5-1992

Chinese Foreign Policy in Changing Perspective--A Case Study of the Three World Doctrine

Guojun XU

This Thesis Is Dedicated To The People of Virginia Whose Generous Support And Sincere Friendship Gave Me A New Vision Of The World

China's Foreign Policy In Changing Perspective

---A Case Study Of The Three World Doctrine

Xu Guojun

M.A., Guangzhou Institute of Foreign

Languages, Guangzhou, P.R.C.

For the Degree of Master of Arts in

Political Science

University of Richmond

May 1992

Thesis Directors: Dr. John W. Outland

Dr. Sheila Carapico

China has in recent years embarked on a fresh policy of close cooperation with her former antagonists, the Western countries, not only in economic areas, but also on social, military and political issues. Does this mean that China has given up her highly publicized third world position? Or did China ever genuinely belong with the third world in the past? These questions are explored in the thesis through careful analyses of the origins of China's foreign policies as well as comparative observations of their applications to different countries at different stages. Rather than isolating individual variables, as some writers do, in measuring their impact on the outcome of China's policy, this study takes a contextual approach, combining normative analysis with

empirical observation, and blending historical and contemporary perspectives. It concludes that China's differentiation of international political forces should not suggest that China was identifying herself permanently with any one of them, but rather was simply adopting a dialectical approach toward world politics.

I certify that I have read this thesis and find that, in scope and quality, it satisfies the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Thesis Advisor: John W. Outland

Sheila H. Carapico

Arthur B. Gunlicks

CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY IN CHANGING PERSPECTIVE

---A CASE STUDY OF THE THREE WORLD DOCTRINE

By

XU GUOJUN

M.A., Guangzhou Institute of Foreign Languages,

the People's Republic of China, 1987

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

of the University of Richmond

in Candidacy

for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

Political Science

May, 1992

Richmond, Virginia

Preface

The intrinsic dialecticism of social science has bedevilled attempts to explain China's foreign policy behavior from a particular point of view. On the one hand, it is relatively easy to demonstrate the motivations behind Chinese policies by isolating the individual factors such as communist ideological aspirations, strategic calculations, or historical legacies that shape the policies. On the other hand, due to the complex nature of China's foreign policy process and the delicate relationships between the influencing factors, an analysis that is less than comprehensive is doomed to failure. As the case of the three world doctrine indicates, China's foreign policy process is just like those of other nations, determined by internal as well as external situations, and shaped by ideological as well as non-ideological aspirations.

This thesis rejects the traditional methods that categorize China's foreign policy, either as one of Marxist revolutionism that seeks to destroy capitalism by violence or one of classical expansionism that derives its source from China's past imperialism. Instead, it incorporates the methods of normative-empirical analysis and examines the impact of each variable that forms China's foreign policies in context. After a brief survey in

Chapter I of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the current modes of study, Chapter II reviews the formulation of the three world doctrine from a combination of theoretical and historical points of view. It emphasizes in particular the interactions between Marxism, Maoism, the Chinese world view, and Sino-Soviet relations and examines the impact of such interactions on the Chinese policy making process. The study then proceeds, in Chapters III, IV, and V, to trace the modification and adjustments of the three world doctrine in its application to individual nations or regions, such as the developing countries, Western Europe, Japan, and the United States, in light of the world's changing political climate. In conclusion, the thesis suggests that China's foreign policy, as exemplified by the three world doctrine, consists of several dimensions and operates dialectically in practice. While the third world has always occupied the most prominent place in China's policy pronouncements, the first world---the United States and the Soviet Union ---is the true focus of China's policy makers. No momentous breakthrough is claimed as a consequence of this study regarding the measurement how much each of those variables contributes to China's foreign policy outcomes, but I believe that it has established some fresh explanatory linkages among them.

The completion of this study is indebted to the help and support of many individuals at various stages of its origin and writing. The Carver Fund gave me early financial support that made my academic endeavour at the University of Richmond possible. The

encouragement of my parents in China sustained my high spirit throughout the whole course of my two years of studies away from home. Above all, my gratitude goes to Dr. John W. Outland and Dr. Sheila Caparico whose advice and supervision gave the thesis its present form.

Xu Guojun
University of Richmond, Virginia
March 2, 1992

Introduction

The theory of three worlds, which differentiates the three forces in international politics, was officially inaugurated by Deng Xiaoping in 1974 at the Sixth Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly. Deng Xiaoping declared that in the international arena the United States and the Soviet Union---the two superpowers---constituted the first world, the underdeveloped countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America formed the third world, and the other developed countries apart from the two superpowers made up the second world. Deng also pledged that China belonged to the third world and would always stand by its side in its struggle against imperialism and to establish a more just world order.[1]

Since the birth of the PRC in 1949, the Communist regime has carried out a perplexing series of foreign policies: it has supported anti-West national liberation movements; it has supported insurgent guerrillas in some countries trying to overthrow their governments; but it has also courted the "militarist" Japan and the "imperialist" Great Britain and even cooperated with the "hegemonist" United States. How and to what

---

[1] see Peking Review April 19, 1974. pp.6-11.

extent in fact, then, have China's foreign policy and her global strategy been dictated by the three world theory? To what extent has China led or followed, helped or hindered the elusive struggle of the third world? What, indeed, does China intend to achieve by dividing the world into three parts? Is there any discernable pattern in China's relations with the rest of the world? And finally, what are the sources that made up this peculiar foreign policy? These are some of the most important questions which require more attention now that China, whether it is with the first world, the second world, or still the third world, has become an active and influential member of the world community.

Chapter I: The Methodology Of Studying Chinese Foreign Policy

It is no simple matter to sort out the variables from the constants in the patterns of behaviour characterizing China's approach respectively to the three worlds. The difficulty lies in how to differentiate between Beijing's public pronouncements and short term tactics on the one hand, and, on the other, the underlying motivations, perceptions, assumptions, goals, and long-range strategies that have together shaped China's foreign policy patterns. So far, as can be seen in the various contending and conflicting explanations offered by scholars and diplomats, the endeavour has not been very successful. One view, for instance, declares that China's foreign policy has roughly followed the guideline of the three world theory---either by appearance or nature China is a third world country seeking changes in the existing world structure. Another view argues that there is no coherence at all in China's diplomatic practice and her much publicized theory. Still a third view contends that China's foreign behaviour differs little from those of other big powers. Of even more interest, many researchers and analysts have not infrequently found themselves in contradiction with their own previous conclusions as time moves on.

Without doubt, the failure to achieve a consistent explanation is, to some extent, due to the complex nature of China's foreign policy---its fluidity, flexibility and multidimensionality---but it is also certain that the failure is attributable to some methodological shortcomings in scholastic inquiry. At the risk of oversimplification, the current research of China's foreign policy could be summarized into four lines of inquiry. The most common line approaches the issue through analysis of ideological factors such as government statements and official pronouncements. The second approach concentrates on rational analysis that looks into China's national interests and builds everything around them. A third line focuses on China's bilateral relations with individual countries, such as Japan, and tries to find a pattern in such relations. Concerns with the impact of the international environment on China's foreign policy constitute a fourth area which is sometimes called "systemic analysis." Needless to say, each of these four lines of inquiry has contributed to the discovery of the truth in its own way. But since all of them start from a particular standpoint, their analyses are often misleading or one-sided at best.

The Ideological Approach

The most popular mode of inquiry is the ideological approach.[1] Writing in China's Future, Allen S. Whiting argues

[1] Representatives of this school are found in Allen S. Whiting, A. Doak Barnett and R. G. Boyd who argue that ideology is at the base of perception and thus decision-making.

that China's foreign policy has been motivated by an ideology that finds expression in the Leninist exertion of power to destroy capitalism by violence. Although other factors also bear upon China's policy-making process, Whiting declares, "the communist ideology is the basic reference point from which the Chinese understand world affairs, set policy goals, and define the legitimate means of pursuing these goals". Consequently, any effective efforts to probe the nature of China's foreign policy cannot but start with the role of the ideology.[2]

In so far as ideology means the ideas at the basis of some economic or political theory or system,[3] in so far as China has become in many ways a symbol of the postwar ideological challange to the established order in world politics, and in so far as Marxism-Leninism is part of the total array of theories and operational principles of China's foreign policy, the inquiry is relevant. Relevant, too, is the unique role of ideology in the politics of China. According to F. Schurmann, for instance, ideology in communist countries plays a unique role which could not be found in non-ideological societies. It "legitimizes authority, integrates the community, rationalizes or justifies policy decisions, and assists bureaucratic or elite-mass communications and provides ligitimate foci for popular

---

[2] See Allen S. Whiting China's Future McGraw-Hall Book Company, NY:1977. p.38.

