

Second Edition,
Fully Revised and Updated

China and the World

*New Directions in
Chinese Foreign Relations*

edited by Samuel S. Kim

Westview Press

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Princeton University

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China and the World

About the Book and Editor

For the first time in modern history, China has become a full-fledged member of the global system. In this completely revised edition of the popular text, the authors focus on the developments of the past decade to answer the questions raised by China's expanding, increasingly complex international role. What is the central challenge of post-Mao Chinese foreign policy? How does post-Mao China relate to a rapidly evolving global environment? How has the nexus between China and the world changed, and why? And what are the implications for China's future international relationships?

Combining a conceptual and theoretical framework with specific case studies, the text addresses enduring concerns and enigmas that are of interest to both students and policymakers. The authors explore the sources of Chinese foreign policy, weighing the relative influence of domestic and external factors on policy formulation. They also examine the changes and continuities that characterize Chinese foreign policy, identifying the patterns underlying China's interactions with the major global actors and its policies on specific international issues. Special attention is given to the extent of word/deed (and at times, word/word) disjuncture in Chinese foreign policy, with several chapters probing the discrepancies between rhetoric and reality, between policy pronouncements and policy performance, and between intent and outcome. The conclusion identifies and assesses China's foreign policy options and prospects for the next decade.

Samuel S. Kim teaches in the graduate program of the Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University. His many publications include *China, the United Nations, and World Order* and *The Quest for a Just World Order*.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

This collaborative volume has been energized by the conviction that the appropriate time has arrived to reassess post-Mao China's foreign policy. The contributing authors believe that China, for the first time in modern history, has finally joined the world. It is becoming a full-fledged member of the global political system. This momentous transformation of China's role in world politics presents a challenge to much of what has been said and written on Chinese foreign policy. We focus on the developments of the Deng decade (1978–1988) to answer the questions raised by China's increasingly complex, involved, and multifaceted global role. What is the central challenge of Dengist foreign policy? What is China's self-definition of its national identity and role conception in the world today? How does Dengist China relate to a rapidly changing world environment? To what extent, and in what specific ways, has the nexus between China and the world remained constant or changed, and why? What are the future implications and prospects for both?

With this broad concern in mind, the book seeks to combine theory and generalizations with some specific empirical case studies. The mandate of each contributor was to address, within the scope of each assigned chapter, several key questions and puzzles that are of theoretical and practical value to both scholars and policymakers. First, what are the wellsprings of Chinese foreign policy? Specifically, what is the relative weight of domestic/societal factors as opposed to external/systemic ones? Or does this kind of domestic/external typology make any sense in an age of global interdependence and interpenetration? Second, what changes and continuities characterize the Chinese foreign policy of the post-Mao era, and what are their sources? In Parts 2 and 3 of the book, the contributors identify the underlying patterns of China's interactions with the major global actors (the United States, the Soviet Union, the Second World, and the Third World) and China's policies on specific international issues and problems. Third, what is the extent of words/deeds disjuncture (at times even words/words disjuncture) in Chinese foreign policy? Several chapters probe and explain the discrepancies between ideal and real, between policy pronouncements and policy performance, and between intent and outcome in Chinese foreign policy. The task is neither to chant nor to condemn the official script but to investigate the extent of theory/practice incongruence and proffer persuasive explanations. The concluding chapter identifies and assesses China's foreign policy options and prospects in the 1990s and beyond.

This second edition would not have been possible or desirable without generous, encouraging, and critical responses from students and scholars to the first edition. Like the first edition, this volume too is an outgrowth of our experience in teaching Chinese foreign policy and international relations courses over the years. In spite of diverse intellectual background, methodological inclination, and normative orientation, the contributors are united in the conviction that we can and must study Chinese foreign policy as if international relations really mattered—or conversely that we must study international relations as if China really mattered. This volume, an offspring of an invisible college of “bridge-builders,” represents another modest step toward remedying the dialogue of the deaf between China specialists and world politics analysts.

Several acknowledgments are in order. Throughout the preparation of the first and second editions of this volume, I have received invaluable help from Allen S. Whiting, who, along with contributing the final chapter, always offered sound advice and counsel. For diverse reasons, a number of scholars could not contribute to the first edition, and four contributors to the first edition could not be persuaded to shift gears in the midst of other projects to do necessary revisions for this volume. But I wish to extend my thanks to Lowell Dittmer, June T. Dreyer, Melvin Gurtov, Harry Harding, James C. Hsiung, Jonathan Pollack, Thomas Robinson, Peter Van Ness—and Davis Bobrow, Steve Chan, Michael Ng-Quinn, and Susan Shirk (first edition contributors regrettably absent here)—for their contributions in the various stages of the project and in many other ways. Since 1979 I have had the benefit of critical dialogue with a number of PRC international relations scholars in China and the United States. I had an unusual opportunity to hear PRC scholars’ reactions to the first edition of the book during my one-year stint as a Fulbright professor at the Foreign Affairs Institute, Beijing, China, in 1985–1986. Some of these scholars are playing sensitive roles as policy advisers, so I need not identify them, but my thanks go to them anyway. I am indebted to the Center of International Studies, Princeton University, for a research grant from the Peter B. Lewis Fund, which supported this and other research projects. It has been a great pleasure to work once again with Westview Press in the production of this book. Special thanks are due to Susan McEachern, Miriam Gilbert, Libby Barstow, and Ida May B. Norton for their sustained support and encouragement and for their efficient steering of the manuscript through the various stages of the production process. The usual disclaimer still holds: that the editor and contributors alone are responsible for the views and interpretations—and the errors that may persist—in the book.

