

YIN YANG'S NATURAL DIPLOMACY: PANDA DIPLOMACY

RAUL GABRIEL GANA MANALO

ABSTRACT

This paper will study the USA-China relations through the lens of the Yin Yang school of thought to evaluate whether the Panda Diplomacy of the Chinese government is an effective identifier to garnering positive relations with the US government and its people. Evaluation will be done through studying the political, economic and socio-cultural relations of China and USA, utilizing various forms of information such as news articles, journal articles, statistics and graphs. The main scope of the paper will be on USA and China's relations since the two states have a long history when it comes to diplomacy and at the same time a rich history in Panda Diplomacy as the United States currently owns the highest amount of loaned Pandas which is 12.

Keywords: *Panda Diplomacy, Yin Yang, US-China relation*

Panda Diplomacy is a diplomatic tool utilized by the Chinese government as a sign of friendship, alliance and a means of generating positive public opinion. Pandas, the Chinese's national

animal, creates a large socio-political, cultural and economic impact on the receivers. It is recognized as a tool of foreign policy for it creates relations to those who receive Pandas as it is seen as a good and healthy relationship between China and the donor (Randall, 2011). The value of Pandas is unique in a sense that it creates international relationships and harmony between states due to its symbol of international conservation and cooperation. The World Wildlife Fund's (WWF) logo speaks of international cooperation to conserve animals and in creating a logo that overcomes language barriers and speaks of the conservation movement, the Panda was used. However, donor countries receiving Pandas may not always have a positive outcome for a state and may even prove detrimental to a diplomatic relationship between two states as receiving one entails countless responsibilities and demands numerous actions from the government and the people. This raises the question of whether Panda Diplomacy results in a positive and better relationship between donor countries and China.

Brief Yin Yang School of Thought Background

Pandas are known to be a large and cuddly bear notable for their affection towards humans but in terms of their physical appearance, Pandas are easily recognized for their black and white fur. Being black and white and also representing the nation's national animal, Pandas and its use in diplomatic affairs can be interpreted by the author to parallel one of the popular schools of thought of China, the

Yin Yang philosophy. The Yin Yang philosophy is the core of Chinese philosophy as it equates to the view of the Chinese, representing man's relationship to nature (Yang, 1993; Hong & Lang, 2003, p. 128). The general idea of the philosophy is that there will always be existing pairs of opposite yet related objects or concepts in everything. The Yin and the Yang can be defined into numerous definitions and something to note for these definitions is that they will always be contrasting or opposites. Below is a table of possible definitions for the Yin and the Yang (Capra, 1988, p. 36):

Yin	Yang
Earth	Heaven
Female	Male
Darkness/Night	Light/Day
Winter	Summer
Negative	Positive

Delving deeper into the philosophy, the Yin Yang has principles it observes and for this paper, it will be broken down into three main principles: there is always a Yin and a Yang in everything and these Yin and Yang can be furthered into (1) having Yins and Yangs of their own; (2) the Yin and the Yang are two elements that are interrelated and interdependent and finally, (3) the Yin and the Yang is dynamic or is in constant movement. Ultimately, these three principles aim to achieve a certain balance that will eventually lead to harmony.

Yin Yang School of Thought & Panda Diplomacy

The parallelism of the Yin Yang philosophy to China's Panda Diplomacy can be seen by analyzing the effects of the said diplomacy to a receiving country in terms of socio-political, cultural economic impact. Utilizing the three main principles aforementioned, the relationship between China and a donor country can be evaluated, thus determine whether Panda Diplomacy can be an identifier for a positive relationship between a donor country and China.

First Principle

The first principle stated is that there will always be a Yin and a Yang in everything and that these Yin and Yang can be furthered into having Yins and Yangs of their own. It has been stated that the general idea of the Yin Yang school of thought is there will always be an existing opposite pair of objects or ideas in anything. In temperature, there is hot and cold; in seasons, there is winter and summer; in life, there is the positive times and the negative times. In general, a dichotomy exists; there is a black and a white or a positive and a negative in everything. Yet, within these positives and negatives lie further positives and negatives as within a positive, there will be positive effects and negative drawbacks and within the negative, there will be positive drawbacks and negative effects. In short, one can find some Yang characteristic within the Yin and a Yin characteristic within the Yang (Hong & Lang 2003, 130).

