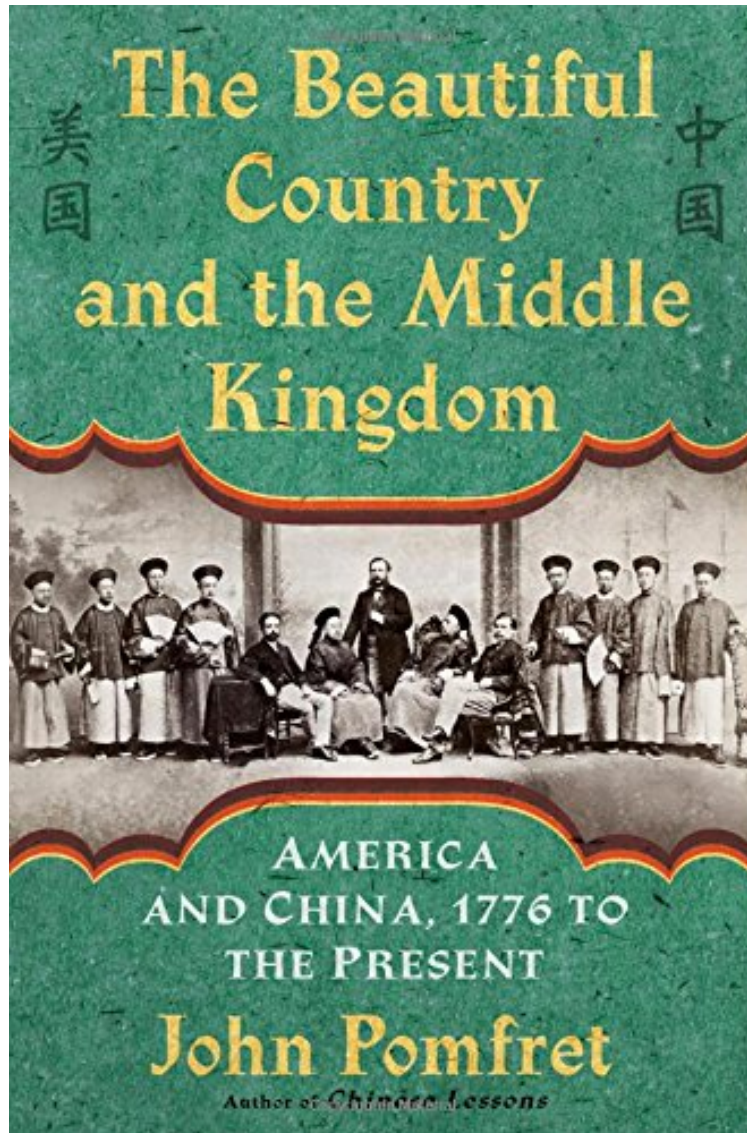


(Mobile book) The Beautiful Country and the Middle Kingdom: America and China, 1776 to the Present

# The Beautiful Country and the Middle Kingdom: America and China, 1776 to the Present

John Pomfret

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#36378 in Books John Pomfret 2016-11-29 2016-11-29 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.59 x 1.54 x 6.411, 1.00 #File Name: 0805092501704 pages The Beautiful Country and the Middle Kingdom America and China 1776 to the Present | File size: 46.Mb

**John Pomfret : The Beautiful Country and the Middle Kingdom: America and China, 1776 to the Present** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Beautiful Country and the Middle Kingdom: America and China, 1776 to the Present:

54 of 57 people found the following review helpful. In pursuit of the Great Harmony: The co-evolution of the USA