[3] The Concise Oxford Dictionary London:1960. p. 589.

emotions."[4] During the forty years it has controlled the country, the Chinese Communist Party has staged one campaign after another aimed to "unify its people's mind" and to bring them in step with its policy decisions. Its media---the People's Daily and the Red Flag Magazine---has carried from day to day two constant themes: the danger of US imperialism and Soviet revisionism. Political indoctrination was also conducted through factory assemblies and farm meetings. To a certain extent, the Chinese Communist Party did succeed in planting in its people's consciousness a sense of hatred against the United States and the Soviet Union. Thus, whether from a normative point of view or practical point of view, it is imperative to probe the role of ideology in China's foreign policy making. However, does this mean that China's public statements, newspaper editorials and popular slogans tell everything about China's policy making process? In other words, is the ideological component an adequate enough means for policy analysis?

Much evidence suggests that reliance on ideological analysis alone would not necessarily lead to discovery of Peking's foreign policy goals. Instead, it could sometimes end up in mere speculation. One could ask, for instance, if Mao Tsetung was so possessed by the Leninist idea of world revolution, why did he choose to limit his role to that of "communicating experiences" with his third world allies, rather than directly exporting

---

[4] F. Schurmann Ideology and Organization in Communist China Berkeley:1970. pp.58-73.

revolutions to them? If Mao Tsetung was so preoccupied with the Marxist goal of destroying capitalist countries, how could China trade with Britain, France and Japan more than with Poland, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria? Or one could make the following observation: both Mao Tsetung and FDR called upon their countries to become "arsenals"--- one the "arsenal of revolution," the other "the arsenal of democracy."[5] Disregarding their moral implications, is there any difference, in terms of policy instruments, between the two ideological calls? Looked at from these perspectives, the ideology model is not able to solve the basic analytical problems, such as: how is it possible to distinquish meaningfully between a foreign policy that is ideological and one that is not? In ideology-oriented policies, how and how much ideology is translated into policies? And how is it possible to determine "the ideological content of an action which benefited the state performing it in some conventional way, such as by improving its power, prestige or security?"[6]

---

[5]Mao Tsetung said that "We China...are not only the political centre of world revolution, but moreover in military matter and technology must also become the centre of world revolution...we must become the arsenal of world revolution" in 1967 at the height of China's "Cultural Revolution. FDR made his call---the call upon America to become the arsenal of democracy---during the Second World War when the whole world faced the threat of Hitler. I see that ideological propaganda and instigation are policy tools that both ideological and nonideological coutries would use at certain time. see also Allen Whiting China's Future p.42.

[6] see J.D. Armstrong. Revolutionary Diplomacy University of California:1977. p.6.

After all, what is ideology? In one sense, ideologies are "sets of values and beliefs."[7] They are presumed to have universal validity and to be applicable to all circumstances. Thus, they are necessarily stated in general, broad, abstract forms, and, like law, they have to be interpreted and their fit tested in every specific case. In another sense, ideology is a consciousness which is characterized by fluidity and change. It changes in form and content in accordance with time and conditions. A "false consciousness"[8], in particular, could be mere pretense, propoganda or simply a disguise that conceals reality for political uses. As Marxists, the Chinese Communists are not blind followers to Marxist dogmas. Instead, they have displayed considerable flexibility in applying Marxism to their activies in China. In his writings, Mao Tsetung time and again admonished his cadres of the danger of blind adherence to theory in defiance of reality in studying Marxism and Leninism. On one occasion, he even went so far as to warn them "We should not be misled by our own propaganda."[9] It is clear, then, that while there could be no doubt about the Marxist nature of the Chinese regime, it is equally true that Marxism has been very much localized and nationalized in China during its forty years of

---

[7]see Werner Levi's article "Ideology, Interests and Foreign Policy" In International Studies Quarterly Vol.14, No. 1, March 1970.p.4.

[8] see Hans J. Morganthau Politics Among Nations NY:1966. pp.83-6.

[9] Allen S. Whiting China's Future p. 43.

practice. The effectiveness of the ideological approach to understanding China's foreign policy is, therefore, largely dependent upon the extent to which Marxism-Leninism has been translated into or manipulated in the policy process.

The "National Interest" Approach

The second popular approach adopts "rationality" as its basis of analysis. "No modern statesman has ever claimed that he committed his nation simply to prove its trustworthness or ever led his nation to fight against an ideology quo ideology. Even the Holy Alliance, intended by Czar Alexander to enforce Christian values in the governement of Europe was a piece of sublime mysticism and nonsense," as Werner Levi pointed out in his article "Ideology, Interests and Foreign Policy" published in the March 1970 issue of International Studies Quarterly.[10] This school thus emphasizes that China's foreign policy should and could be explained only in terms of "national interests"---her desire for security, political and economic benefits. While the Marxist ideology is discarded as disguising the regime's true, interest-motivated objectives or as performing a rationalizing function by presenting its self-interested behaviour in terms of noble ideas, "national interest" is thought to signify "realism"

---

[10] Werner Levi "Ideology, interests and Foreign Policy" in International Studies Quarterly Vol. 14, No.1, March 1970, p.6; see also Hans J. Morganthau In defense of National Interest NY: 1951.

and "pragmatism" on the part of the foreign policy administrators.[11] The Chinese peace offensive at the 1956 Bandung Conference and the 1958 offshore island crisis, for instance, are interpreted as being motivated by Beijing's need to develop its internal economy. And the different stages of China's foreign policy are said to result from a rational analysis of China's needs and her capabilities. True, "national interests" as policy goals are more observable than ideology and can be deduced from policy outputs. But like ideology, the concept of "national interest" is also ambiguous: it could refer to the particular interests of one nation state against another; it could also denote the interest of group within a community. If the international peace environment Zhou Enlai was promoting at Bandang would help China's first Five-year Plan at home, "national interest" could be a good explanation for China's "five principles" diplomacy. If the international crisis of 1958 could prod the various political factions at home to unite behind a domestic development program, "national interest" could also be a fine explanation for the linkage between the 1958 Taiwan Strait crisis and Mao's commune program. If, however, the Bandung peace policy and the Taiwan Strait crisis policy are juxtaposed in the light of "national interests", the explanations simply create a case of contradiction. The recent fact that massive cooperation with the United States and other western countries was possible only with the simultaneous emergence of Deng Xiaoping and the

---

[11] Hans J. Morganthau Politics Among Nations NY:1966. p.5.

disappearance of the Gang of Four is another indication that "national interests" is an invariably subjective concept and it alone is incapable of explaining China's foreign behaviour. Moreover, from an historical perspective, the Chinese concept of "national interests" has changed dramatically from one period to another. How to evaluate realistically China's foreign policy goals, therefore, requires a wider apporach than trying to determine the concept of "Chinese national interests."

The Dyadic Approach

A third favoured mode of studies is to look into China's dyadic relations. If neither ideology nor "national interest" is objective and substantive enough to reach the general truth behind China's policy-making, then the best way is to examine case by case China's attitude toward individual countries. As an intermediate step leading tword a general consideration of the totality of China's foreign policy, studies of her bilateral relations certainly have value. They can lead to abundant empirical findings and perhaps yield low-level generalization for theory building. The examination of China's relations with Japan, for instance, will give us insight into China's attitude toward a neighbouring capitalist country which is economically powerful and strategically important. However, studies that stop at the dyadic level can never, from the methodological point of view, go

beyond the level of ad hoc explanations, nor can they add much theoretical value to the study of Chinese foreign policy.[12] The case of Sino-Japanese relations does not point to the rationale behind Sino-British relations or Sino-French relations, let alone illuminate how the relationship with one country could affect the relationship with another. There are simply too many differences between each case to produce deductive power through this approach.

The Reactive Approach

A fourth approach is to adopt a reactive view of China's conduct of foreign relations in both geographical and functional areas.[13] "Whatever the power of ideology, whatever the personal influence of Mao Tsetung, and whatever the desirability of each objective, the Chinese Communist Party could not transcend the time and environment in which it was placed. Its decisions of policy toward the United States, the Soviet Union and the third world were determined...by the international political configuration of the time and China's geopolitical position."[14]

---

[12] Hsiung and Kim China In the Global Community Praeger: 1980. p.3.