Applying the First Principle to the Panda Diplomacy, it is already noted that Pandas are generally seen as a positive, cute and attractive creature and is used as a tool to create relationships between states. The downside however to Panda Diplomacy is that when a state does not receive or is delayed to receive Pandas, it could mean that China does not wish to have a relationship with the country. This will be further explained later as China strategically selects countries to donate Pandas to. Within the Yang (Positive), there will be a Yin and a Yang; receiving a Panda means positive public opinion or appeal and improved relations of China and the donor country while on the other hand, the donor country pays money to China as part of the “renting” process. Within the Yin (Negative), there will be a Yin and a Yang; doubt amongst the government will occur due to the failure to receive Pandas from China as the state can be labeled “*unstrategic*” by the Chinese while on the other hand, there will be less obligations and less expenditure for the country. This Yin and Yang process will continue to go on and on, branching out further Yins and Yangs which leads to the second principle, the interrelation and interdependence of these Yins and Yangs.

Second Principle

The second principle stated that the Yin and the Yang are elements that are interrelated and interdependent. Interrelated because the Yin gives something the Yang and the Yang gives something to the Yin while at the same time, the Yin and Yang are also interdependent as they also rely on each other to exist as there

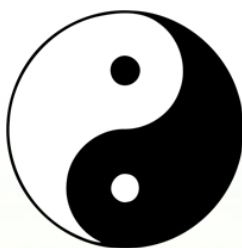
can be no Yin without any Yang and no Yang without any Yin (Fangchun & Yunfan 2014, 9488-9489). The presence of Yin will always mean that there will be a presence of the Yang and the presence of the two means a harmonious and existing relationship between two extremes. The absence of one will mean the absence of the other. There can be no top without a bottom and no bottom without a top; no cold without heat and no heat without cold. There is dependence of one for the existence of the whole which shows that the Yin and Yang are truly interdependent and interrelated with one another.

China uses diplomatic relations with other countries by loaning Pandas in order to improve not only diplomatic relations but also increase and expand economic and political influence in the global sphere. In the same way, in order for other countries to create and improve political and economic relations, diplomacy is needed. The process of giving and receiving within diplomacy, the act of giving and following certain obligations and responsibilities for both parties shows the interdependence.

More importantly, for diplomacy to exist, countries must be willing to offer something in exchange for some sort of benefit. There must be a “give and take” process between states and in this case, it would be China and the donor country. In the latter parts of this paper, it will show the economic and political effects of giving and receiving Pandas and the impact on the socio-cultural landscape.

Third Principle

The third principle stated is that the Yin and the Yang are dynamic or constantly in movement. The symbol of the Yin and Yang, two teardrop-shaped symbols with a line separating a black side and a white side, is called Taiji (Fangchun & Yunfan 2014, 9488). These two shapes represent the Yin (Black) and the Yang (White) with an S-line separating the two to form two teardrop-shaped symbols in the middle (image shown below). Applying also the previously mentioned principles, there is also a black dot on the Yang and a white dot on the Yin representing the Yang and the Yin and Yin in the Yang. This is to ensure the balance within both the Yin and the Yang. The separation and the movement of the two elements are needed in order to ensure balance and harmony between the two extremes as failure of equilibrium could result in chaos. A good example for this could be the seasons of Summer and Winter or Daytime and Nighttime. Failure to create balance of the two examples could result in either extreme drought or extreme blizzards or eternal brightness or eternal darkness which could bring disastrous consequences to people and to nature.



Taiji: Yin (Black), Yang (White)

In Panda Diplomacy, the loaning of Pandas, as of today, seems to be in constant motion as there is somewhat a pattern to the giving and receiving of Pandas when it relates to the foreign relations of China. The pattern is mostly prominent in the economic and political relations of China and the donor country and this will be further elaborated in the latter parts of the paper as this paper will focus mainly on the USA-China relations.