and China

By Alan F. Sewell

This book is about the co-evolution of the USA and China --- the intimate, and often surprising, ways that each nation shaped the development of the other. Author John Pomfret, who is deeply rooted in both nations, explains it thus:===Many Americans believe that their countrys ties to China began when Richard Nixon traveled there in 1972, ending the Cold War between the two nations.In fact, the two sides have been interacting with and influencing each other since the founding of the United States. It wasnt just free land that lured American settlers westward. It was also the dream of selling to China.The idea of America also inspired the Chinese, pulling them toward modernity and the outside world. American science, educational theory, and technology flowed into China; Chinese art, food, and philosophy flowed out.Since then, thread by thread, the two peoples and their various governments have crafted the most multifaceted and today the most important relationship between any two nations in the world. Now is the time to retell the story of the United States and China. Today, these two nations face each other not quite friends, not yet enemies pursuing parallel quests for power while the world watches.No problem of worldwide concern from global warming, to terrorism, to the proliferation of nuclear weapons, to the economy can be solved unless Washington and Beijing find a way to work together.===Pomfret explains how the USA broke away from the British Empire in part so that our Yankee Traders could trade freely with China, which even in the 1700s was viewed as a treasure house of silk, fine art, tableware, tea, and spices. We took possession of the Oregon Ports and Hawaii, as way stations to China, soon after 1800, at a time when we had not yet secured possession of our Trans-Appalachian West. If China had not existed, the USA might have remained a middling nation confined to eastern North America instead of becoming a global superpower. The lure of trade with China carried our flag to the Pacific Coast and then to the Orient. He explains that had the USA not become a global power, because of China, then China might have remained a collection of disunited petty fiefdoms carved up by the European empires.He explains how our cultures complement each other. China looks to the USA to strengthen its mastery of science, technology, and economic development. They admire our modern free-wheeling culture of innovation, and have a profound liking for Americans. The name for America as written in Chinese characters as The Beautiful Country. Likewise Americans have admired Chinas ancient culture of wisdom, patience, and beauty. The Middle Kingdom filled the role as a wiser, more exotic civilization than the well-oiled if somewhat antiseptic one that Americans were forging.Both countries value a classless society with upward mobility for all people. This shared value made us allies when the European Empires, Russia, and Japan have threatened Chinas independence. America was drawn into WWII when Japan attacked us after we insisted that it abandon its brutal attempt at conquest of China. In the 1970s the USA and China again became allies, after a period of dreadful relations, when China feared that the neighboring Soviets would launch a preemptive attack against Chinas emerging nuclear program.Unfortunately, in the interim between these alliances, the USA was drawn into wars in Korea and Vietnam to contain Chinese Communist expansion. Even after periods of hostility, such as these, the pursuit of the Great Harmony between the USA and China resumed.I approached this book being somewhat knowledgeable on these points. My father, a foreign policy buff who had campaigned for President Nixon, taught me the nuances of American and Chinese relations during the time of Nixons great overture to China in the 1970s. Even so, this book provided a depth of knowledge about the interactions between Americans and Chinese that I was not aware of.The book is objective, without ideological axes to grind. It explodes myths, such as that the Chinese Communists bore the lions share of fighting against the Japanese in WWII, while the Chinese Nationalists under Chiang Kai-shek were corrupt slackers. This was a myth that my father, a China buff, taught me. Pomfret says the reality is that the Chinese Nationalists did most of the fighting, thereby wearing themselves down to the point where Maos Communist could take over the country.Pomfret advises us to be objective in furthering our own best interests as our relationship with China continues to deepen: In the pursuit of the Great Harmony, rapturous enchantment is not Americas ally; realism is. At the moment, that means constraining Chinas ambitions to extend its territory far out into the Pacific, thereby encroaching on our allies claims to islands and control of the sea lanes. It means coming to terms with our trade with China, which results in \$367 billion trade deficits each year.Americans who want to thoroughly understand our relations with China during our 240 years as a nation will be educated by this book. China has always shaped our history --- mostly in positive ways, but also by the inevitable rivalries of two great powers. We may be nearing some choppy waters in our relations with China, in trade and territorial disputes in the Western Pacific. This book has arrived at an opportune time to help us understand how to negotiate with China to get through the choppy seas together.8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. If You Want To Understand Our Moist Important Bilateral RelationshipBy psfindcWritten by one of the last US-Sino journalistic experts out there, Mr Promfret's work is a true tour de force of the complexity of the entwined US/China relationship. You will lean more in this one volume than in a whole college course. From our two nations' love/hate relationship at the end of the 1900s to our current interdependence. From failed American missionaries to revered US science and educational philanthropists in early decades of the 20th century China - even Mao liked us for a while; to America's absorption of Chinese art, philosophy and cuisine. No more pertinent or timely book out there. A few more volumes like this and Mr Promfret will deservedly surpass Jonathan Spence as the go-to authority on China.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A very long relationship dissected intelligentlyBy Blue in WashingtonA meticulously researched book on the history of economic, political and cultural relations between China and the United States. The substance of the book is

convincing, particularly the sections on modern history, some of which has been observed first hand by author John Pomfret. What detracted from the book somewhat for me was its very scholarly denseness. It is replete with detailed personal histories of 19th Century Americans who went to China to make commercial fortunes or harvest Christian souls. In an event, the book is a major achievement in providing a credible backdrop to why the contemporary relationship between the two countries is often fraught with miscues and misunderstanding. It makes the point, directly and indirectly, that all international relationships cannot be conducted without some meaningful understanding of and reference to past encounters.

