholars have shown how security and loyalty investigations, along with FBI surveillance, not only harmed individual scientists' careers during the Cold War but also led many to abandon political activity in favor of professional neutrality.[11] Along the same lines, Mark Solovey also noted the

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Exchange: State, Society, and Intercultural Relations, 1905-1950 (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2008); Walter Johnson and Francis J. Colligan, *The Fulbright Program: A History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965); and Teresa B. Bevis and Christopher J. Lucas, *International Students in American Colleges and Universities: A History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 2007).

[10]See especially Rebecca S. Lowen, *Creating the Cold War University: The Transformation of Stanford* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); David C. Engerman, *Know Your Enemy: The Rise and Fall of America's Soviet Experts* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Roger L. Geiger, *Research and Relevant Knowledge: American Research Universities since World War II* (New York: Oxford University of Press, 1993); Christopher Simpson, ed., *Universities and Empire: Money and Politics in the Social Sciences during the Cold War* (New York: New Press, 1998); and Noam Chomsky et al., *The Cold War and the University: Toward an Intellectual History of the Postwar Years* (New York: New Press, 1997). See also David Engerman's discussion on works that examine the relationship between universities, knowledge production, and American foreign relations. David C. Engerman, "American Knowledge and Global Power," *Diplomatic History* 31, no. 4 (Sept. 2007), 599-622. For works that examine the transnational origins of American Cold War knowledge, see Udi Greenberg, *The Weimar Century: German Emigres and the Ideological Foundations of the Cold War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014); and Daniel Bessner, *Democracy in Exile: Hans Speier and the Rise of the Defense Intellectual* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2018).

[11]Edward A. Purcell Jr., *The Crisis of Democratic Theory: Scientific Naturalism & the Problem of Value* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1973); Ellen Schrecker, *No Ivory Tower: McCarthyism and the Universities* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); Jessica Wang, *American Science in an Age of Anxiety: Scientists, Anticommunism, and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); and Andrew Jewett, *Science, Democracy, and the American University: From the Civil War to*

role of federal patronage in shaping the aggressive "scientism" of American researchers during this era. Solovey found that in order to secure funding, social scientists often claimed to provide strictly "apolitical, nonideological, and value-free" information.[12] Leah Gordon, meanwhile, pointed out that the politics of race put additional pressure on African American social scientists to prove their objectivity.[13] Building on this scholarship, this essay investigates the extent to which Tsou adopted similar rhetorical strategies to claim that "Chinese scholars" could be as objective as others, and the extent to which his claim of "objectivity" could protect his academic work and facilitate cross-national understanding.

Finally, looking at Tsou's story broadens US Cold War historiography by tracing the political motives behind his intellectual work. Many scholars have explored the history of academic exchange between the United States and the Soviet Union, considering the risks and rewards of intellectual collaboration between superpowers, but collaborations between the United States and the People's Republic of China have received far less attention.[14] While historians in the field of China Studies have explored cultural ties between China and the United States during the late Qing dynasty in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the Chinese Republican period in the first half of the twentieth century, and the post–open door era since the mid-1970s, little research has been done on the cultural, intellectual, and educational contacts between 1950 and 1970.[15]

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the Cold War (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012). Although concentrating on a different historical period, Adam Nelson's work also informs on questions of academic identity, especially the identity of an immigrant scholar. See Adam R. Nelson, "Citizens or Cosmopolitans? Nationalism, Internationalism, and Academic Identity in the Early American Republic," *Asia Pacific Education Review* 14, no. 1 (Feb. 2013), 93-101; and Adam R. Nelson, "Citizens or Cosmopolitans? Constructing Scientific Identity in the Early American College," *History of Educational Quarterly* 57, no. 2 (May 2017), 159-84.

[12]Mark Solovey, *Shaky Foundations: The Politics-Patronage-Social Science Nexus in Cold War America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2013).

[13]Leah N. Gordon, *From Power to Prejudice: The Rise of Racial Individualism in Midcentury America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).

[14]See especially Yale Richmond, *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War: Raising the Iron Curtain* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003); Tomas Tolvaisas, "Cold War 'Bridge-Building': US Exchange Exhibits and Their Reception in the Soviet Union, 1959-1967," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 12, no. 4 (Fall 2010), 3-31; and Benjamin Tromly, *Cold War Exiles and the CIA: Plotting to Free Russia* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2019).

[15]For pre-1950s cultural contacts, see, for example, Wilma Fairbank, *America's Cultural Experiment in China, 1942-1949* (Washington, DC: US Department of State, 1976); Yung-Chen Chiang, *Social Engineering and the Social Sciences in China, 1919-1949* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Shuhua Fan, *The Harvard-*

Examining the legacy of the earlier cultural contact that brought Tsou and other Chinese immigrant scholars to the United States and helped to promote US-PRC cultural exchanges in the early 1970s reveals the role of Chinese diasporic scholars in sustaining international academic relations.[16]

Coming to the United States: Chinese Students During the Exclusion Era

Tsou came to the United States in 1941, when his working-class compatriots were still barred from entering as a result of discriminatory immigration laws. Although Chinese had been present in America since the 1780s, during the last three decades of the nineteenth century, nativist views attributed unemployment and declining wages to Chinese workers, who were viewed as racially inferior and a threat to white European American civilization. In response to this growing racism, Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, barring Chinese laborers from immigrating and prohibiting Chinese from becoming naturalized citizens. Congress renewed this law ten years later and made it permanent in 1902. The Exclusion Act was not lifted until 1943, when the US alliance with China during World War II forced Congress to support its claims of friendship by finally permitting a small number of Chinese to enter the United States and gain naturalization rights.[17]

Yenching Institute and Cultural Engineering: Remaking the Humanities in China, 1924-1951 (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014); Grace Yen Shen, *Unearthing the Nation: Modern Geology and Nationalism in Republican China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014); and Richard Jean So, *Transpacific Community: America, China, and the Rise and Fall of a Cultural Network* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016). For the post–open door era, see Joyce K. Kallgren and Denis Fred Simon, eds., *Educational Exchange: Essays on the Sino-American Experience* (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1987); Cheng Li, ed., *Bridging Minds across the Pacific: US-China Educational Exchange, 1978-2003* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2005); and Zuoyue Wang, "US-China Scientific Exchange: A Case Study of State-Sponsored Scientific Internationalism during the Cold War and Beyond," *Historical Studies in the Physical and Biological Sciences* 30, no. 1 (Jan. 1999), 249-77.