Methodology

This paper will study the USA-China relations while under the lens of the Yin Yang school of thought to evaluate whether the Panda Diplomacy of the Chinese government is an effective identifier to garnering positive relations with the US government and its people. Evaluation will be done through studying the political, economic and socio-cultural relations of China and USA, utilizing various forms of information such as news articles, journal articles, statistics and graphs. The main scope of the paper will be on USA and China's relations since the two states have a large history when it comes to diplomacy and at the same time a rich history in Panda Diplomacy as the United States currently owns the highest amount of loaned Pandas which is 12.

USA-China Relations

The history of China's Panda Diplomacy with the United States first started when China recognized the diplomatic value of the

Panda's popularity as it gained a large positive appeal outside China especially during 1936 when a Panda named Su Lin was brought to the US by explorer, Ruth Harkness (Nicholls, 2010; Buckingham, et.al. 2010, 2). In 1972, Chairman Mao Ze Dong presented US president, Richard Nixon, a pair of pandas as a gift and a sign of friendship during the president's visit to China. After 1984, Pandas were no longer considered to be gifts but rather as gift loans that involved a capital lease model that had financial transactions of US\$50,000 per month per Panda (Sina, 2011; Imbriaco, 2006).

This however, did not last long as the transactions were subject to controversy for Pandas cannot be commercially traded but rather be traded for scientific purposes and for the enhancement of its propagation and survival. In order to mitigate this issue, the Chinese government abandoned the idea of short-term loans in favor of a long-term loan which will be used in order to finance the implementation of the Giant Panda management plan that was published by the WWF and approved by the Chinese Forest Administration. Over the course of time, there have been numerous Panda loans that China has given to the United States with the country being successful in breeding numerous Panda cubs and attracting thousands of crowds whether in real life or in social media. According to Buckingham, et.al. (2010), the Chinese's act of sharing their precious animal is not simply a deal but rather a representation of a seal of approval and shows intent for a long and prosperous working relationship. This long and prosperous working relationship

will be evaluated by highlighting some political, economic and socio-cultural aspects of the Panda Diplomacy while under the lens of the Yin Yang school of thought.

Panda Diplomacy: Political Aspect

In the political aspect, the Panda Diplomacy between China and the United States has increased throughout the years and relations between the two countries have shown to be erratic as shown in this graph.



Figure 1: China-US Relations (1950-2014) (Source: Hinderson 2017, 19)

In the graph above, it shows that there are times wherein, when China donates or loans Pandas to China, relations between the two countries increases. However, during the 1980s, there is a drop in

terms of relations and these could be due to numerous factors and one of them could be the Tiananmen Square Massacre which left hundreds dead and this resulted in the freeze between US and China relations for quite some time. After some time, relations began to spike again and this is possibly due to further political and economic agreements between the two countries as the US-China relations act of 2000 was signed. Afterwards, relations continue to go up and down as numerous historical events would occur whether it is the Financial Crisis of 2009 or the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Although it can be said that the Panda Diplomacy is not the sole contributor of the increase of relations between the United States and China, it could still possibly provide a good and stable relationship between the two countries and its citizens. Furthermore, with the increase of the Pandas being received by the United States overtime, it shows that there is a possible correlation between the number of Pandas being loaned to the United States and the relations between the two. Shown below are the countries and the distribution of Pandas from 1937 up until 2012.

In the photos provided, the darker the countries are shaded, the more Pandas that the country has received throughout history and the United States is shown to have received more than 16 Pandas followed by other countries such as Japan, Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom and France. With this said, it can be discerned that another pattern can also arise and it is that the countries whom China chooses to loan its Pandas to are technologically advanced or has valuable resources and has numerous agreements with China.