[13] One theory is Richardson's reaction process which argues that nations, like individuals, usually behave toward others as others behave toward them. Another theory is that of the environmentalists such as Harold Sprout and Halford Mankinder that sees factors such as geography, demography, resource distribution...as determining the foreign approach of a country. Although the two theories are different in their emphasis, they share the common characteristic of environmental determinism.

[14] Hsiung and Kim. ibid. p.8.

It is, therefore, essential to have a systemic view of international relations when we come to study China's foreign policies. Like other countries on the world stage, China must respond to changes in her external environment; she must constantly adjust her policy postures toward any given country in light of its posture changes, leadership shifts, socio-economico-political developments and other occurances in the international system. In the early 1950s, for instance, China leaned toward the Soviet Union when she was threatened by the United States. She leaned back to the US in the late 1970s and early 1980s when the Soviet Union became the bigger threat and the US changed its hostile attitude. A comparison of China's foreign aid with that of the Soviet Union, for another example, yields insight into China's regional priorities and the impact of Sino-Soviet competition on China's policies toward specific third world countries. China's aid pattern seems to move along with opportunities arising out of circumstances where Soviet influence was absent, as in East Africa, or had gone sour, as in Sudan and Egypt.[15] However, as with previous approaches, any attempts to focus solely on circumstances will risk the same danger of "seeing the tree and missing the wood." For one thing is certain, foreign policy making, like a drama whose plot develops with the interaction between roles, is not a passive process. Rather, it involves the wills and initiatives of the policy-

---

[15] Other cases include the establishment of diplomatic relations with Rwanda, Brundi, Cameroon, Togo, Tunisia and Zaire.

maker. When certain external factors come to bear, a foreign policy maker does not respond in the rebounding manner a spring does, but through perception of the event---its positive as well as negative implications. One could choose to act, or not act, in whatever manner one deems most appropriate to his or her interests. Otherwise how could we explain the triangle relationship between the United States, China and the Soviet Union? Or how could we explain China's competitive aid programs to Ethiopia and Somalia.[16]

The Contextual Approach

In short, all of the methods discussed above carry with them a one-sided bias or an ad hoc suspicion. The fault with them, as James C. Hsiung has pointed out, is that no single variable stands above the decision-making process, and all are subject to redefinition in response to changing times. A focus on any single one of them will yield little or no understanding of Peking's actual policy behaviour or outcome. What is needed, therefore, is to develop a systematic framework which could remedy ad hoc with coherence. In other words, we need to adopt a contextual

---

[16] Both Somalia and Ethiopia rank high on the Chinese and Soviet grantee list. The fact that China entered those countries later than the Soviet Union and offered them more generous aid programs indicates China's intention to balance off Soviet influence there. see John A. Cringen and Steve Chan Chinese Crisis Perception and Behaviour: A Summary of Findings Paper delivered at the JCCC Workshop On Chinese foreign Policy.Ann Arbor, Mich. Autust 12-14, 1976.

approach which would cross-check and weigh all possible variables of a foreign policy in a related manner.

A contextual approach to Chinese foreign policy analysis should at least consider three possibilities. First, it should seek to establish a foreign-domestic, historical-present linkage.[17] This is not merely to juxtapose descriptions of important domestic and foreign events, or descriptions of past history and present events. This can at best help explain particular connections between specific sets of domestic and foreign data at certain times and produce some low level generalizations. Instead, a contextual approach should seek to establish some coherent explanatory relationships on such levels as the machinery of foreign policy making within China's political system, the [practical] effects of external stimuli/demands, [the psychological effects of sentiments accumulated from past experiences] and China's foreign policy outputs. All of this would be very much along the lines that James N. Rosenau has developed.[18] For instance, China's cooperative posture toward the United States should be linked to the fall of the leftist faction within the Chinese leadership, to the need of the Four Modernization Drive, to the aspiration to revive her power status, to her historical sentiment toward Tsarist Russia, and to the reassessment of the international

---

[17] see James N. Rosenau ed. Linkage Politics NY: Free press. 1969

[18] James Rosenau. Linkage Politics 1969.

situation. A complete understanding of China's shift in foreign policy in 1978 could not be reached without addressing all those variables.

Second, the contextual approach needs further to sort out the relative weight of those variables often involved in foreign policies, some of which may actually be competing for the attention of the decision makers. These factors include ideological preferences, national interests, historical experiences, political culture, domestic structure and political attributes, systemic factors, conditions in the international system, real and perceived capabilities and so on. They occupy different positions in the policy making process at different times. In the 1950s, for instance, national security towered above all other concerns, while in the 1980s economic demands downplayed the interests of ideological promotion. One must also ask, how does the relative weight of each factor change? Precisely because these concepts are subject to constant redefinition, it is essential to examine these diverse sources of foreign policy in order to understand properly what the policy goals are in a given case.

Finally, the contextual approach needs to look into the complexity of different levels and types of China's external relations, that is official and unofficial, bilateral and multilateral, political and economic, substantive and symbolic and so on. Different from most other countries, whose foreign policies almost exclusively deal with state relations, China's

foreign policy gropes along several dimensions at the same time. In China, international relations are regarded as a situation in which social, economic and political forces---some identified with particular national states and others cutting across national lines---are contending for supremacy. International relations are, thus, not only, or in many situations not even primarily, a matter of conventional dealings between nation and nation, or government and government. Official government policy and government-to-government relations are, it is true, important aspects of China's foreign policy, but the Chinese approach to foreign policy demands the use of every possible instrument, formal and informal, overt and covert, to influence and shape the changing pattern of social, economic and political development outside China's borders. A noticable example is China's treatment of its relations with the Burmese government in the early 1960s. When Burma's prime minister, Ne Win, visited China in 1963 and was given a ceremonious reception in Peking, the Burmese communist party was praised for its armed struggles against its government in Ragoon. The Chinese explained this dichotomy as a function of the difference between state-to-state and party-to-party relations.[19] Therefore, it is important to watch those linkage questions: how are "unofficial relations used to promote or deter official relations? How do multilateral relations affect China's bilateral relations, or vice versa? When do public

---

[19] A. Doak Barnett Communist China and Asia London: Oxford University Press. 1960. p.71.

pronouncements remain propaganda and when do symbolic relations become substantive? Failure to distinquish them will result in omitting an important aspect of China's foreign policy behaviour.

This list is not conclusive, and perhaps may never be conclusive. Since Chinese foreign policy is exceedingly complex and flexible, we have to take an extra step in order to find approximate truth.

Chapter II The Origins Of The Three World Doctrine

It has by now become clear that the main intention of the three world doctrine was to counterbalance the influence of the United States and the Soviet Union by rallying the support of the underdeveloped countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America as well as promoting the neutrality of the developed countries in Europe and Japan. If, however, one is to further assess the validity of this strategy, one needs, first of all, to examine the context from which it was derived. Although the three world doctrine was officially inaugurated by Deng Xiaoping in 1974, it was developed by Mao Tzetung much earlier,[1] and its political and philosophical roots are to be found in several places, including Mao Tsetung's revolutionary ideology, his nationalistic world view, the characteristics of the international environment, and the conditions of China's military, economic and diplomatic development. This chapter will study the impact of such facftors as the changing Sino-Soviet relations, the Chinese world view, Maoism, and the current international situation on the formulation of China's foreign policy.

---

[1] The term "three worlds" was first used by Mao Tsetung in a conversation between him and an African leader in 1972. The evolution of the theory may even traced to Mao's talk with the American correspondent Anna Louise Strong in August 1946. see Mao Tsetung Selected Works 1969, Vol.4. pp.97-101.

The Impact of the Sino-Soviet Split

Numerous factors motivated China to formulate the three world doctrine, but what appears to be the immediate cause is the collapse of the Sino-Soviet alliance. During the 1950s, the Chinese accepted the Soviet view that the world is divided into two hostile and irreconcilable camps---the socialist camp and the capitalist camp, and followed a foreign policy of "leaning to one side." Through the period of ten years the two sides had close cooperation on an extensive range of issues and signed a series of agreements on mutual assistance, credit, railway cooperation and port leases. According to a Soviet statistics,

> more than 10,000 Soviet experts and specialists were sent to China to help industrial construction, while about 1000 Chinese scientists, 10,000 engineers, technicians and skilled workers received training in the USSR. While more than 11,000 Chinese students were trained at Soviet higher educational institutions, the Soviet Union turned over to China more than 24,000 sets of scientific and technical documents, including 1,400 projects of large industrial enterprises.[2]

The effect of this cooperation was so obvious that the relation between the two countries was celebrated by leaders both in Peking and Moscow as "a great alliace between two socialist countries" and "a powerful guarantee of China's independence and security."[3] By the end of the 1950s, however, the friendship began to go sour for apparently ideological reasons. Khruschov's

---

[2] the report of Mikhail Suslov, secretary of the CPSU, to the Soviet Congress 14 Feb 1964. cited in John Gittings Survey of the Sino-Soviet Dispute Oxford:1968.pp.28-36.