[16] Zuoyue Wang examined the role of Chinese American scientists in US-China relations both before and after Nixon's trip in 1972. More studies, however, are still needed. See Zuoyue Wang, "Chinese American Scientists and US-China Scientific Relations: From Richard Nixon to Wen Ho Lee," in *The Expanding Roles of Chinese Americans in US-China Relations: Transnational Networks and Trans-Pacific Interactions*, ed. Peter H. Koehn and Xiao-huang Yin (New York: Routledge, 2002), 307-34.

[17] Lucy E. Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers: Chinese Immigrants and the Shaping of Modern Immigration Law* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993); Erik Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); and Roger Daniels,

Although Chinese laborers were unwelcome during the long exclusion period, Chinese students, along with others, such as Chinese merchants and diplomats, were legally exempt. Chinese students were presumed to be of strategic use to those who sought to expand American political, commercial, and moral influence in China. In order to craft a loyal and pro-American elite and thus enhance America's economic, political, and intellectual influence in China, missionaries, merchants, educators, and internationalists made great efforts to bring Chinese students to US campuses. They also successfully persuaded the US government to return the overpayment of the Boxer Indemnity to China in the form of scholarship in 1909 and 1924, with the stipulation that the funds be used exclusively to support Chinese students studying in the United States.[18]

Just as Americans became increasingly interested in welcoming Chinese students, the Chinese government also saw the necessity of sending students abroad. China's decline and the pressure it felt to modernize in the face of Western encroachment after the Opium Wars of the 1840s prompted efforts to send Chinese students abroad to selectively learn advanced technology and Western ways of life. From the 1870s through the 1940s, successive Chinese governments encouraged and funded thousands of Chinese students to study in Japan and Western countries. During the early twentieth century, as the Boxer Indemnity fund was made available to Chinese students, the United States became a favored destination and attracted a steadily increasing number of Chinese students. By the time Tsou arrived at the University of Chicago in 1941, Chinese were among the most numerous foreign students on US campuses.[19]

Tsou came to the United States during World War II when China was a US wartime ally. Keenly aware of China's important role in the war against Japan, the US government in 1941 extended lend-lease aid to China. In addition to sending American educators and engineers to China, the Lend-Lease Act brought twelve hundred Chinese to the

Guarding the Golden Door: American Immigration Policy and Immigrants since 1882 (New York: Hill and Wang, 2005).

[18]Michael H. Hunt, "The American Remission of Boxer Indemnity: A Reappraisal," *Journal of Asian Studies* 31, no. 3 (May 1972), 539-59. See also Richard H. Werking, "The Boxer Indemnity Remission and the Hunt Thesis," *Diplomatic History* 2, no.1 (Jan. 1978), 103-106; and Michael H. Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship: The United States and China to 1914* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983); and Li, *US-China Educational Exchange*.

[19]Madeline Y. Hsu, "Chinese and American Collaborations Through Educational Exchange during the Era of Exclusion, 1872-1955," *Pacific Historical Review* 83, no. 2 (May 2014), 314-32. See also Wang, *Chinese Intellectuals and the West*, 52-59.

United States for technical training and cultural exchange. In addition, some US colleges and universities, as well as philanthropic foundations, also granted scholarships to Chinese students to study in the United States. These efforts aimed to give China's technical and cultural experts "American knowledge" and present the "American way of life," and, in this way, to aid "the struggle for democracy or social betterment in China."[20]

Meanwhile, the Chinese Nationalist government began sending an unprecedented number of Chinese students to US campuses, hoping the advanced knowledge they gained would help China's postwar reconstruction. Although a large number of students studied engineering, science and medicine, other students were sent to learn international law, international politics, and other subjects in the social sciences and humanities. This was to gain the knowledge necessary to help China improve its status in the postwar world. By 1949, around five thousand Chinese students and professionals were studying in the United States. To both governments, these Chinese students also served as cultural ambassadors—they not only symbolized the friendship between these two countries but were expected to promote "mutual understanding."[21]

Growing up during the 1930s and 1940s when China was subjugated by imperialist Japan, these Chinese students, motivated by rising nationalism in China, shared a belief that their education could "save China."[22] While studying at US universities, they established various student organizations in an effort to win American public support for China in its fight against Japan.[23] Tsou belonged to this cohort. He was born in Guangdong Province in southern China in December 1918—shortly after the World War I armistice and barely five months prior to the May Fourth Movement by students calling for democratic and cultural reforms. He attended local schools and earned his undergraduate degree in 1940 at Southwestern Associated University in Kunming, a joint institution created by China's three leading universities when they were forced into exile during World War II. When he attended

[20] Frank Ninkovich, "Cultural Relations and American China Policy, 1942-1945," *Pacific Historical Review* 49, no. 3 (Aug. 1980), 478.

[21] See Fairbank, *America's Cultural Experiment in China, 1942-1949*; Ye, *Seeking Modernity in China's Name*; and Li, *US-China Educational Exchange*.

[22] Zuoyue Wang, "Saving China through Science: The Science Society of China, Scientific Nationalism, and Civil Society in Republican China," *Osiris* 17 (Jan. 2002), 291-322.

[23] Ting Ni, *The Cultural Experiences of Chinese Students Who Studied in the United States during the 1930s-1940s* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2002); and Stacey Bieler, *"Patriots" or "Traitors"? A History of American-Educated Chinese Students* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2004).

graduate school at the University of Chicago in 1941, he chose to study international law and political science methodology, writing a dissertation on the research methods of political scientists Charles Merriam and Harold Lasswell and the disciplinary evolution of American political science.[24]

He probably planned to return to China, hoping to use his knowledge to improve China's status geopolitically and academically. Like other contemporary Chinese students, he did not intend to settle in the United States, nor did he have any legal mechanism to do so. According to American immigration regulations, no one in America on a student visa was eligible for employment, so students had to return to their home countries after finishing their studies or practical training. Chinese students' usefulness to both China and the United States was premised on the notion that they would return to China. This situation, however, soon changed.

"Stranded" in the United States: Chinese Students and Cold War Geopolitics

Early in 1948, due to the deteriorating economic situation in China—particularly rapid inflation caused by the Chinese Civil War—many Chinese students in the United States faced increasing difficulties. Many were cut off from all financial support, either from the Chinese government or from their families. In 1948, Tsou wrote several letters seeking financial aid from the University of Chicago and other sources, but he was unsuccessful.[25]

To assist financially strapped Chinese students, Congress appropriated emergency aid: $500,000 from the Economic Cooperation Administration in 1949 to Chinese students in certain technical fields.[26] Later that year, Congress granted another $4 million to Chinese students. This time, with restrictions on fields of study removed, Tsou finally received aid from the US government.[27] In

[24]Tang Tsou, "A Study of the Development of the Scientific Approach in Political Studies in the United States: With Particular Emphasis on the Methodological Aspects of the Works of Charles E. Merriam and Harold D. Lasswell" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1951).