Panda distribution by country 1937-1983



Panda distribution by country 1984-2007



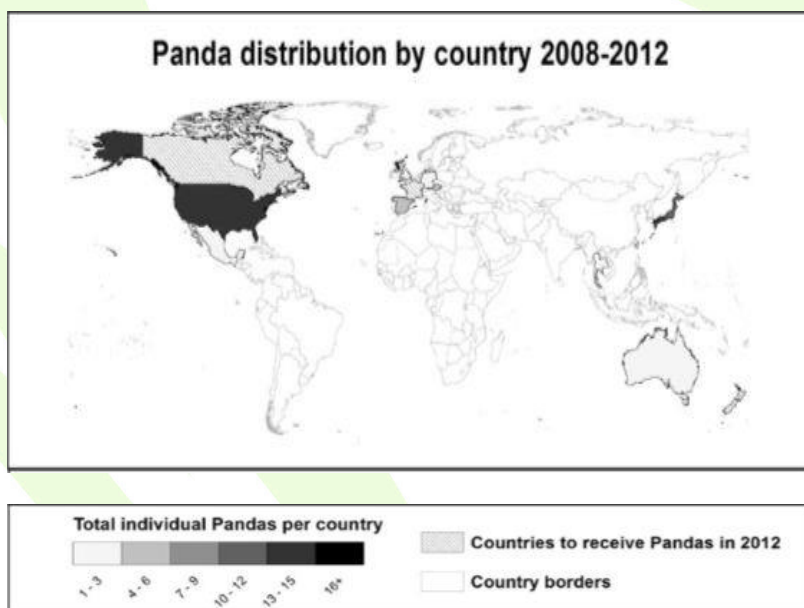


Figure 2: Panda Distribution 1937-2012 (Source: Buckingham, et.al. 2010, 6)



Growing US Mandarin Language Learning to 1 Million by 2020

Additionally, during 2015, Presidents Xi Jin Ping and Barack Obama initiated the 1 million strong project which aimed to increase the number of Mandarin speakers in the United States by around 1million speakers by the year 2020. This will lead to better communications and dispute settlements between China and USA in

the future should the occasion arise. This project also benefits the United States as it aims to increase American students studying in China.

Panda Diplomacy: Economic Aspect

Position	Trading partner	Date latest panda arrived
1	United States	Two extended, two cubs repatriated 2010
2	Japan	2011
3	Hong Kong	2007
4	South Korea	Sent 1995–1999
5	Taiwan	2008 (after the earthquake)
6	Germany	Sent 1995, died 2007
7	Australia	2009
8	Malaysia	Expected 2014
9	Singapore	2012
10	India	NA
13	United Kingdom	2012
15	Thailand	Extended 2010
No data	Canada	2012
	France	2012

Figure 3: China’s Trading Partners and Panda Status
(Source: Buckingham, et. al. 2010, 4)

In Figure 3, it is shown that the United States holds the number one position in holding the most amount of Pandas. Although the pattern wherein China chooses countries that have abundant resources and agreements with China could be plausible due to the fact that the United States has been the most successful in terms of

breeding and scientific research, it still cannot be said that Panda Diplomacy is the sole contributor of heightened US-China relations. It can be said however, that it could possibly contribute significantly in terms of economy. The figures shown below are the US Imports and Exports of goods with China.

	1985		1986		1987		1988	
	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports
January	319.2	293.1	300.0	459.5	213.3	520.6	289.5	652.8
February	222.7	281.0	330.6	376.6	212.7	565.3	360.3	650.6
March	239.5	293.0	289.6	401.8	207.6	482.5	407.8	509.9
April	265.6	283.3	318.9	264.9	439.6	468.3	446.5	551.9
May	329.3	295.1	256.8	319.0	228.7	514.7	313.8	615.1
June	280.9	348.7	275.3	375.7	261.8	536.3	503.2	720.8
July	383.1	344.4	198.6	450.2	227.4	560.0	483.6	761.6
August	320.9	311.8	235.6	434.7	278.2	598.1	424.4	803.9
September	339.1	391.8	216.4	413.4	304.1	549.6	396.4	793.3
October	377.1	385.5	198.8	398.5	376.9	567.9	412.9	834.0
November	316.3	327.5	226.7	486.0	350.5	489.8	449.3	798.8
December	462.0	306.5	259.0	390.7	396.5	440.5	533.9	818.2
Total	3855.7	3861.7	3106.3	4771.0	3497.3	6293.6	5021.6	8510.9