Samuel S. Kim

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Part 1
Theory and Practice

CHAPTER 1

NEW DIRECTIONS AND OLD PUZZLES IN CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY

Samuel S. Kim

INTRODUCTION

For the first time in modern history, China has finally joined the world, becoming a full-fledged member of the global political system. This momentous transformation of China's place in world affairs presents a challenge to the dominant theories and methods in Western studies of comparative foreign policy and international relations. All the major global actors have made their responses. And yet, most specialists in the two closely connected and relevant fields of comparative foreign policy and international relations still proceed as if China did not really matter or as if Chinese international behavior was beyond their concern and grasp.

Perhaps because of its sheer physical size and societal, nationality, and demographic dimensions, only the parts of China can be grasped, never the whole. Zhao Ziyang's coastal development strategy—a recognition of, and a response to, this problem—is a mixture of international, national, and regional developmental and linkage strategies. Outer China, the coastal regions with a population of 200 million, is better suited for fuller vertical integration into the capitalist world system than Inner China (800 million), which continues more or less self-reliant, developing inland industries for domestic markets.

To compound this size factor and the quest for national identity, China as a state actor still remains short of complete unification. The unification problematique is no longer, if it ever was, a domestic problem. The transformation of multiple Chinas and multiple systems into one China with two (or several) systems has become an essential and elusive objective of post-Mao Chinese foreign policy. The many Chinas include Taiwan, China (alias: NIC China, Nationalist China, Island China), followed by Hong Kong, China, and Macao, China. Now in the offing is Tibet, China. There is also what Wang Gungwu calls "External China" (*Waihua Zhengce*) as a new policy area involving "people outside the P.R.C. who are Chinese nationals of one kind or another as well as

those people within China who are related to, and are identified with, ethnic Chinese outside China."¹

And then there is always the enigmatic China. Chinese foreign policy behavior seems to be in such a state of constant but ambiguous motion that one can never fully understand what really makes it tick. Consider China's self-characterization of foreign policy in the 30,000-word document enunciating the official reassessment of Mao Zedong in mid-1981, arguably the most important political document issued in the post-Mao era: "In his later years, he still remained alert to safeguarding the security of our country, stood up to the pressure of the social imperialists, pursued a correct foreign policy, firmly supported the just struggles of all peoples, outlined the correct strategy of the three worlds and advanced the important principle that China would never seek hegemony."²

The above statement is revealing and yet misleading at the same time. It shows an exceptionist mentality in Chinese foreign policy pronouncements, exempting the history and internal debates of Chinese foreign policy from public criticism and from Chinese scholarship on international relations. In striking contrast with domestic policy, there persists the compulsive self-characterization of foreign policy as one of principled constancy and continuity. Even when Mao's Three-Worlds Theory was touted as the cardinal strategic principle, it proved a poor fit to actual foreign policy behavior. Moreover, this reference to the Three-Worlds Theory appeared almost as quickly as it disappeared in Chinese foreign policy pronouncements. Both Chinese words and deeds change over time, and at times they change unpredictably.

Alternatively, Chinese foreign policy is still viewed through anachronistic methods—shaded glasses perhaps—or is made a scapegoat for the outside observer's misconceptions, misperceptions, and miscarried expectations. Are we not languishing in an academic cul-de-sac because we have never bothered to prepare a proper road map? There is a need for an analytical framework that would help us capture the dialectics of Chinese foreign policy.