[3] Wu Yu-chang "Sino-Soviet Friendship and Unity Among the Socialist countries" People's China No.2, 16 January 1957. pp.4-5.

denunciation of Stalin and his call for co-existance with capitalism at the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956 was considered by the Chinese as "sheer betrayal of Marxism".[4] Then in 1959, the Soviet government stopped all its aid programs to China and called back all its technicians and adivsors currently working on Chinese projects. Finally, in 1964, both the Soviets and Chinese began to deploy massive military forces along their borders.

Some people have wondered why, since both the Chinese and the Soviets shared the same ideological objective, they could have turned against each other in the pursuit of that ideological objective. Others have suggested that as disputes developed in the course of cooperation, they were contradictions of a cooperative nature. Indeed, nothing could be further from the truth than to suggest that China could have been kept in the camp by its ideological orientation or that the final split could have been avoided if both sides could have compromised with each other a little. For one thing, the two-camp doctrine is theoretically characterized by inherent dilemmas. As defined by many theorists and practitioners of international relations, international politics is a process of determining the position of each country

---

[4] see the Editorial in The People's Daily July 14, 1964 "On Khruschov's Phony Communism and Its Historical Lessons for the World". see also A. Doak Barnett China after Mao Princeton Press:1967. p.123.

in the structure of international political economy.[5] From a more pessimistic point of view, in particular, political power in the international system is so distributed that the gaining by one country necessarily means the losing by another. The two-camp doctrine which requires the subordination of one nation to the other is, therefore, inherently incapable of answering the fundamental questions posed to politicians regarding the independent role of each nation in international affairs. The policy dilemmas will only stand out when placed in the context of big power relations. According to Professor Chun-tu Hseuh's research, what actually determined the course of development behind the ideological disputes were two issues, both of which surmount China's security and independence. One of them was the different views of strategy against the United States who was then China's major threat. The policy of co-existance with capitalism would mean, in the Chinese perspective, no less than open indulgence of US hostility toward China. The other issue was "the five unreasonable demands" put on China by the Soviet government. According to Professor Hsueh's interpretation of Geng Biao, China's vice premier and defence minister, who commented on the issue at the Chinese Embassy in Washington in 1979, the five demands included the permanent stationing of Soviet forces in Port Arthur, the establishment of a joint fleet under Soviet

---

[5] Ferguson and Mansbach explain that one of the premises of political realism is that competitive power politics, realist style, is the alpha and omega of international relations. see Ferguson and Mansbach.The Illusive Quest University of South Carolina:1988. p.89.

command, the establishment of a Soviet influence in the development of resources in the Northeast and Northwest provinces of China, the establishment of a long-wave radio station in China for naval communication under Soviet control, and the institution of a division of labour between the two socialist countries--- China would be responsible for agricultural production and the Soviet Union for industrial development and supplies. It is clear to any person of reasonable judgement that these demands, if accepted, would effectively deprive China of her sovereignty. Under these circumstances, as Huan Xian said, the Chinese government could not but come to the conclusion that the Sino-Soviet Alliance had, in effect, become "a dead lane" for China. For her independence, she had but to pursue "a third road."[6]

The Impact of the Chinese World View

From a sociological point of view, the external policy of a nation is always shaped by her image of herself. A glimpse into China's history and China's national sentiment would exclude any imagination that China would follow the two-camp doctrine in a truthful manner. In The Logic of International Relations, Steven Rosen and Walter Jones have suggested that

> The world outlook of communist China since 1949 has been deeply influenced by history. Unlike the Soviet Union or the United States, China has been seared by exploitation, humiliation and oppression. The seemingly endless waves of foreign conquerors passed through China within the memory of the current generation of leaders. The difference between

---

[6] See Huan Xian "China's Foreign Policy" in Peking Review April 11, 1974. p.32.

> the sturdily independent and self-sufficient China before is obvious even to its enemies. Without exaggeration, the overriding consideration of Chinese foreign and domestic policy has been the restoration and preservation of China as a powerful and independent nation invulnerable to external conquest and domination."[7]

It is completely understandable how strongly China felt about her past and future. While classical China was a vast empire, self-proclaimed as "the centre of civilization", throughout the 19th and a good part of the 20th century she suffered a great deal of humiliation at the hands of foreign powers. She was forced by the threat of foreign military power to accede to a series of "unequal treaties", in which she agreed to indemnify large amount of money and to open almost all of her important ports. The Treaties of Nanjing, Tianjing and Beijing, in particular, by which China lost her control over trade tariffs and vast territories including Hong Kong, Kowloon and the Amur and Ussuri Rivers basins,[8] almost deprived China of all her sovereignty. Dr. Sun Yat-sen, the founder of China's first republic, described his feeling,

> we are the poorest and weakest country in the world, occupying the lowest position in world affairs; people of other countries are the carving knife and the serving dish while we are the fish and meat.[9]

---

[7] Steven J. Rosen and Walter Jones, The Logic of International Relations Winthrop Publishers: 1986. p. 122.

[8] The territory China lost to the Tsarist Russia alone was about three times as large as France. cited in The History of China.Commercial press:1985.pp.79-83.

[9] Sun Yat-sen San Min Chu I: The Three Principles of the people Shanghai Commercial Press:1928. p.12.

The resulting sentiment among the Chinese people was necessarily a strong sense of bitterness and a strong desire for change. To paraphrase John K. Fairbank, in those years no Chinese could be Chinese without having a dedicated conviction of the innate worth and superiority of Chinese culture, and no Chinese could be a patriotic Chinese without a dedicated commitment to driving foreign presence out.[10] Suffice it to say here, as an inheritor of this national mentality, the Chinese Communists would pursue a foreign policy that was revisionist in nature. While it would not take violent actions to seek changes in the international structure, it would also not be willing to subordinate itself to the will of any other nation, no matter what kind of regime that nation was.

The Impact of Maoism

The Chinese communists are heir not only to a civilization with a great imperial past, but also to modern revolutionary ideologies. The Chinese foreign policy formula includes the following basic principles which together constitute Mao Tsetung's Thought:

1. the idea of a two-stage revolution in colonial and semi-colonial countries, leading from a bourgeoisie-democratic stage to a socialist stage;
2. the concept of a broad united international front to include all positive forces;
3. the strategy of unity and struggle within the united front toward the middle or neutral elements;
4. the need for a strong military force as backsupport;

---

[10] John K. Fairbank The Chinese World Order Harvard: 1968. pp.89-95.

and 5. the need for flexibility and compromise in the process of struggle.

From an analytical view, this formula is a misture of Marxist dialectism and Chinese materialism, of Marxist revolutionary romanticism and Chinese traditional pragmatism.

The ultimate question along this line of thinking, therefore, whittles to that of Mao Tsetung's philosophy, his way of looking at social development.

Central to Mao Tsetung's philosophy is his epistomology that contradictions are inherent in every object and that it is the prevailing of one aspect of the contradiction over the other that makes social development. Revealingly, of all Mao's theoretical works, "On Contradiction" and "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People" are designated by the CCP as the handbooks that all of its cadre must read. Categorically, Mao's vision focuses on two points. One is that he sees the historical process in terms of a conflict between the two major opposing forces. He emphasizes that

> In the relationship between the various contradictions, one and only one is supposed to be the principal contradiction that ncecssarily determines the development of others. All others are secondary and can be easily solved as they are subordinated to the resolution of the principal contradiction.[11]

At the same time, Mao Tsetung recognizes that the resolving of secondary contradictions is helpful to the resolution of principal contradictions. He emphasizes that principal contradictions, after all, exist on the background of secondary

---

[11] Hsiung and Kim China in the Global Community. p.21.

contradictions. When background disppears, the major drama will not last long. Therefore, as an alternative, one could also approach an issue by resolving easier and minor contradictions.

The third Maoist emphasis is that in methdology contradictions should be seen as the substance of social life, dialectics as the analytical method of understanding contradictions, and struggle as the necessary process of resolving contradictions. Contradictions are prevalent in all things. They rise, resolve, and rise again in a seemingly endless, wavelike motion. From a purely philosophical point, this epistomology is the most fundamental. Otherwise, how could one understand that the imperialist Europe and the militarist Japan should be categorized differently from the United States. The teaching of this epistomology, as far as foreign policy is concerned, will not be mistaken: in the process of struggle, one's focus should shift from time to time, from place to place and from actor to actor. While the target should be certain in each phase of struggle, conflict, competition, coexistence and cooperation are all permissible forms of action, as long as the archemeny will be weakened.