Figure 4: US Imports and Exports Trade in Goods with China 1985-1988
(Source: US Census Bureau)

	1995		1996		1997	
	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports
January	744.9	3450.6	929.2	3657.7	938.4	4667.6
February	1085.5	3001.5	1146.9	3539.6	913.3	4262.4
March	1070.1	2910.4	1092.5	2863.7	1021.6	3628.6
April	896.4	3148.3	841.3	3247.9	964.7	4445.0
May	831.0	3654.9	881.6	3954.3	1056.8	4795.1
June	946.7	3960.7	771.6	4111.2	920.3	5213.5
July	985.7	4311.8	998.2	4816.7	1097.1	5777.2
August	881.4	4804.7	778.3	5495.7	938.0	6073.6
September	959.6	4584.1	753.4	5480.7	1039.8	6561.4
October	1097.4	4714.3	927.5	5812.9	1438.8	6606.5
November	1124.7	3868.0	1586.4	4585.4	1300.7	5425.7
December	1130.3	3133.9	1285.7	3947.0	1232.7	5101.1
Total	11753.7	45543.2	11992.6	51512.8	12862.2	62557.7

Figure 5: US Imports and Exports Trade in Goods with China 1995-1997
(Source: US Census Bureau)

From the above figures, the author interprets that due to improved relations of China with USA through the Panda Diplomacy, it has contributed to the increase in the imports and exports of goods with China. The years of 1985-1988 and 1995-1997 are chosen due to the reason that these are the years when the Chinese loaned pairs of Pandas to zoos in the United States. There is continuous increase of imports and exports throughout the years from 1985-1988 and in the year of 1996, when the San Diego Zoo received the first capable pair of Pandas to breed, imports and exports of goods between the United States and China rose significantly and this can be due to the increased relations between the two states. Aside from the

imports and exports, tourism also rose throughout the years in the United States as shown in the figure below.

Although there is a slight drop during the years of 2001, this could be due to the 9/11 terrorist attacks which caused a security issue to occur, rendering public security to be stricter and more reinforced and possibly inducing paranoia to many citizens and tourists in the United States. This caused a slight decline for some years but nevertheless, tourism still grew as more Panda cubs were born especially in the years of 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008. Zoo tourism in the United States alone contributes 16 billion dollars to the nation's GDP (Fuller 2011). The author interprets that due to Panda Diplomacy, it has contributed to the zoo tourism in the United States and has increased not only imports and exports but also the tourism industry.



Figure 6: US Tourism Revenues 2001-2016
(Source: Tradingeconomics.com)

Panda Diplomacy: Socio-Cultural Aspect

It has been said that Pandas are popular due to the reason that they are considered to be this large and cute creature that touches the hearts of many. These Pandas receive high levels of attention whether it's in social media or in real life, people will find a way to see them.

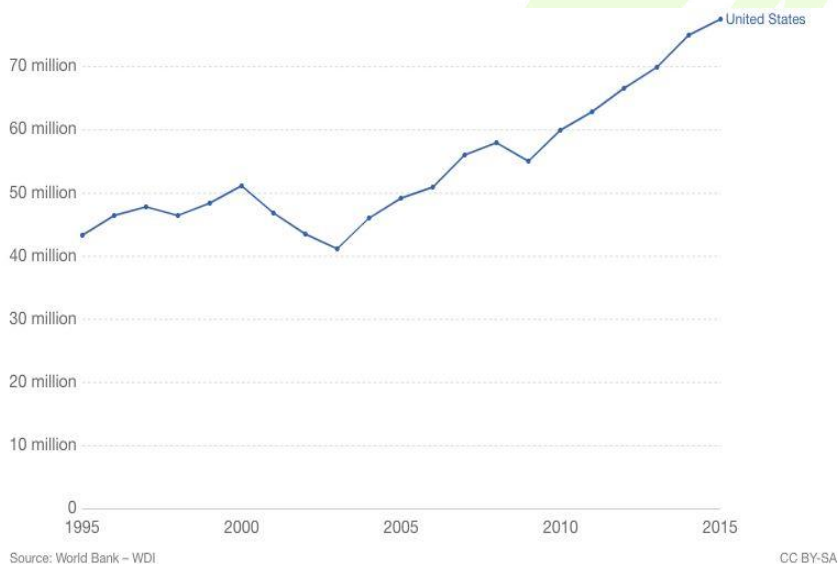


Figure 7: International Tourists in the United States (1995-2015)
(Source: World Bank)