[25]Leonard D. White to John B. Stewart, Jan. 13, 1953, box 2, folder 12, Faculty Files, 1942-1963, University of Chicago Department of Political Science Records, 1927-1964, University of Chicago Library (hereafter cited as Tang Tsou Faculty Files).

[26]"ECA's $500,000 Lets Chinese Students Stay," *New York Times*, March 31, 1949, 4.

[27]"ECA Aid Available to Chinese Students," *News Bulletin of the Institute of International Education* 25 (Nov. 1949), 19.

order to get this aid, however, one of the requirements of the application was signing a pledge to return to China after finishing his degree. Although the Chinese Exclusion Act had been repealed and Chinese had regained naturalization rights, the US government still required Chinese students to return home after completing their education in the United States. These students, according to the US government, were "future democratic forces" that were "in a unique position to exert a profound influence on the future course" of Communist China; therefore, they had to return.[28]

Policies toward Chinese students were soon reversed. With the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, the PRC became America's enemy. Based on the theory that Chinese students concentrated in fields related to the advancement of national security and their return would strengthen a communist enemy, Congress passed a series of laws to control the exit of students who specialized in science, engineering, or medicine, and at the same time allowed Chinese students to become permanent residents and American citizens. As a social scientist, Tsou was not subject to departure restrictions, but considering his home country had a new regime to which he had no loyalty, he chose to stay in the United States.

Yet, like other Chinese students, his stay was fraught with difficulties. The outbreak of the Korean War intensified the nation's fear of an internal communist subversion that threatened to overthrow American democracy from within. The rise of anticommunist hysteria in the United States led federal agents to identify Chinese Americans and Chinese students as susceptible to communist infiltration.[29] As J. Edgar Hoover, director of the FBI, asserted when testifying before the House Committee on Appropriations, "Red China has been flooding the country with its propaganda[,] and there are over 300,000 Chinese in the United States, some of whom could be susceptible to recruitment."[30] Under these circumstances, the FBI and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) adopted what many university officials regarded as a "harsh policy" toward Chinese

[28] Han, "An Untold Story," 80.

[29] Cindy I-Fen Cheng, *Citizens of Asian America: Democracy and Race during the Cold War* (New York: New York University Press, 2014). Cheng observes that popular perceptions of Asian Americans as "foreigners-within" cast them as both (potential) "loyal citizens" who should be integrated into the dominant society and as (potential) "alien subversives" who should be deported. While my focus is different, my thinking about the Chinese immigrant scholars and the dual effect of the Cold War on them has been informed by her excellent work.

[30] Francis L. K. Hsu, *The Challenge of the American Dream: The Chinese in the United States* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, 1971), 103.

students.[31] According to the *New York Times*, eleven Chinese students at the University of Illinois were put in jail and later released under official supervision on grounds that they were members of the Chinese Students Christian Association or the Scientific Workers Association of Engineering and Chemistry, both alleged to have been infiltrated by communists.[32] Some Chinese scientists were forbidden to work in fields such as atomic physics.[33] Many, including Tsou, faced danger of deportation.[34]

In 1954, Tsou was suspected of being a Communist supporter. His student status was terminated after his graduation from the University of Chicago in 1951, so, according to US immigration law, he was vulnerable to deportation at any time. Although the Refugee Relief Act of 1953 allowed Chinese students to apply for permanent residency, Tsou's application was rejected in 1954 on the grounds that he supported Marxism and communism. This was an odd assessment, as Tsou had a close personal connection with the fiercely anticommunist Nationalist government of the Kuomintang, which had relocated to Taiwan. Tsou's father, Lu Tsou, was a prominent Kuomintang politician who co-led efforts to expel Communist Party members from the Kuomintang in its earlier years. Also, while studying at the University of Chicago, Tsou was affiliated with the Nationalist government's Consulate General in Chicago. But when the INS investigated Tsou about his political beliefs and asked about his views on Marxism, he provided an overly scholarly answer, which US officials misunderstood. He stated that some of Marx's ideals were originally libertarian and resembled the American ideal of every individual being able to develop themselves to the fullest. Although he also stated that he sharply disagreed with the means of violence Marx advocated to attain these ends, the INS decided that Tsou was a Marxist who believed in fulfilling Marxist ideals through evolutionary rather than revolutionary means. Only with the help of Tsou's professors at Chicago, who wrote seventeen affidavits to prove Tsou's belief in American liberalism and democracy, was Tsou able to avoid deportation and change his status from nonimmigrant student to resident alien.[35] During the McCarthy era of the early 1950s, Tsou and other Chinese students,

[31] James Reston, "Chinese Students in Country Stir Fight of US Agencies," *New York Times*, March 9, 1951, 3.

[32] Reston, "Chinese Students in Country Stir Fight of US Agencies."

[33] Roy Gibbons, "Act to Keep Chinese Scientist from City Out of Red Hands," *Chicago Tribune,* July 27, 1955, 1.

[34] Harrison E. Salisbury, "US Is Criticized on Chinese Students," *New York Times,* June 3, 1955, 1.

[35] Tang Tsou to Leonard D. White, March 22, 1954, Tang Tsou Faculty Files.

no longer seen as democratic forces, became potential agents representing the interests of Communist China due to their Chinese identity.

Chinese students faced scrutiny not only from the US government but also from the "free" Chinese government in Taiwan. The Nationalist government of the Kuomintang had been a US ally during World War II and had relocated to Taiwan after its failure in China's civil war (1945-1949). With the outbreak of the Korean War, Cold War exigencies led the United States to defend Taiwan from communist attack and to insist that the ousted Kuomintang government, under its leader Chiang Kai-shek, hold China's seat in the United Nations. In their common war against communism, the US government permitted the Kuomintang's secret police to extend its reach into the Chinese American community, and among Chinese students and scholars in particular, many of whom were forced to support the Kuomintang's claim to represent China's legitimate government.[36] Anyone who "made statements derogatory to General Chiang" or did not commit against the Chinese Communists met with hostility and suspicion.[37]

In the face of America's anticommunist hysteria and the Kuomintang's outreach, Tsou and other Chinese students lived in an atmosphere of fear. Many, including Tsou and his wife, Yizhuang Lu (also a Chinese student at the University of Chicago, studying sociology), stopped participating in Chinese student organizations and kept silent in political debates.[38] In examining the effect of Cold War politics on the American scientific community, Jessica Wang noted that anticommunist paranoia pushed American scientists to turn from open political action to quiet diplomacy.[39] The "stranded" Chinese students and scholars, most of whom had few strings to pull and few resources to defend themselves, had no alternative but to turn away from any overt political activism. To stay out of trouble, Tsou dared not talk to other Chinese students and scholars.[40] In this way, (geo)politicization was asymmetric: the very states that used Chinese students as (geo)political footballs led these students themselves to avoid politics.