The Impact of the International Environment

While theoretical dilemmas and national sentiments undercut the validity of the two-camp policy, neither can Peking's approach to world affairs be understood solely in terms of its own aims and motivations. Communist China does not operate in a

vaccum. Its policy, like that of other nations, is shaped to a considerable degree by a process of action and interaction between itself and other major powers, and between its leaders' ambitions and the stubborn realities of the outside world.

The Chinese attitudes toward and relationship with the two strongest powers are fundamental factors shaping China's policies. Since achieving power in China, the Communists have had to adapt their policy continuously to the requirements and limitations imposed by the changing attitude of the United States and the Soviet Union. The basic power struggle between the big two had determined China's every major maneuver on the world scene. China and the Soviet Union are geopolitically placed in competitive positions.[12] Both are provided by nature with great power potential, such as size and population, and are also placed in proximate geographical locations. While China is the largest and historically most influential country in Asia, the Soviet Union, being a Eurasian country, also has a stake in the region. Moreover, the Soviet Union is a largely landlocked country which has no easy access to the Pacific Ocean without going through the Sea of Japan or the Sea of China. Consequently, the relationship between the two countries has always been

---

[12] Geopoliticians such as Harold Sprout, Halford Mankinder, and Alfred Mahan point out that the foreign policies of a nation are more determined by its geographical characteristics. See Patrick M. Morgan Theories and Approaches to International Politics Brunswick:NJ, 1987. pp.58-67.

characterized by suspicion.[13] This is, of course, not to suggest geographical determinism, but one need simply remember how France and Germany had fought over Alsace-Lorraine and the Sarr.

Consequently, the ideological assumptions behind the two-camp doctrine were constantly violated, despite the ideological convergence between the two states. Two of Mao's and Stalin's secret speeches are revealing,

> Mao: In 1950 I argued with Stalin in Moscow for two months. We argued about the Treaty of Mutual Assistance and Alliance, about the joint stock companies, about the border questions.[14]

> Stalin: We invited the Chinese comrades to come to Moscow...The Chinese comrades agreed here with the views of the Soviet comrades, but went back to China and acted otherwise.[15]

If the two parties could not have a single mind in the hayday of the Cold War, could they maintain their relations from further deterioration as world politics moved from bipolarism to policentrism? Toward the turn of the 1950s, the divergence between the two sides became so wide that they turned into open rivals. While the ever-growing appetite of the Soviet Union, as underlined by its intervention in Eastern Europe, demanded further submission from its campfellows and meant to deprive them of national sovereignty, the Chinese grew an ever-stronger desire to pursue their own foreign policy interests and to play their

---

[13] Notice in the previous section, one of the five demands the Soviet union put on China was the use of Port Arthur.

[14] cited in Mao Tsetung Long Live Mao Tsetung Thought 1967.

[15] Vladmir Dedijer Tito p.322 (New York:Arno press,1953)

own role on the world stage with the gradual buildup of national capability, and especially with the imminent acquisition of the nuclear bomb.

What could be said about China's reasons for joining the Soviet camp is, therefore, that they represented more of a measure of expediency than an expression of ideological devotion, more of an intermediate tactic than of a final goal. It should be remembered clearly that when China came onto the world stage in 1949 she was confronted by a stark reality that directly threatened her existence. She was militarily and diplomatically besieged by the United States and her allies and after 30 years of civil war, her economy was almost prostrate and needed urgent outside support. In the words of Camelleri,

> "If China decided immediately after Liberation to lean to the Soviet side, it was largely because at the height of the Cold War there was little possibility of a middle road; if its alliance with the Soviet Union was not to consolidate its independence, its struggle for revolution was nothing..."[16]

Whatever her original intentions, the fact is that by joining the Soviet camp China protected her vulnerable independence from US pressure with Soviet military deterrence, helped revive her prostrate economy with Soviet credit, and quickened her developing pace with Soviet technology.

Following the above line of explanation, a second question naturally surfaces about the three world doctrine: what logic

---

[16] see Camerilleri Chinese Foreign Policy Seattle:1980. pp.47-53. and Yahuda China's Role in World Affairs St. Martin's Press:1978. p.43.

does it follow that the world should be so divided? Again, this question has to be looked at from several angles. To some extent, it represents a problem of tactics and organization. With the collapse of the Sino-Soviet alliance, China was militarily and diplomatically besieged on all sides, not only by the United States but by the Soviet Union as well. Indeed, China perceived collaborations and collusions between the Soviet Union and the United States to strangle her on the world stage. Given the great gaps in national capabilities between the two sides and the stark reality that the world was so polarized that one half of the developed world was controlled by the United States and the other by the Soviet Union, what should China do to break out of the encirclement? How could China counter the pressures of the superpowers.? Clearly the only way was to form a counter-alliance by winning the support of all elements which were not hostile to China, including the neutrality of the middle elements. In The Art of War, Mr. Sun Zi, an ancient Chinese military expert, discussed the strategy of survival and breakthrough by an army in difficulty:

> When the enemy is powerful, look for its internal contradiction, divide it, and then concentrate all your power to attack its weakest link.[17]

This surely is the only way for China to fight her way out of encirclement. But how to apply this strategy: how to look for the enemy's internal contradiction? how to divide it? and what forces

---

[17] see Sun Zi The Art of War. Sun Zi was one of Mao Tsetung's favourite writers. It is said that Mao carried his books all along with him even in the hardest days during the Long March.

are you going to concentrate? These are Mao Tsetung's contributions. For him, while Sun Zi's strategy pointed out the way to survival, the very key was in organizational matters--- in correctly distinguishing true enemies from true friends, and temporary allies from eternal comrades. In "An Analysis of the Classes in the Chinese Society", he wrote,

> Who are our enemies? who are our friends? He who does not know how to distinguish his enemies from his friends cannot be a revolutionary, yet at the same time it is no easy task to distinguish them. If the Chinese revolution...has shown such meager results, it is not the goal but the tactics which have been wrong. The tactical error committed is precisely the inability to rally one's true friends in order to strike at one's enemy.[18]

With the assistance of this strategy, Mao was able to survive the hardest times in his career. In each of the wars against the warlords(1925-1927), against the Nationalists (1927-1949) and against the Japanese(1936-1945), he was able to defeat strong enemies with his guerilla forces.[19]

In international politics, Mao Tsetung perceived basically the same dynamic. For him, as for many other realists in the international arena, the rest of the world influences a country in three ever-present ways: it threatens it; it trades with it

---

[18] Mao Tsetung "Analysis of the Various Classes in the Chinese Society"(1926) in Selected Works Vol.1,1969.

[19] A notable example is Mao's treatment of the Xian Incident. When Chiang Kaishi was arrested by his generals in the December of 1936 in Xian, Mao Tsetung did not take the opportunity to eliminate his rival. Instead he helped secure Chiang's release. Subsequently he made Chiang declare war against Japan. His calculation was that while Japan had become the greatest threat to China and his program, his contradictions with Chiang could be put off until after the defeat of the Japanese.

and thus helps it; or it lends its influence in support of it or against it.[20] When friendship, support and influence could not be obtained from one group, they surely can be won from another group, and when there is not enough muscle in one's own body to compete with one's rival, he surely has to rally the support of others. The crucial task for China is, therefore, to sort out the external environment in such terms as "friendly forces", "intermediate forces" and "hostile forces" , and properly fit them into a scheme to isolate enemies, just as was done in domestic politics. The three world doctrine performed exactly this function. By differentiating the three worlds, Mao Tsetung cleared away the key questions of who to rely upon, who to unite with, and who to strike at. By differentiating the three worlds, he also made the tactical scheme of how to oppose strong enemies when one's capabilities are weak.

---

[20] The systemic model in international relations theory explains "why the actors do what they do" in terms of reaction to the external environment." see the chapter entitled "A System, a system, the kingdom is a system" in Theories and Approaches to International Politics Patrick M. Morgan, 1987.

Chapter III China's Relations With The Third World

China's credentials with third world countries are clear. Since 1949, she has enthusiastically encouraged their national independence from Western suzerains; she has extended generous assistance to their economic construction programs; she has received their national leaders with the highest honors; and she has also advocated their political and economic interests at every international forum. In short, as Harris and Worden observe, "on every appropriate occasion, whether greeting the People's Congress, or addressing the United Nations General Assembly, Beijing's leaders and spokesmen have unanimously asserted that China is a member of the Third World."[1]

The Implications of the Third World

What does China intend to achieve through identifying herself with the third world? And how does the third world as a group fit into the Three world doctrine? And how could China identify herself with the third world?