Figure 7 shows the number of international tourists arriving in the United States. The author interprets that one of the contributors to this significant increase of tourists is the Panda Diplomacy of China for not only did it increase relations between the two states,

but it also increased the number of tourists who wish to see Pandas and Panda cubs. Aside from the increase in tourism, Pandas are also evident in popular culture. One popular example is from the film, Kung Fu Panda, where the main character is a Panda who goes on to save China through defeating the villains by learning Kung Fu. Other pop culture use of Pandas would include the use of their pictures as shirt designs, songs, food and other consumerist goods.



Additionally, the Panda is the official logo of the WWF which represents the symbol of international conservation and also represents the cooperation between people, institutions and states to conserve and protect those endangered animals in the wild. Overall, due to the Panda Diplomacy that China has conducted throughout decades with the United States, it has not only touched the realm of politics and economics but also the hearts and minds of the people through its cuteness and symbol it holds.

Data and Yin and Yang Analysis

In analyzing all the aspects of the Panda Diplomacy with the use of Yin Yang school of thought, it can begin through the actual diplomacy of China and the United States. In diplomacy, there is giving and receiving between the two parties and in this case, China and the United States both give something in return. Applying the second principle first, there is interdependence between the two countries for diplomacy to arise. Pandas are given and in exchange, there is an increase of trade. Although it has been said that Panda Diplomacy may not be the sole reason for the increase in trade, it could still possibly be a large contributor to the large gain in trade. Additionally, the interdependence does not stop there as conservation also plays a role in the interdependence between the two states. The United States needs the funds from China and more importantly, the Pandas, to actually conserve them and China needs more conservational effort to help increase the numbers of Pandas.

Utilizing the first principle now, it can be noted that there is a Yin and Yang, a good side and a bad side towards the Panda Diplomacy. Good because it increases relations, it increases trade and it increases public appeal. Bad because the maintenance alone for the Pandas costs around 10 million to 20 million dollars depending on the zoo, its facilities and the staff required. Additionally, Zoos are charged \$600,000 dollars per Panda cub and renting pairs of Pandas alone could cost around \$500,000 dollars a year. These are some expenditures that if not given attention to, may cause some negative bumps in tourism industry of the United States. Adding on to the negatives, the withdrawal of the Panda cubs by China could mean that the donor country and in this circumstance, the United States, has done something unfavorable and this occurred when the United States tried to create a trade agreement with Taiwan which resulted in China withdrawing some Pandas from the United States. Diving deeper however, it can be said that there is still a Yin and Yang, benefits and drawbacks, with these two situations. For the loaning of Pandas, it can be said that this could be an investment that could possibly be beneficial not only for the economy but also for the socio-cultural development of the people and on the other hand, loaning Pandas could come to a point where China could raise the loan thus significantly increasing the expenditure of the Zoos even more which would lead to either loss of employment, lowered wages or mismanagement of the animals. For the withdrawal of Panda Cubs, it can be beneficial as there is no need to pay the loan fee anymore if

the withdrawal pushes through but on the other hand, it could result in public dismay as the United States lost their own Panda. Looking at the Panda Diplomacy in the first principle, there will always be two extremes and within these extremes, will be two more extremes. Inside the Yin and the Yang will be more Yin and Yangs and it will continuously go on.

Finally, applying the last principle which is that the Yin and Yang is constantly in motion, the Panda Diplomacy is constantly in motion as seen in the patterns. There will be ups and downs due to numerous variables such as economic collapses, terrorist attacks and natural calamities but the guaranteed thing is that there will be two extremes, the highs and the lows of the economy, the rise and downfall of empires or the presence and absence of natural events. The presence of the two extremes are necessary in order to achieve balance and harmony between China and the United States.