[36] Charlotte Brooks, *Between Mao and McCarthy: Chinese American Politics in the Cold War Years* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).

[37] Salisbury, "US Is Criticized on Chinese Students."

[38] Yizhuang Lu to Tang Tsou, Feb. 24, 1955, box 25, family letters folder, Tang Tsou Papers, Special Collection Research Center, University of Chicago (hereafter cited as Tang Tsou Papers).

[39] Wang, *American Science in an Age of Anxiety*.

[40] Yizhuang Lu to Tang Tsou, Feb. 24, 1955, Tang Tsou Papers.

Becoming a China Expert: Chinese Students and the Politicization of China Studies

The biggest challenge for Tsou and other Chinese students was finding employment. While the US government had passed The China Aid Act in 1950 to allow Chinese students long-term employment and The Refugee Relieve Acts in 1953 to apply for permanent residence, Chinese students had difficulty finding suitable jobs. According to Samuel S. Kung's investigation of the New York metropolitan area at the time, by the end of 1954, only about 70 percent of former Chinese students were employed, of whom less than 60 percent worked full time.[41] Tsou faced the same difficulty. In a recommendation letter for a position at Case Institute of Technology in Ohio, University of Chicago professor David Kaston wrote of Tsou, "I know that many colleges are reluctant to take Chinese students on their staff, but I mention Tsou to you as I also know that you are interested primarily in the man and not in his race." Although the letter emphasized Tsou's qualifications and ranked him "in [the] top ten of any graduating year," Tsou did not get the job.[42] From the content of Kaston's letter, it appears that racial politics might have played a role in the search committee's decision.

After teaching at the Illinois Institute of Technology on a part-time basis for one semester, in September 1952, Tsou moved to Salt Lake City, where his wife had obtained a teaching position at the University of Utah. Tsou found a part-time job in the External Division of the university teaching two classes, but to make ends meet, Tsou worked as a librarian on an hourly basis.[43] In 1953, the university was unable to offer him a full-time teaching position and the two courses he was teaching through the External Division, Introduction to Political Science and Scope and Methods of Political Science were reduced to one class due to reduced student enrollment (a result of the nighttime course schedule rather than the quality of the courses). Discouraged, he began to think about shifting the subject of his research and teaching. In a letter to his former professor C. Herman Pritchett, then chair of the Department of Political Science at the University of Chicago, Tsou expressed his gratitude for the many failed attempts to find him an academic position, writing, "If I could fully utilize this period of forced leisure to prepare myself in a field in which a Chinese has [a] certain natural advantage, I might be

[41] Samuel Shi-shin Kung, "Personal and Professional Problems of Chinese Students and Former Students in the New York Metropolitan Area" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1955), 32-33.

[42] David Kaston to Tang Tsou, Jan. 24, 1952, Tang Tsou Faculty Files.

[43] Tang Tsou to Leonard White, Jan. 3, 1955, Tang Tsou Faculty Files.

better equipped to avail myself of future opportunities."[44] The fields Tsou had in mind were China Studies or Far East Studies. The "natural advantage" Tsou had was his aptitude for "knowing China and the complicated Chinese language" and reading "original Chinese materials."[45] Tsou's professors at Chicago shared the opinion that his Chinese background could be a professional asset. His advisor, Leonard White, made a similar suggestion and believed that in the field of "Far Eastern history, government, and international relations," Tsou's "academic prospects will be greater."[46] Tsou told his advisor that he took this suggestion "seriously." He even planned to write something "in the general area of the propaganda techniques of the Chinese Communist" in order to prepare himself for scholarship on Chinese politics and parties.[47] "All I need is a chance to shift to the Far Eastern field," he wrote.[48]

A few months later, in January 1955, Hans Morgenthau, chair of the Center for the Study of American Foreign and Military Policy at Chicago, sought to hire someone who could use both Chinese and American materials to examine the various controversial issues arising out of the wartime and postwar relationship between the United States and China. Tsou got the job. His employment was partially due to his close relationship with Morgenthau, who served on Tsou's committee for his master's and PhD theses and had a high opinion of Tsou. To some extent, the politicization of China Studies—and the American demand for knowledge about China—provided a chance for a scholar whose Chinese identity had otherwise seemed a liability in the geopoliticized (and racialized) context of the Cold War. And yet Tsou's entry into the field of China Studies carried its own risks.

By the time Tsou entered the field, China Studies had suffered from the attacks of McCarthyism. Despite being created in the late 1920s, the field occupied a marginal position in American academic institutions and did not flourish until World War II, when Americans began to realize the importance of Asia and developed a strategic interest in this area. The war gave a generation of China specialists a more prominent place within both academia and government, and during the postwar era, these specialists used the perceived geopolitical importance of China to develop their discipline. With

[44]Tang Tsou to C. Herman Pritchett, June 3, 1953, Tang Tsou Faculty Files.

[45]Tang Tsou to Hans Morgenthau, June 25, 1953, box 57, Tang Tsou folder, Hans Morgenthau Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC (hereafter cited as Hans Morgenthau Papers).

[46]Leonard White to Tang Tsou, July 1, 1953, Tang Tsou Faculty Files.

[47]Tang Tsou to Hans Morgenthau, Jan. 2, 1955, Hans Morgenthau Papers.