A remarkable history of the two-centuries-old relationship between the United States and China, from the Revolutionary War to the present day. From the clipper ships that ventured to Canton hauling cargos of American ginseng to swap Chinese tea, to the US warships facing off against China's growing navy in the South China Sea, from the Yankee missionaries who brought Christianity and education to China, to the Chinese who built the American West, the United States and China have always been dramatically intertwined. For more than two centuries, American and Chinese statesmen, merchants, missionaries, and adventurers, men and women, have profoundly influenced the fate of these nations. While we tend to think of America's ties with China as starting in 1972 with the visit of President Richard Nixon to China, the patterns of rapturous enchantment followed by angry disillusionment were set in motion hundreds of years earlier. Drawing on personal letters, diaries, memoirs, government documents, and contemporary news reports, John Pomfret reconstructs the surprising, tragic, and marvelous ways Americans and Chinese have engaged with one another through the centuries. A fascinating and thrilling account, *The Beautiful Country and the Middle Kingdom* is also an indispensable book for understanding the most important and often the most perplexing relationship between any two countries in the world.

Praise for "Chinese Lessons" "A compelling account of China's evolution. The communist country's emergence from isolation and impoverishment has been told before, but rarely in such intimate, and occasionally heart-rending detail." David J. Lynch, "USA Today" "Almost every page offers a new observation or insight, and thankfully, Pomfret's lucid style makes the book a pleasure to reread." Chris Ulbrich, "San Francisco Chronicle" "Praise for Chinese Lessons" "A compelling account of China's evolution. The communist country's emergence from isolation and impoverishment has been told before, but rarely in such intimate, and occasionally heart-rending detail." David J. Lynch, USA Today "Almost every page offers a new observation or insight, and thankfully, Pomfret's lucid style makes the book a pleasure to reread." Chris Ulbrich, San Francisco Chronicle "Praise for *The Beautiful Country and the Middle Kingdom*" "John Pomfret has given us the most encompassing, vivid, and fair-minded account of the world's most important diplomatic relationship, with a warning on the risk of getting it wrong and a belief in the ability to get it right. A triumph of writing, research, and, above all, judgment." Evan Osnos, National Book Award-winning author of *Age of Ambition* "A tour de force. Beautifully written, sweeping in scope, learned, lively, and filled with fascinating stories, *The Beautiful Country and the Middle Kingdom* is a timely and important book written by one of the most brilliant and insightful China experts of our day." --Amy Chua, Yale Law Professor and author of *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* and *The Triple Package: How Three Unlikely Traits Explain the Rise and Fall of Cultural Groups in America* "If you are going to read one book on US-China relations, make it John Pomfret's *The Beautiful Country and the Middle Kingdom*. Superbly researched and historically grounded, this book soars on its rich narrative filled with fascinating vignettes. No one is more equipped than Pomfret by intellect, by experience, and by passion to attempt such an ambitious work and he has skillfully delivered a masterpiece. Karl W. Eikenberry, Ambassador and Lieutenant General, United States Army, Retired "This is the best single book on the two-century-old history of Sino-American relations. Pomfret tells this colorful story through intriguing tales of individuals Americans, Chinese, and Chinese-Americans. At the same time, he ably explains the transformations, tensions, and tragedies that have defined governmental ties. Pomfret has researched with care and weighed various interpretations with a keen eye and deft touch." Robert B. Zoellick, Former President of the World Bank, US Trade Representative, and US Deputy Secretary of State "Praise for Chinese Lessons" "A compelling account of China's evolution. The communist country's emergence from isolation and impoverishment has been told before, but rarely in such intimate, and occasionally heart-rending detail." David J. Lynch, USA Today "Almost every page offers a new observation or insight, and thankfully, Pomfret's lucid style makes the book a pleasure to reread." Chris Ulbrich, San Francisco Chronicle "Praise for *The Beautiful Country and the Middle Kingdom*" "Donald Trump (or his next secretary of state) would be well advised to read this timely and comprehensively informative book...very good and important." --Simon Winchester for *The New York Times Book Review* "...exhaustively researched and vigorously told...If the new administration in Washington wishes to get a sense of the broad sweep of American history with China, I can think of few better places to start than this book." --Howard W. French for *The Wall Street Journal* "[An] absorbing new book...[Pomfret] weaves a lively tale, peppered with a cast of adventurers, spies, preachers, communists and McCarthyites who have boosted and sabotaged the relationship in turn over the years." --*The Economist* "One thing that John Pomfret does very effectively in *The Beautiful Country and the Middle Kingdom* is help us appreciate just how long Chinese views of America have been