---

[1] The third world, of course, has not been so enthusiastic. See Lillian Craig Harris and Robert L. Worden China and the Third World Auburn House: Mass.,1986, p.1.

To answer these questions, one needs, first of all, to look at what the third world is. The Third World is a collective name referring to those economically poor and underdeveloped nations which stand in contrast to the developed capitalist world. It consists of over 125 nations in Asia, Africa and Latin America and constitutes over 70 per cent of the world's population. Theese countries are rich in natural resources but are mostly small in size, diverse in culture, and different in perception of national interests. For a very long time in history they were colonies of Western countries.

At the same time, the third world is the fastest changing part of the world, both in political and economic capabilities. Since World War II, third world countries have won freedom and independence from colonial rule one after another, and now over 120 of them are members of the United Nations. The third world emerged as a powerful political force in international relations in 1964 at the meeting of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) when a bloc of Asian and Latin American countries began to meet as a Caucus of 77 to achieve political goals through voting solidarity. Since then it has functioned as a decision-making bloc in the United Nations General Assembly. Although the third world nations still split on some issues due to their cultural and national differences, on key issues, especially those dealing with economic development, ending

colonialization, sovereignty and human rights,[2] they have shown a record of almost complete voting solidarity. As a result, they can almost always raise a two-thirds majority vote in the General Assembly, meaning that the United States, the Soviet Union and Western Europe constantly find themselves on the losing side.[3]

The implications of these characteristics on China's global strategy and her policy toward the third world in particular is clear. The growing capabilities of the third world could not escape China's vision. When looked at individually, these third world countries are economically poor and politically weak, especially when they are viewed in light of their percentage of World GNP, but if they act in concert, they decisively broaden or narrow the maneuvering room of other countries, including the superpowers. Their voting power in the United Nations Assembly and their role in world energy crises[4] testify that this assertion is not at all extravagant. In any case, the third world constitutes a viable force in world politics for China who was then drowned in the midst of external hostility and diplomatic isolation.

---

[2] Other major issues on which they have often found themselves in solidarity include the establishment of a new international economic order and the establishment of cartel arrangements to control supply and fix world prices for such products as oil, copper, bauxite, sugar and coffee etc.

[3] It should be pointed out that voting patterns in the United Nation have shifted considerably the last couple of years.---author.

[4] A notable example is the role of rising oil prices in the recession of the industrial countries in 1973.

On the Chinese side, too, it was also a natural tendency that she would identify herself with the world's underdogs. First, the third world is the only force available in international politics that could be really motivated to support China. In the post-war era, the industrial world was completely polarized between the two superpowers, the east dominated by the Soviet Union and the west by the United States. The third world was, in comparison, the only "free world" over which a third power other than the two superpowers could exert influence. It was, therefore, situationally determined that the "poor" and "weak" third world should be taken by China as the mainstay of her united international front.

Second, the third world has the political motivation to be allied with China. In his report to the People's Congress on China's foreign relations(1954), Chu Jung-fu, then vice foreign minister, assessed the potential of the third world's support,

> ...colonial and semi-colonial states have either won national independence or are engaged in the struggle for national independence. Both the Chinese people and the people of these countries have for a long time been subjected to the oppression and exploitation of imperialism and have suffered long enough... They share a common interest in the wiping out of colonialism, and there are no basic conflicts of interest among them...[5]

Clearly, in the Chinese evaluation, the fact that the third world countries were colonized by the West would make them natural allies of China, and for the extent to which they had suffered at

---

[5]Chu Jung-fu "Foreign relations of new China during the past five years', World Culture, 5 Oct. 1954, in Current Background, no. 307, 6 Dec. 1954. pp.1-9.

the hand of their suzerains, they would be most resolute in will and most persistent in action to resist the hegemony of the superpowers. It was, therefore, politically possible to integrate their aspiration for independence into China's counter-superpower struggle.

China's Policy Goals

As with the development of the three world doctrine itself, China's foreign policy toward the third world also went through several stages of change and there is an apparent symmetry between the two. The earliest interest of China in the third world was mainly related to two factors: their common historical experiences and China's ideological expectations. Both China and the majority of the third world countries had suffered colonization by the Western countries. Out of sympathy and largely influenced by the spectacular success of her own, the Chinese leadership genuinely wished that these countries would soon win independence on the model of the Chinese revolution. Secondly, driven by her ideological preferences, the Chinese leadership expected that the third world countries would quickly join the socialist camp and that their movements for national liberation and independence would soon sweep across the rest of Asia, Africa and Latin America. (It should be emphasized that this expectation was not an integral part of China's own program. It was mostly the result of sympathy and ideological

preferences.) Thus, during the early 1950, China carried a contradictory attitude toward the Third World. On the one hand, she believed that the third world countries were a progressive force in international politics, but on the other she felt dissatisfied with them and even regarded them as reactionary for their neutralism in a world of clear division.

However, by 1954 the Chinese rejection of the third world's non-alignment began to change. Obviously, the change was a part of the total adjustment of China's perception of the world system and her place in world affairs. As has been discussed in the previous chapter, the focus of China's foreign policy has always been centred around concerns about her international position and national security which are largely determined by her relationship with the superpowers. With the dynamics of the two-camp politics running out in the mid-1950s, China began to conceive an independent role in international relations. She perceived in the neutral third world a potential political base upon which she could establish herself and in non-alignment a convenient tool to counterbalance the influence of the superpowers. Therefore, in contrast to her earlier attitude toward the third world countries, the Chinese no longer regarded their neutrality as conservative or reactionary, but rather that the more neutral and the more independent they were, the better for China.

The first step along this line was taken by Zhou Enlai, China's premier and foreign minister, at Bandung in 1954. Instead

of encouraging the Asian and African countries to join the socialist camp, as China had always done, Zhou Enlai advocated the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence[6] as the basis of Chinese foreign policy. The five principles include respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity; abstention from aggression and threats against each other; non-interference in the internal affairs of one another; recognition of equality of all nations large and small; and mutual benefit in economic and cultural relations. The significance of the raising of the five principles, as was demonstrated by China's subsequent policy behaviour, could never be overestimated. It marked a shift in China's general attitude toward the existing world order and the perception of her future role in world affairs. First, it was an open deviation from, if not yet total negation of, the two-camp doctrine and the "leaning to one side" policy. Second, it refuted, in effect, the legitimacy of the Soviet leadership over other countries and China in particular. And thirdly, it manifested China's intention to establish her own sphere of influence. In short, as Mao Tsetung's "Great Disorder Under Heaven"[7] indicates, by stressing equality, China was encouraging

---

[6] The Five Principles were included in the joint agreement signed between China and India in April 1954.

[7] This is recalled from my memory of my school days when every child in school learned Mao Tsetung's speeches, although I can not remember whether it is a poem or a speech. But certain am I about its gist: the current international situation is characterized by disorder, the greater the disorder, the better for revolution. Deng Xiao Ping's speech at the UN Assembly of 1974 also mentioned the great disorder under heaven wherein all the political forces in the world go through drastic division and

a policentric world order and a realignment of world forces. Following the Bandung conference, China initiated a series of diplomatic actions which were totally independent of Soviet influence or camp concerns. She fostered cooperation with India and Burma with whom she had border problems. She established diplomatic relations with Afghanistan, Nepal, Egypt, Syria, Yeman and Ceylon, all of which had social systems vastly different from her own. She even sought to improve relations with neighbouring countries such as Pakistan and Iraq that had committed themselves to various forms of military alignment with the United States. The net intention of these actions was to establish the basis for a provisional alliance between the neutralist third world countries and China, and, in addition, "to project the image of a modern, rapidly developing, cooperative society deserving of legal and political recognition as an important member of the world community". [8]

If this policy change manifested only China's intention to break out of the diplomatic encirclement imposed by the United States, its intention toward the Soviet Union was soon demonstrated without ambiguity at the second Afro-Asian conference. Like the first conference, this second one was a club gathering convened to discuss national independence movements. In keeping with China's usual attitude on the subject matter, the conference should have made a place for the Soviet Union who was

---

realignment. see also Peking Review April 19,1974. p.11.