[48]Tang Tsou to Leonard D. White, June 15, 1954, Tang Tsou Faculty Files.

financial support from the Rockefeller Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation, and the Ford Foundation, centers and programs in China Studies developed at many universities, and committees and projects relating to China appeared with various institutional sponsors.[49]

However, the good times did not last. China Studies in the United States soon became entangled with both international and domestic politics. The failure of the Nationalist government of the Kuomintang in the Chinese Civil War in 1949 and the change in US policy toward China politicized the field in new ways. When the Chinese Communist Party finally consolidated its hold on mainland China and started fighting American troops in Korea in 1950, the Truman administration was blamed for the "loss of China." Some China experts within and outside the government were said to have an "unusual affinity . . . for Communist causes" and were therefore subject to witch-hunts.[50] Along with the so-called China Lobby in Congress, which "toiled to make support for Chiang [Kai-shek] and loyalty to the American government synonymous," McCarthyism, especially during the McCarran Committee hearings that begun in 1951, not only destroyed the academic careers of some China hands but also inflamed deep animosities among China Studies scholars.[51] At the McCarran hearings, conservative (pro-Chiang Kai-shek) professors William McGovern and Kenneth Colegrove of Northwestern University, David Rowe of Yale, and George Taylor and Karl Wittfogel of the University of Washington called Owen J. Lattimore of Johns Hopkins University a "fellow-traveler" and the "principal agent of Stalinism."[52] Even John K. Fairbank of Harvard was said to demonstrate "unquestioned sympathy" for the Chinese

[49]Robert A. McCaughey, *International Studies and Academic Enterprise: A Chapter in the Enclosure of American Learning* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 113-163.

[50]Thomas C. Reeves, *The Life and Times of Joe McCarthy: A Biography* (New York: Stein and Day, 1982), 251, 261.

[51]Nancy B. Tucker, *Patterns in the Dust: Chinese-American Relations and the Recognition Controversy, 1949-1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 82.

[52]The most sensational story concerned Owen J. Lattimore, a Far East expert at Johns Hopkins University, described as the "top Russian espionage agent in this country." The McCarran Committee recommended that he be indicted for perjury. Although the indictments were dismissed twice in court, Lattimore's academic life was ruined. He was suspended by Johns Hopkins after his indictment, and the Page School of International Relations, which had been under Lattimore's directorship, was closed. For a long time, Lattimore could not find a suitable appointment, and he was forced to move to England in the early 1960s. See Robert P. Newman, *Owen Lattimore and the "Loss" of China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 356 and 385.

Communist Party and to act as its "constant backer" until the Korean War.[53] The testimony reflected intense disagreements among scholars over US policy toward this region. Worse, as historian Paul L. Evans concludes in his excellent biography of Fairbank, "The intervention of partisan party politics in the academic community unleashed a storm of destructive antagonisms."[54] These antagonisms not only made institutional cooperation in this field extremely difficult (if not impossible) but also had a chilling effect on China Studies, as young students were discouraged from pursuing academic careers in this field, and established scholars turned their academic attention to China's past. Work on contemporary Chinese politics and US policy toward China was silenced, just when US policymakers wanted it most.

Although China Studies was controversial at the time, Morgenthau saw a need for expansion in this area. A German émigré, by the 1950s, Morgenthau had emerged as the chief intellectual authority on international relations in the United States and a close advisor to Cold War diplomats. He believed good scholarship could serve the state and help formulate sound policy.[55] As established China experts had turned away from the topic, Tsou, an "outsider" in the field who had academic training in political science and the advantage of Chinese language skills, became a perfect candidate. Morgenthau hired Tsou, offering him the chance he wanted to enter the field. At the same time, his "big break" raised two important questions. First, how would Tsou navigate the complex politicization of China Studies, and, second, how might his Chinese identity shape his strategy, voluntarily or involuntarily? Would his identity become a professional asset or a liability?

Tsou called himself a "pure" scholar. As his dissertation on methodology shows, Tsou did not believe that social scientists should be totally value-free, only that values or preferences should not affect methods or conclusions.[56] He told his wife, "I am only a pure scholar, and scholarship is different from politics."[57] Given the politicization of the field of China Studies, however, and the fact that Tsou himself was once a victim of McCarthyism, Tsou's statement was obviously idealistic. At the same time, claims of intellectual objectivity and political detachment represented perhaps a necessary rhetorical strategy in

[53] Paul M. Evans, *John Fairbank and the American Understanding of Modern China* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1988), 147.

[54] Evans, *John Fairbank and the American Understanding of Modern China*, 154.

[55] Greenberg, *The Weimar Century*, 211-255.

[56] Tsou, "A Study of the Development of the Scientific Approach."

[57] Yizhuang Lu to Tang Tsou, March 17, 1955, box 25, family letters folder, Tang Tsou Papers.

order for him to have a chance to continue his academic career. By claiming his neutrality and political impartiality, Tsou asserted the authority of his scholarship as well as his legitimacy in the highly politicized domain of American academia—and especially China Studies—during the Cold War. He also sought to minimize his own racial and national identity in relation to his academic work—or so it seemed.

Tsou's strategy was not uncommon at the time. Scholars noted that McCarthyism supported the rise of "scientism" across the social sciences. Congressional investigations from 1952 through 1954 into the subversive tendencies of social scientists and their funders, as well as the inclusion of social science as a research area of the National Science Foundation, gave scholars added reasons to model their methods and rhetorical strategies on the purportedly apolitical investigative norms of the natural sciences.[58] For scholars of color, this strategy had particular implications. According to Gordon, during the 1950s, many foundation leaders and white academics assumed that black social scientists were inherently biased on racial issues and, thus, tended not to fund those who examined racial issues at historically black colleges and universities. The politics of race put more pressure on African American social scientists to prove their objectivity.[59] As a Chinese scholar, Tsou felt similar pressures. In his acceptance speech for the Achievement Award conferred by the Immigrants' Service League of Chicago in 1972, Tsou stated:

> Political truth cannot be readily known, any appraisal of political action cannot be wholly impartial. . . . These are occupational hazards which no political scientist can avoid but which are more serious in the field of contemporary Chinese Studies than elsewhere and are more obvious to a scholar of Chinese origin than anyone else.[60]

Obviously, in the face of American anticommunist Cold War politics and racial politics, Tsou was aware of the possible risk a Chinese scholar might face in examining modern Chinese politics. To navigate this complex terrain, Tsou downplayed his Chinese identity and emphasized his objective scholarship. As he noted in his

[58]Jewett, *Science, Democracy, and the American University*; and Solovey, *Shaky Foundations*.

[59]Gordon, *From Power to Prejudice,* 103-131. See also Aldon Morris, *The Scholar Denied: W. E. B. Du Bois and the Birth of Modern Sociology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015).

[60]Tang Tsou, "Remarks Made in Accepting the Achievement Award Conferred by Immigrants' Service League of Chicago," Feb. 2, 1972, box 8, general folder, Tang Tsou Papers.