Whatever the truth of the matter, the study of Chinese foreign policy has been moving in divergent directions in an atheoretical, noncomparative, and noncumulative manner. A comprehensive bibliography on Chinese external affairs published in 1973 listed no fewer than 2,085 entries.³ The decade and a half after 1973 witnessed a dramatic increase in Western scholarly monographs on Chinese foreign policy, accompanied by an even more dramatic explosion of Chinese scholarship on international relations (see bibliography). Yet what we know in the West about Chinese foreign policy is still inadequate and uneven. We are still some distance from capturing its increasingly complex, involved, and multifaceted nature. Our target subject seems to be moving faster than we can keep pace with. We are just beginning to realize that new realities of post-Mao China's international relations—indeed, anomalies that clash with our conventional wisdom based on the established patterns of

Chinese behavior—call for a paradigmatic change. These new developments challenge some of our most familiar ways of thinking about China's foreign policy in terms of its *conflict behavior in bilateral contexts*.⁴

Consider the range of conflicting assumptions and arguments about both the continuities and the changes that mark Chinese foreign policy—one of the enduring puzzles in the field. For some time, debate on this question, formulated in terms of weighing the relative weight of tradition versus modernity, was divided into two schools of thought: the *exotica sinica* "continuity" school, which stresses the essential uniqueness and inscrutability of Chinese behavior ("a single Chinese nebula in the western world's firmament"); and the revolutionary "discontinuity" school, which argues that the lines of continuity with traditional China have been broken.⁵ Even among the diplomatic historians who generally stress the weight of the past on present Chinese behavior, there is a disagreement between the "great (single) tradition" school and the "multiple traditions" school.⁶

More recently, the change/continuity controversy among the political scientists has split into three divergent forms. From one end of the conceptual spectrum, Thomas Robinson argues that "a general policy orientation, once adopted or forced upon the regime by circumstances, never continued for more than four or five years at most" and that "changes were not only relatively frequent but radical, moving within a relatively short time between pugnacious intervention, one-sided alliance commitment, total isolation, extreme involvement and reversal of alignment."⁷ From the opposite pole, Michael Ng-Quinn emphasizes the structural constraints of the international system dominated by the superpowers, arguing that "Chinese foreign policy has been largely consistent since the end of World War II" and that "there is relative continuity in Chinese foreign policy amidst leadership changes even in the post-Mao era."⁸ Harry Harding suggests a third perspective: "What has remained relatively constant thus far, in other words, are the fundamentals of China's foreign policy: its basic organizing principles, its general goals, and its style. What has changed, in contrast, are China's policies toward specific issues and its relationships with particular countries."⁹ The basic scholarly disagreement on the "what" question, let alone on the "why" question, is also attested to by the conflicting periodization of the history of PRC foreign policy.¹⁰

In the interest of developing a more orderly, cumulative, and contextual knowledge about Chinese foreign policy, this chapter suggests a behavior-centered (multimethod) analytic approach, which rests on the following core assumptions:

- The epistemological principle of "seeking truth from facts" serves a useful point of departure.
- The empirical reality of Chinese foreign policy need not be limited to the category of idiographic inquiry; a more rigorous comparative and contextual approach is called for.

- Chinese foreign policy is most amenable to empirical analysis during the "behavioral/implementation" phase described below.
- Given the complex, involved, and multidimensional nature of post-Mao Chinese foreign policy, no single concept, method, or perspective is adequate to describe and explain it.
- Human behavior tends (1) to be patterned around only a few values; (2) to change over time; (3) to be goal-oriented and future-oriented; and (4) to have diverse cultural forms and manifestations.
- An understanding of China's political behavior can never transcend the limits and possibilities of the concepts and data used to describe it and the theories or models developed to explain it.

The behavior-centered approach proceeds from the premise that we must study Chinese foreign policy as if international relations really mattered, or conversely that we must study international relations as if China really mattered. By drawing upon the repertory of concepts, theories, and methods in comparative foreign policy and international relations as a way of bridging the gap between the two, the behavior-centered approach seeks to develop a more systematic body of knowledge about Chinese conduct.

A BEHAVIOR-CENTERED APPROACH

Chinese foreign policy covers a wide though nebulous domain. For analytical convenience, we may conceptualize Chinese foreign policy as a system of human actions, a system with its own principles, rules, and decision-making procedures. Figure 1.1 presents an idealized, schematic model of Chinese foreign policy, with each behavioral dimension divided into interconnected, interacting sequential phases.

The most serious obstacle to a cumulative, comparative, and policy-relevant study of Chinese foreign policy has been inadequate conceptualization and operationalization. Priority should be accorded to conceptualizing Chinese foreign policy in discrete measurable units of analysis. Too often, students of Chinese foreign policy have put the cart before the horse, plunging into explanatory analysis (even judgmental conclusions) without specifying *a priori* the dependent variables to be explained. Theories or models designed to explain the variations in a state's behavior must follow, not precede, the empirical specification of a given foreign policy behavior.

A state behavior is a vague, abstract concept. As a legal entity in international law, the state *per se* is incapable of making and implementing foreign policy decisions. Nor do domestic and external factors make decisions for a state actor. Foreign policy makers, acting on behalf of each state, alone do this. The leadership approach—often formulated as Mao's domination thesis in the study of Chinese foreign policy—is helpful

FIGURE 1.1
A Model of the Chinese Foreign Policy System