[8] Camelleri. Ibid. pp.79.

then still regarded by China as the leader of world revolution. Nevertheless, China opposed Soviet participation on the ground that she was not an Asian or African country. When resentment grew among the third world countries not at odds with Moscow and it appeared that China might not get her way, she threatened to withdraw. In 1966, when the first Tricontinental Conference (The First Conference of Solidarity of the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America) was held in Pro-Moscow Havana, China made efforts to convene a similar one in Beijing. Clearly, what China was most concerned about was not ideological solidarity or the expansion of the socialist camp, but rather the exclusion of competing influences. Looked at from these perspectives, China's third world policy---its encouragement for national independence and non-alignment---was nothing but the product of careful calculation of national interests, despite the fact that she had historically supported these countries out of sympathy and proletarianism. China's dominant value was to establish a pro-China political constituency in the international community which would help China break out of the diplomatic isolation drawn by the superpowers.

The Instruments of Policy

Needless to say, the third world policy was carried out within the parameters of realpolitik, both at the level of policy pronouncement and execution. At the former level, China highlighted everywhere the points of conflict between the third

world and the superpowers and underscored the points of identity between the third world and herself through condemning the injustice of the existing world order, calling for equal sovereignty for all, and politicizing issues of international concern related to the third world. The definitions of the "superpower" and the "third world", for instance, were given full political significance, in contrast to the ordinary academic sense that describes them in terms of their aggregate power potentials and their levels of economic development. In his speech at the above-mentioned UN General Assembly, Deng xiao Ping defined that "a superpower is an imperialist country which everywhere subjects other countries to its aggression, therefore control, subversion or plunder and strives for world hegemony" whereas a third world country is exactly the victim of the superpower ambitions.[9] On the other hand, China described her own position as one who shared the destiny of the third world and was dedicated to the fight against imperialism and hegemonism.

> China is not a superpower, nor will she ever seek to be one... If one day China should change her color and turn into a superpower, if she too should play the tyrant in the world...the people should identify her as social imperialism, expose it, oppose it and work with the Chinese people to overthrow it...[10]

A corollary to the characteristic of high politicization is vagueness and lack of precision in using technical terms. In the majority of her policy pronouncements, it was never indicated

---

[9]see Deng Xiaoping's speech Peking Review Ibid.

[10] Deng's speech Peking review Ibid.

where the edges of the term's meaning were. For instance, when did China become a third world country? Do all of the socialist countries belong to the third world? Do such countries as Cuba of the 1960s and Vietnam of the late 1970s belong to the third world? These questions were not clarified. On the contrary, terms such as peace-loving nations and third world countries were often used interchangably. The effect is that there is left a wide margin of flexibility for determining the real meaning of China's policy. These characteristics were not the result of mindless mistakes, but of tactical deliberation. The value-laden definition, in effect, served to draw a line between the first world on the one side and the third world on the other. It also helped the third world, with which China had pledged identification, to align itself accordingly in international affairs, without alienating vacillating elements or locking up her own hands.

Thus, in practice we saw many faces of China in her relations with the third world: leader as well as supporter, champion as well as benefactor, all played out in reference to its objectives and the circumstances of the time. During the whole 1960s and the early part of the 1970s, China extended substantial aid on a fairly sustained basis to over 70 third world countries and supported them through political, economic and cultural grant-programs. In the 7 years from 1968 to 1976 alone, the volume of

foreign aid amounted to US$3000 millions.[11] As she was militarily antagonized and diplomatically isolated during that period, China made winning the support of the third world countries the highest objective of her foreign policy. Among the tactics she used was her conscious effort to portray herself as different from other big countries. Thus, we find remarkable not only China's aid volume compared with her own economic scale, but also her aid pattern which was so different from those of the Soviet and Western loans. Much of China's assistance consisted chiefly of outright grants. Even in cases of loans she allowed very low rates of interest and very long periods for repayment. She also excluded from her aid materials which were readily available in recipient countries. These created differences portrayed Chinese economic and technical aid as a concrete manifestation of her true identity with the third world and as a valuable element in the "common"task of national construction and the "common" struggle against imperialism. Although such aid arrangements made China's own economic construction additionally constrained, the very fact of China's unwealthy economy made her especially heroic and heart-touching. China was only too pleased to derive the political advantage from the contrast painted between her approach to economic aid and that of other big powers. This helped China obtain not only maneuvering room in a time of diplomatic isolation, but also broad political support in

---

[11] Hsueh Chun-tu China's foreign Relations Praeger:1982, p.42.

the international community. In 1971, China was voted into the United Nations in spite of the strong opposition of the United States.

Once recognized in the international community, as symbolized by her accession to the United Nations, China began to adopt the posture of a champion of third world interests to increase her influence in international affairs. International forums became a convenient vehicle for her to realize this goal. By offering moral support to favoured third world initiatives and rejoinders to the developed world for its imperialist, colonialist, or protectionist attitude toward developing countries, she presented herself as a leader in the debate between the two sides. According to Harris and Worden's finding, the importance of third world development and the effects of the first and second world's political, economic and military policies on development have been the themes of every address China's representatives have delivered at annual UN opening seesion since 1971.[12] A tangible example is her call for the long-sought third world goal of a new international economic order:

> The third world countries strongly demand that the present extremely unequal international economic relation be changed, and they have made many rational proposals of reforms. The Chinese government and people warmly endorse and firmly support all just propositions made by the third world countries.[13]

---

[12] Harris and Worden. Ibid. p.125.

[13] Peking Review April 19,1974. p.10.

All such initiatives tipped the balance of influence between China and the superpowers so much that the latter constantly found themselves in the minority at international forums.

The third world policy accrued China other benefits as well. By paying special attention to its small Asian neighbours, the policy contributed to enhancing China's security interest. It could be easily recognized that of all the third world regions, South and Southwest Asia received the bulk of China's foreign policy attention for geopolitical reasons. Geographically adjacent to the Southern border of China, the relation between the countries in question and China are traditionally described as "lips and teeth". Since the end of its empire age, China has attempted to establish "good neighbour relations" with them. With the collapse of the Sino-Soviet alliance, the strategic importance of the region was more than ever buttressed. The United States had stationed troops to China's east and southeast in Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and the Philippines etc., and the Soviet Union had built up massive military forces on its northern border. Now the Soviet Union was taking initiatives to expand its influences in India and meant, from China's perspective, to encircle it from the south. China had certainly to take corresponding actions in the region to thwart the perceived Soviet intention. By extending generous aid and frequently sending goodwill delegations, the third world policy paved China's way into Pakistan, Burma, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangaledash and Indochina, countries which geopolitically "counter-

encircled" India. From 1968 to 1978, the above countries received US$ 1000 millions in peace time aid, accounting for 39 percent of the total foreign aid China committed during the period.[14]

The third world policy portrayed an image of China as "neither leader nor follower, yet both champion as well supporter". The motive of this policy is obvious and the lesson is also clear. To thwart the intention of a powerful hostile alliance, the best way is to strengthen one's own alliance by whatever means. However, other questions still remain, especially, if the above policy had been a function of a siege mentality, the consciousness of being encircled by hostile and hegemonic predators. Can China maintain her policy now that the environment has so dramatically changed? This question will be discussed in the fifth chapter.

---

[14] Hsueh Chun-tu China's Foreign Relations Praeger:1982,p.41

Chapter IV: China's Relations With The Second World

When the representative of China and his counterpart from the European Economic Community signed the agreement on mutual cooperation in 1975, the world witnessed one of the most dramatic breakthroughs in modern diplomacy. China became the first communist country (Yugoslavia excepted) to recognize the organization of capitalist countries. The event thus signified a tilt in China's foreign policy toward Western Europe. At the same time the event also manifested a clear difference between China's approach toward this part of the world and its approach toward the third world. Rather than embracing wholeheartedly or championing enthusiastically, as she did to the third world, China looked at the second world with an eye half filled with suspicion. The Chinese representative insisted on incorporating into the agreement an "antihegemonism" clause.[1]

How did China come to deal with the second world differently than with the third world? Why should China court the second world whom she did not trust? And how well did the second world fit into the scheme of China's three worlds differentiation? These same questions have to be asked if we are to understand the overall pattern of China's foreign behaviour. This chapter will

---

[1] The same clause was incorporated into the Treaty of Peace and Friendship signed between China and Japan in 1978.

discuss the various dilemmas imposed on China's policy thrust by the political ambivalence of the second world. It will also trace the calculations the Chinese policy makers made in their dealings with these countries.