Achievement Award speech, "What one can do is to make objectivity and scholarly excellence the guidelines of one's work."[61]

Tsou's claim of objectivity proved successful. In 1963, he published *America's Failure in China, 1941-50*, which, two years later, won the Gordon J. Laing Prize from the University of Chicago Press for the best book written by a Chicago faculty member.[62] In the book's six hundred pages, Tsou elaborately dissected US policy toward China from Pearl Harbor in 1941 to the start of the stalemate in Korea in 1950. He analyzed a series of American blunders that led to the "communization" of China and the emergence of a new East Asian power as America's enemy rather than its friend. Speaking to the "who lost China?" debate, Tsou asserted that America's policy toward China failed, but the "measure of the failure is not the loss of China. No one can lose something which he has never possessed."[63] He argued that the failure of US policy in China stemmed from an imbalance between ambitious goals and insufficient means. Throughout most of the war, Tsou explained, the United States clung to the idea of making China into an independent, united, and hopefully democratic power. However, when faced with major decisions, the American government was prepared to take only diplomatic rather than military action to ensure the Nationalist government's control of China, a strategy that, in the end, proved ineffective. Having refrained from bringing to bear its full power in China between 1941 and 1947, over the next three years (until June 1950), the United States failed to disentangle itself from an unobtainable cause. His book concluded, "One could hardly find a more sobering example of the tragic results produced by a policy of good intentions and high ideals which lacked the foundation of a correlative estimate of self interest and which was not supported by military power equal to the noble tasks."[64]

Tsou did not agree with China lobbyists who argued for more support for Chiang Kai-shek. Instead, he claimed that "Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek was responsible for what happened in China."[65] He argued that Chiang, although an ardent Nationalist, had innumerable frailties that made him unfit to win the battle against the surging communists, and "his refusal to undertake long overdue

[61] Tsou, "Remarks Made in Accepting the Achievement Award," Tang Tsou Papers.

[62] Tang Tsou, *America's Failure in China, 1941-50* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963).

[63] Tsou, *America's Failure in China*, ix.

[64] Tsou, *America's Failure in China*, 591.

[65] Tsou, *America's Failure in China*, ix

reforms created the very conditions which were exploited by the Communists in their rise to power."[66] But Tsou did not want to look for American scapegoats—whether politicians or diplomats—who betrayed American interests in China. After carefully scrutinizing all participants, from soldiers to statesmen, Tsou found more consensus of opinion among Americans regarding China during the period of his study: their misunderstanding of the true nature of Chinese communism was almost universal, and not even the most rabid China lobbyist had suggested using American troops to keep Chiang in power.

Tsou's book was recognized as a great success in the United States and attracted considerable praise in American scholarly circles, academic journals, and the mainstream press. Although reviewers disagreed with certain points, almost all recognized the book as "well-balanced," "dispassionate," "without bias or rancor," or "a work of tremendous research depth and impressive objectivity."[67] Reviewers ranked it as the "best study on the subject which has appeared," "first-rate analysis of both Chinese and United States policy in that critical period from 1941 to 1950," and "the most important book to be published on China" in the early 1960s.[68] Some reviewers mentioned Tsou's identity as a Chinese or a China-born scholar, but all noted that he had a "remarkable degree of detachment from the

[66]Tsou, *America's Failure in China*, 89.

[67]Donald S. Sutton, review of *America*'s *Failure in China*, by Tang Tsou, *Journal of International Affairs* 18, no. 1 (Jan. 1964), 114-17; William Henry Chamberlin,"Two Careful Studies of a Shadowy Nation," *Wall Street Journal*, April 16, 1964, 18; Frederick Nossal, "The Making of Mao," *Saturday Review* (July 13, 1963), 24-25; John F. Melby, review of *America's Failure in China, 1941-50*, by Tang Tsou, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 350 (Nov. 1963), 169-70; Robert H. Ferrell, "Our China Policy Reassessed," *Yale Review* 43 (Autumn 1963), 105; and Charles Burton Marshall, "Our Bitter Tea and How We Brewed It," *The New Republic*, Feb. 15, 1964, 28.

[68]Oscar Gass, "China, Russia &the US: II" *Commentary*, April 1967, 39; Mary C. Wright, review of *America's Failure in China*, by Tang Tsou, *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 50, no. 3 (Dec. 1963), 484-85; "Lessons of Failure,"*Newsweek* 61, no. 23 (June 10, 1963), 108; Dorothy Borg, review of *America's Failure in China,* by Tang Tsou, *Journal of Asian Studies* 23, No. 2 (Feb. 1964), 302-304; Arthur Steiner, reviews of *America's Failure in China, 1941-1950*, by Tang Tsou, and *How the Far East Was Lost: American Policy and the Creation of Communist China, 1941-1949*, by Anthony Kubek, *American Political Science Review* 58, No. 1 (March 1964), 165-67; Frederick Nossal, "The Making of Mao," "Review on *America's Failure in China*,"*Saturday Review* (July 13, 1963),: 24-25; John F. Melby, review of "Review on *American's Failure in China, 1941-50*, by Tang Tsou," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 350 (Nov. 1963), 169-170; and Robert H. Ferrell, "Our China Policy Reassessed," *Yale Review* 43 (Autumn 1963), 105.

political hatreds of the countries both of his origin and of his domicile."[69]

Only Fairbank's review noted that "after his almost impeccable display of objectivity," Tsou repeatedly let himself express the hope that the course of history could have been different if the United States had been prepared to use its military power to defend the cause of freedom in China, which, according to Fairbank, "discloses that he too is a human" and "subjected to wishful thinking."[70] Fairbank was right. Growing up during the decades of China's profoundest crisis, Tsou lamented that his home country lost a chance to become liberalized because of the Japanese invasion and lack of an early US military attack on the Japanese.

America's Failure in China established Tsou as a specialist on Sino-American relations and remains one of his best-known works. In his career's later years, Tsou commenced a series of studies on Chinese politics, domestically and internationally, on such important issues as the Cultural Revolution, post-Mao reforms, and the Tiananmen Square incident of 1989, clarifying the meaning of these crucial social movements and incidents in China and their implications for US foreign policy.[71] Recognizing the importance of Tsou's studies, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Joint Committee on Contemporary China of the Social Science Research Council and the American Council of Learned Societies offered him generous funding to support his research.[72] Tsou's work impressed Chicago's faculty so much that they offered him an assistant professorship in 1959 and then a full professorship in 1966. Tsou, a former Chinese student, eventually became a faculty member at the University of Chicago when few scholars of color worked in prestigious American research universities.