shaped, as they are now, by a mix of feelings including admiration, attraction, disappointment and disdain. Pomfret, a veteran journalist and author of the well-received *Chinese Lessons: Five Classmates and the Story of the New China* (2006), reminds us that we are dealing with a love-hate relationship that dates back to the years following the American Revolution... *The Beautiful Country and the Middle Kingdom*, though containing clear arguments, including the idea that there is a related love-hate dynamic in American views of China, is ultimately a biographically driven work. Its strength lies in the cumulative effect of seeing recurring patterns revealed via skilfully drawn character sketches." --Financial Times "Trump must learn more about the history of U.S.-China relations ... A new book by veteran journalist John Pomfret, titled *The Beautiful Country and the Middle Kingdom*, would be a good start as it details the two century love-hate relationship between the two powers." --The Diplomat "The book is particularly timely because it takes readers on a grand, historic adventure that shows the cyclical love-hate relationship, when current politicians in both countries are sometimes fond of focusing on the hate...[it] fleshes out the dual U.S.-China narrative through stories of people, without losing sight of the larger context...well-researched." --NPR.org "The book is sweeping in scope but nonetheless manages to paint a vivid picture of personal interactions, adventures and misadventures... a deeply informative work. Examining the relationship between two countries as vast and complicated as the US and China takes stamina, yet as the world increasingly revolves around the interactions of these two superpowers, it is important to understand how their relationship has developed, succeeded and failed over the past 240 years. Pomfret does a masterful job of presenting the good, the bad and the ugly from generations of interactions." --South China Morning Post "Takes the myriad historical milestones of two of the world's most powerful nations and turns them into one fluid, fascinating story, leaving us with a nuanced understanding of where these two nations stand in relation to one another and the rest of the world." --Publishers Weekly "[F]ormer Washington Post foreign correspondent Pomfret, who was recently a Fulbright Senior Scholar in Beijing, delves into the historical relations between the two and offers a fresh appraisal of each nation's contributions to the other... [an] impressively wide-ranging history demonstrating that the U.S.-China relationship began decades before Richard Nixon arrived on the scene." --Kirkus s "John Pomfret has given us the most encompassing, vivid, and fair-minded account of the world's most important diplomatic relationship, with a warning on the risk of getting it wrong and a belief in the ability to get it right. A triumph of writing, research, and, above all, judgment." --Evan Osnos, National Book Award-winning author of *Age of Ambition* "A tour de force. Beautifully written, sweeping in scope, learned, lively, and filled with fascinating stories, *The Beautiful Country and the Middle Kingdom* is a timely and important book written by one of the most brilliant and insightful China experts of our day." --Amy Chua, Yale Law Professor and author of *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* and *The Triple Package: How Three Unlikely Traits Explain the Rise and Fall of Cultural Groups in America* "If you are going to read one book on US-China relations, make it John Pomfret's *The Beautiful Country and the Middle Kingdom*. Superbly researched and historically grounded, this book soars on its rich narrative filled with fascinating vignettes. No one is more equipped than Pomfret by intellect, by experience, and by passion to attempt such an ambitious work - and he has skillfully delivered a masterpiece." --Karl W. Eikenberry, Ambassador and Lieutenant General, United States Army, Retired "This is the best single book on the two-century-old history of Sino-American relations. Pomfret tells this colorful story through intriguing tales of individuals--Americans, Chinese, and Chinese-Americans. At the same time, he ably explains the transformations, tensions, and tragedies that have defined governmental ties. Pomfret has researched with care and weighed various interpretations with a keen eye and deft touch." --Robert B. Zoellick, Former President of the World Bank, US Trade Representative, and US Deputy Secretary of State "Praise for *Chinese Lessons*" "A compelling account of China's evolution. The communist country's emergence from isolation and impoverishment has been told before, but rarely in such intimate, and occasionally heart-rending detail." --David J. Lynch, USA Today "Almost every page offers a new observation or insight, and thankfully, Pomfret's lucid style makes the book a pleasure to reread." --Chris Ulbrich, San Francisco Chronicle

**Author** John Pomfret served as a correspondent for the Washington Post for two decades, covering wars, revolutions, and China. He is the author of the acclaimed book *Chinese Lessons*, and has won awards for his reporting on Asia, including the Osborne Elliot Prize. He holds a BA and MA from Stanford University and was one of the first American students to go to China after relations were normalized. Pomfret was expelled from China after the Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989. Most recently, he was a Fulbright senior scholar in Beijing.