In determining the relationship between the United States and China, this paper looks also on the timeline of events (shown in figure 1) wherein Panda Diplomacy has occurred between the two states. From there, it will determine whether or not the said diplomacy can be a good identifier for China-USA relations.

First, during the years of 1984 up to 1986, there were increased diplomatic events such as Ronald Reagan's visit to China (April 1984) or President Li Xiannan's visit to the United States (July 1985) which is actually the first ever visit of a Chinese Head of State to the country. These events are identified to be positive events as they discussed

numerous positive Sino-US relations during their meetings such as Sino-US Joint ventures and even the Nuclear Cooperation pact.

Afterwards, in the year of 1989, the United States sanctioned China for its human rights violations during the Tiananmen Square massacre on June 4th. This can be considered a negative event for the United States imposed trade embargoes on military weapons and equipment to China. In the years of 1992 and 1993, more negative events occurred for China-USA relations as China expresses discontent and disapproval on the US-Hong Kong policy of the United States and the “Galaxy” incident where China denied a claim made by the US government regarding their Chinese merchant ship on Saudi Arabia carrying chemical materials.

Past 1995 however, things started to shift as during this time, another Panda was transferred from China to US, triggering another Panda Diplomacy deal which results in positive relations between the two states. In 1997, President Jiang Zemin visits the United States and together with Bill Clinton, creates a joint communique calling for strengthened partnerships between the two states. In the following year, President Bill Clinton visits China and supports China’s foreign policy by stating that the United States does not support Taiwan the independence of Taiwan.

A few years later, disaster struck in the United States as the 9/11 attacks transpired causing the country to tighten its security significantly thus lowering many relations not only with China but also other states. Years after the 9/11 incident, Panda Diplomacy

occurred again which caused an increase in the Diplomatic relations between the two states. Positive diplomatic events would include the approval of China over the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1373 which supported the coalition in Afghanistan and has also relegated resources for the coalition and China's disapproval and negotiations with North Korea regarding its nuclear weapons.

Post 2009, as President Barack Obama takes the seat of presidency for the United States, multiple events, positive and negative, have occurred that shifted the relations between China and the United States. In 2009, the US-China Strategic and Economic dialogue occurred increasing the relations between the states as it focused mainly on regional and global strategic issues between the two countries and focusing on matters such as global warming, nuclear weapons and humanitarian crises. In 2010, the Chinese government threatened to impose sanctions on US companies who attempt to supply weapons to Taiwan and threatened to also suspend any further cooperation on regional and international issues. These events are marked as negative events between the two states. However, these negative events do not last long as many Pandas are soon born in multiple zoos in the United States that are either kept or returned home. This will pave the way for better relations between China and the U.S.

Finally, in 2012 and 2013, multiple events occurred that positively increased the relations between the two nations yet again as they have coordinated and cooperated well in events such as the Iran

Nuclear deal and the sanctions imposed upon the North Koreans for their nuclear weapons. Additionally, President Xi Jinping and President Barack Obama had a meeting mid-2013 and agreed to cooperate on efforts to curtail global warming and the North Korean nuclear program.

Conclusion

In conclusion, in evaluating the relationship of the United States and China using the Yin Yang School of thought, the author can suggest that the Panda Diplomacy of the Chinese government can be a good identifier for positive relationships between China and USA. The Yin Yang application can be seen in the fluctuation of relations in the historical events between the two nations. Furthermore, the two share the title of being the most powerful countries in the world whether in economics, military or politics and despite the recent negative occurrences between the Chinese Government and the United States Government such as the trade war, this is all part of the Yin Yang's constant flow. A few historic moments ago, China-USA relations were strong but today, it is being challenged by numerous adversaries. Whether the country needs a new pair of Pandas or not is the question as tensions arise. But looking at the issue in a Yin Yang perspective, this will be temporary for when there was light, then comes darkness. But when comes darkness, there will always be light.

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