During the Cold War years, as the US government sought to mobilize the entire nation, including academics and universities, in

[69] From a photocopy of an article by G. F. Hudson, "Scenes of Imperialism," found in box 16, Book Reviews folder, Tsou Tang Papers. Tsou collected all the published reviews on his book and marked the comments on his "identity" and his "objectivity."

[70] John F. Fairbank, "Dilemmas of American Far Eastern Policy: A Review Article," *Pacific Affairs* 36, no. 4 (Winter 1963-1964), 430-37.

[71] Ping-ti Ho and Tang Tsou, eds., *China in Crisis: China's Policies in Asia and America's Alternatives* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968); and Tang Tsou, *The Cultural Revolution and Post-Mao Reforms: A Historical Perspective* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986). On the 1989 events at Tiananmen, see Tang Tsou, "Social Relations, Choices, and Mechanisms in Historical Perspective," in *Contemporary Chinese Politics in Historical Perspective*, ed. Brantly Womack (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 269-321.

[72] American Political Science Association, *Biographical Directory* (Washington, DC: American Political Science Association, 1973), 498.

its global competition for the "hearts and minds" of the international community, another thousand former Chinese students entered the American academic community and became faculty members or researchers at American colleges and universities. Of these scholars, about 190 worked in the humanities and social sciences, almost all doing research related to China, while others were scientists and engineers who produced technical knowledge of various kinds.[73] The Cold War context offered scholars like Tsou the opportunity to integrate in unprecedented ways into American academia, but it also posed the danger that they would be "contained" as potential agents representing the interests of Communist China. These students-turned-immigrant-scholars, once hailed as cultural ambassadors because of their cross-cultural experience and hybrid transnationality, had to make new decisions about their identity under this new geopolitical circumstance: most chose to present themselves as "apolitical" scholars.

Building a Bridge: Chinese Immigrant Scholars and Post-Nixon US-PRC Cultural Relations

As America's China expert, Tsou did not have a chance to visit mainland China until US-PRC relations normalized in the early 1970s. After two decades of hostility, the door for educational and academic exchange between these two countries finally opened with Richard Nixon's historic journey to Beijing in February 1972. In the famous Shanghai Communiqué, science, technology, and culture figured prominently in the new bilateral relationship. "The two sides agreed that it is desirable to broaden the understanding between the two peoples," the Communiqué read. "To this end, they discussed specific areas in such fields as science, technology, culture, sports, and journalism, in which people-to-people contacts and exchanges would be mutually beneficial."[74]

Both the United States and the PRC government saw cultural and educational exchanges through a (geo)political lens. In the context of the Cold War, the Nixon administration decided to bring the PRC into the international community in the hope that a modernized China would provide balance against the Soviet Union and thus work in the US national interest. In return, the PRC government, in the wake of the Cultural Revolution and decades-long international

[73]Chinese Advisory Committee on Cultural Relations, *Directory of Chinese Members of American College and University Faculties*, 1-66.

[74]Joint Communiqué of the People's Republic of China and the United States of America (Feb. 28, 1972), http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/zmgxs/doc/ctc/t36255.htm.

isolation, sought American knowledge and technology to develop its economy and society.

After the Nixon administration lifted the ban on US travel to the PRC, Chinese immigrant scholars (most of whom had become naturalized US citizens) were among the earliest to visit mainland China. Partly due to family reasons (many had family members in the PRC), and partly due to academic and intellectual curiosity (for scholars like Tsou, nothing was more appealing than getting firsthand information about his subject of research), many Chinese immigrant scholars were eager to visit the PRC despite explicit expressions of displeasure by the Taiwan government. Some even visited during the 1970s and 1980s in the face of anonymous threats attributed to pro-Taiwan forces.[75] The PRC government welcomed these Chinese scholars and was interested in more than the advanced knowledge and technology they brought—they used their visits as a diplomatic opportunity to show goodwill toward other visitors from the United States.

Tsou submitted his application to visit the PRC in 1973. Before his visa was approved, Tsou had a chance to visit Canada and meet with the PRC ambassador there. Knowing Tsou's family background, the PRC diplomat invited Tsou to help "build connections with Taiwan." Tsou refused. "I know Taiwan is important," Tsou stated, "but after my father passed away, I do not have any contact with people in Taiwan. I don't think I could do anything in real-world politics. I am only a scholar and dedicated to promoting cross-cultural understanding through academic work."[76]

Tsou devoted himself to academic work and activities during his multiple visits to the PRC during the 1970s and 1980s, spending most of his time visiting universities and various educational and research institutes.[77] His visits attracted official attention and he was received by national leaders, including Deng Xiaoping, then vice premier of the PRC.[78] Realizing that his Chinese colleagues had been cut off from contact with Western academia for decades, while traveling in the PRC, Tsou lectured on his own scholarship and on the recent development of political science in the United States. Even as Tsou was welcomed as a scholar coming from the United States, however, he told his Chinese audience that he was only a "pure" scholar,

[75] Wang, "Chinese American Scientists and US-China Scientific Relations," 214.

[76] Tang Tsou to Wenjin Zhang, Feb. 22, 1974, box 25, Trip to China folder, Tang Tsou Papers.

[77] He made three trips to China: 1975, 1977, and 1986.

[78] Tang Tsou, "Visit to China and Other Relevant Information," Nov. 12, 1979, box 18, Next Trip to China folder, Tang Tsou Papers.

essentially depoliticized, if not also denationalized.[79] Tsou knew that, to Chinese audiences during the late 1970s and early 1980s, just after the end of the Cultural Revolution, his "American" identity could have multiple implications. It could suggest that his knowledge was particularly advanced, but it also could imply that his knowledge came from "the capitalist world" and was therefore ideologically unacceptable.

In 1986, Peking University, the PRC's leading university, conferred an honorary professorship on Tsou as an American political scientist. This recognition was intended to send a signal that Chinese universities welcomed the help of American scholars to develop political science as a discipline (abolished in the 1950s and only recently revived). However, almost at the same time, in a note to a Chinese translation of an article by Tsou published in an authoritative Chinese journal on party history, the editor called attention to the article's "limitations derived from the author's viewpoint of 'bourgeois liberalism.'"[80] As a political scientist who was profoundly aware of the (geo)politicization of knowledge, Tsou nonetheless attempted to resist the politicization of his identity, as well as his scholarship. Tsou hoped that his perceived identity would not affect people's perception of his academic work. "Scholarship should be beyond politics," he always claimed.[81]

Tsou actively participated in US academic exchanges with the PRC. In 1978, after his second visit to China, he wrote a letter to the provost of the University of Chicago proposing a high-level university delegation to the PRC to set up a Chinese-American visiting scholar program in social science.[82] Tsou also played a principal part in making arrangements for a delegation from the Chinese Academy of the Social Sciences to visit the University of Chicago in April 1979, and he hosted the visits of many individual Chinese scholars during the following years.[83] No matter whether he was traveling in the PRC or returning to his US campus, Tsou made numerous efforts to

[79]"Speech Given in Peking University by Tang Tsou," April 29, 1986, box 25, China Trip folder, Tang Tsou Papers. See also Jinyun Cao, "Jindao zoudang laoshi" [To Memorialize Tsou Tang], *Ershiyi Shiji* 19 (1999), http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/ics/21c/media/articles/c055-199909001.pdf.

[80]Theodore J. Lowi, "Introduction to 'Contemporary Chinese Politics,'" *P.S. Political Science and Politics* 20, no. 2 (Spring 1987), 325.

[81]Cao, "Jindao zoudang laoshi" [To Memorialize Tsou Tang].

[82]Tang Tsou to D. Gale Johnson, Dec. 4, 1978, box 18, Next Trip to China folder, Tang Tsou Papers.

[83]Tang Tsou, "Visit to China and Other Relevant Information," Nov. 12, 1979, Tang Tsou Papers.

meet and communicate with Chinese students and scholars from both the PRC and Taiwan.[84] He hoped they could contribute to the knowledge about modern China. As he put it: "In the process of seeking the elusive truth in full realization that one can seldom attain it, . . . one can . . . derive comfort from the possibility that scholarly dialogue and the clashes of opinions in a controversial field will provide a corrective to one's partial views."[85] Was this statement naïve in the context of the Cold War (geo)politicization of scholarship, or was it the key to future collaboration between rivals—or, even in the 1970s, between a superpower like the United States and China, the object of its (geo)strategic attention? Tsou apparently thought the latter.

Other Chinese immigrant scholars also facilitated educational contact between the US and the PRC. With the help of many Chinese immigrant scholars, the US Committee on Scholarly Communication with the People's Republic of China (CSCPRC) negotiated the first academic exchange agreement with the PRC in 1973. Since then, the CSCPRC, a semiofficial group formed in 1966 by the National Academy of Science, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the Social Science Research Council, worked through Chinese immigrant scholars who were visiting China and meeting with Chinese policymakers to facilitate academic exchange.[86] Tsou served as a board member of this organization for many years.[87] Geopolitical considerations initially motivated the United States and China to encourage their efforts to promote academic exchanges between the two countries. However, the active participation of Chinese immigrant scholars gave these exchange programs momentum. Individually and collectively, Chinese immigrant scholars played a crucial nongovernmental role in bringing tens of thousands of Chinese students and scholars to the United States who, whether they stayed or returned in the end, helped to advance the development of scholarship and promote mutual understanding.

[84] Tsou not only advised students from the PRC, but he also welcomed students from Taiwan. His most well-known student from Taiwan was Lien Chan, who later became chairman of the Nationalist Party.

[85] Tsou, "Remarks Made in Accepting the Achievement Award," Tang Tsou Papers.

[86] Wang, "Chinese American Scientists and US-China Scientific Relations," 214.

[87] When Tsou retired from the board, the committee sent him a letter of appreciation as an active and dedicated member for many years. See Committee Scholarly Communication with the People's Republic of China to Tang Tsou, Jan. 18, 1988, box 6, Committee on US-China folder, Tang Tsou Papers.

Conclusion: A Chinese Immigrant Scholar and the (Geo) politicization of American Higher Education

Tsou's story reveals the intersection of American higher education and geopolitics during an earlier period of global tensions and rivalries. During the era of the Chinese Exclusion Act (1882-1943), American hopes of using education to inculcate influence among Chinese and craft a pro-American elite in China prompted American investment in educating Chinese students. By the mid-twentieth century, however, with the deterioration of US-PRC relations, the US government, for the first time in the history of Sino-American cultural ties, refused to let American-educated Chinese return home on grounds that the knowledge these Chinese students acquired in the United States would benefit America's Cold War enemy. American education and American knowledge, along with the students who embodied both, shifted from conveyors of modernity and "Americanness" to strategic resources of national security importance. Throughout the Cold War years, as American higher education and research institutions were increasingly integrated into the American national security state, Chinese students and scholars, with their language skills and cultural background, were recruited to produce knowledge about China. Along the way, they became an integral part of US academic life. At the same time, however, the very identity that had been a professional asset also became a liability as racial-ideological fault lines led some to brand all Chinese as communist sympathizers. Tsou and other Chinese students had to navigate this complex political terrain. Tsou become a "China expert," with an emphasis on his regional expertise and his objective scholarship rather than his Chinese identity. Tsou's Chinese background and identity once again became an asset after diplomatic relations between the United States and the PRC normalized. While both governments often utilized Chinese immigrant scholars to accomplish their geopolitical goals, Tsou and other Chinese scholars took advantage of official cooperation to promote their own agendas—including the advancement of scholarship, the development of their professional careers, and improved relations between the two countries.

Was Tsou's a successful story? Perhaps. Being caught in the geopoliticization of higher education, Tsou eventually became a well-respected China expert. At the same time, he paid a high price for this "success." The Cold War (geo)politics constrained his production of knowledge as well as his personal life. American anticommunist hysteria and national security concerns not only put him in a precarious position, one in which his identity and activity were susceptible to security scrutiny, but also shaped his career prospects, contributing to his shift from methodology to the field of China Studies. Nevertheless,

Tsou was not a passive victim of the geopoliticization of American higher education. He managed to assert his identity as a neutral and apolitical scholar who produced "objective" scholarship. This self-image was historically specific as a response to the politicization of both China Studies and his personal life during the Cold War, a strategy that proved successful. Yet, as the Cold War wound through the 1960s, '70s, and '80s, increasingly overlapping with the "cultural wars" of these decades, did Tsou's claim of "objectivity" still work? Or did this claim perhaps mask, or even reinforce, academic inequalities that falsely distinguished between universal and particularistic (that is, political) forms of knowledge? At least for Tsou, he believed that only the "noble dream" of cultural and political objectivity could make cross-national understanding possible.