The Implications of the Second World

The second world comprises the small and medium-sized capitalist countries, namely western Europe and Japan. As a group, these countries share such characteristics as being economically well-developed and politically "vacillating" or "conservative". While in the past they had been major colonial powers that "exploited" and "oppressed" the people of the third world, including the Chinese,, they were closely associated with the United States---China's major antagonist---through political and military alliances after the second World War. At the same time, however, they were not identical with the United States, but had contradictions with her. While they got nuclear protection through alliance with the United States, they lost much of their identity which was once so distinguished in international affairs.

These characteristics put Western Europe and Japan in a very uncertain position in China's political spectrum: neither friend nor enemy, yet both friend and enemy. Indeed, since coming to power in 1949, the Chinese leadership had consistently attempted to fit them into a well-defined theoretical framework, only to find that there existed no clear answer to that question. In the

1950s, for instance, when China adhered to the Soviet two-camp concept of international relations, Western Europe was considered to be a subordinate part of the American-dominated camp. The intensity of the cold war denied the possibility of an independent European foreign policy, as Mao Tsetung declared,

> all people, without exception, must lean either to the side of socialism, or to the side of capitalism. Sitting on the fence will not do, nor is there a third road.[2]

By the end of the 1950s when the relationship between China and the Soviet Union began to decline, that rigid view became shaken. Responding to both the internal dissension within Nato as well as to the deepening Sino-Soviet conflict, Mao Tsetung began to take a more flexible and dialectic view of the second world. Not only did he start to notice the vacillating nature of second world politics, but also began to emphasize its progressive side. In an interview with a visiting French parliamentary delegation in January 1964, Mao Tsetung is reported to have defined the political role of Western Europe and Japan in the following manner,

> La France..., l'Allemagne, L'Italie, l'Angletterre a condition qu'elle cesse d'etre courtier de l'Amerique, le Japan et nous-meme---Voila le tiers monde.[3]

How did Mao Tsetung's dialectics come to define the changing role of the second world in that manner? The answer is simple enough. First, with the threat of the United States and the

---

[2] Mao Tsetung Selected Works vol.4, p.415.

[3] L'Humanite (Paris) Feb 21, 1964, p.3

Soviet Union being perceived as the principal contradiction with China, the contradictions with "certain other imperialist powers", which were once salient and sharp, were reduced to a secondary status. Second, the tactical necessity of "concentrating all forces to deal with principal contradictions" defies the ideas of struggling against many contradictions at one time. Thus, the political positions of Western Europe and Japan were anatomized as an intermediate zone floating and flirting between the first world and the third world. They were to be reappraised from time to time in accordance with the changes of the international situation. According to Mao Tsetung, these countries

> oppress and exploit the oppressed nations and are at the same time controlled and bullied by the superpowers. They have a dual character and stand in contradiction with both the first and third worlds. But they are still a force the third world can win over or unite with in the struggle against the hegemonism.[4]

This is perhaps a unique aspect Mao Tsetung added to the theory of international relations. The dialectical analysis solved the ambivalence and difficulty which had hitherto existed in China's "agonizing appraisal" of the second world.

China's Policy Goals

---

[4] Beijing Review Nov.4, 1977.

Specifically, China had three distinct foreign policy interests in the second world: global balance of influence, strategic security, and defense modernization, in that order of importance. Politically, the second world stood between the first world and the third world, or, in a narrower sense, between the superpowers and China, and was thus vital to both of them. Hitherto, the superpowers had dealt with the Chinese, the Europeans, and the Japanese as discrete entities, often at odds with each other, and not as independent actors pursuing joint foreign policy interests within a loose framework of cooperation. The strengthening of Sino-second world relations would certainly pose a difficulty for both of the superpowers on the one hand and, on the other, give themselves(the medium powers) greater scope as important actors in their own light. In either case, for China, a good Sino-second world relation would be a powerful thwart to the superpowers' plan to isolate her. Thus, China would naturally expect that the second world would be more independent, separated from the United States and opposed to the Soviet Union.

Militarily, both Western Europe and Japan occupy geographical positions that would directly affect China's security interests. Western Europe stood on the frontline between the United States and the Soviet Union, both of whom considered Europe as their frontline and target of contention. An independent Europe would, thus, mean no less than a thorn in both of their sides. While the United States might feel it was losing the most with Europe's

"independence", much of Soviets' military forces would also be pinned down in the European theatre if Europe were made friendly to China. Japan was yet another case of this nature. She was the most important ally of the United States in the Pacific, lying at the east gate of China and standing in the way of the Soviets' southward aspirations. From a strategic point of view, none of the three great powers could afford to lose her for the global balance of power in the long run. In the short run, suffice it to say that if Japan were made independent, China would be relieved of much immediate military pressure.

Thirdly, better relations with the Second world would provide China with the advanced weapons and technology required to bring her defense to modern standards. One of the major weaknesses of China, in comparison with the superpowers, was the backwardness of her weaponry. To improve her international position fundamentally, China had to build up her weapon industry and military forces, in addition to manipulating a shift in the balance of political influnce. Western Europe and Japan were the only sources available at the time. The importance of the second world to China was nowhere made more clear than by Deng Xiaoping in one of his speeches on the prospects of Sino-Japanese relations,

> If China and Japan could cooperate with each other, they could support half the Heaven.[5]

If Japan and Western Europe fit admirably into the

---

[5]Hsueh. Ibid. p.45.

scheme of China's foreign policy, then how well did China fit the need of the Europeans and the Japanese? This is an equally important question, for without their consent Mao Tsetung's dialectical reasoning is merely an elusive speculation. Without doubt, neither Japan nor Western Europe could expect to gain as much as China in improving their relations. Nevertheless, they still had political, strategic, and economic interests in the undertaking. In the first place, the Europeans were also seeking changes in the existing international political structure at the time. They were aspiring for autonomy from the United States on the one hand and were opposed to Soviet pressure on the other. In this sense, they were riding on the same boat with China. Placed in the political context of balance of influence, China was certainly the most effective tool of their deterrence against the Soviet Union and the heaviest counter of their bargaining with the United States. For not withstanding the temporary fact that China was still a secondary player on the global stage, her potential to rise to quasi-superpower status would augument the international weight of her partners. In the second place, better relations with China would provide Europe with an enormous economic market. While the Europeans had only a limited need for the products of China, the Chinese maintained a large demand for European industrial commodities. Looked at from these perspectives, just as China needed the cooperation of the second world to help her break out of political encirclement and further increase her role in the balance of power, the second world found

China an equally "objective ally" in their search for a new and expanded role in rapidly changing international environment.[6]

The Instruments of Policy

Against this general background, we can now analyze a few representative cases to see how China's political and strategic calculations were translated into her policy actions. In short, China's typical approach to the second world is to drive wedges between them and the superpowers. In an article published by the New China News Agency on August 15, 1972, the peak of the monetary crisis in the Western world, the author commented on the differences between the United States and Western Europe in the following manner,

> The United States, by making the most of its position, hopes to force the West European countries into sacrificing their own economic interests to preserve the dollar's position, weakening daily, and to maintain the dollar's privileged status as a reserve currency in the capitalist world. This tactic has provoked the Western European countries' sharp displeasure.[7]

The purpose of these comments was unquestionable: it was to invite frictions between Western Europe and the United States and to encourage rebellion of the former against the latter. In a time of two years during that period, the Peking press devoted much space to explaining the significance of those antagonisms

---

[6] Hsueh. Ibid. p.100.

[7] Alain Bouc "Peking now wants a United Europe" The Atlantic Community Quarterly Vol X, summer 1972. pp.167-173.

and reported regularly on European developments. "It pounced gleefully on the increased frequency of disagreements and savoured the memory of the 'steel war', the 'oil war', the 'wheat war'and the 'chicken war'."[8]

Among all of China's second world connections, France was most telling of the nature of this relationship. France was the first European country to break official relations with Taiwan;[9] she was the most insistent on the devaluation of the dollar; and she was the only one that declared withdrawal from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Needless to say, the French steps were not taken with the intention to facilitate China's diplomatic endeavours. Neither De Gaulle nor Mao Tsetung, as could be observed in China's vehement assault on French imperialism and colonialism in Indochina, hedged much sentiment about each other. But at all events, both sides saw immediate advantages in establishing good mutual relations. For China, a good relationship with France---a developed European country---would mean a diplomatic breakthrough in the Western line. It would, thus, entail great symbolic significance to her political status in international relations. For France, on the other side, it would quite dramatically underline her new-found independence with respect to her American custodian, and it would open up a

---

[8]Alain Bouc. Ibid. p.169.

[9] Though Britain was the first European country to recognize the PRC, she also maintained a consulate on the island of Taiwan and her embassy in Beijing was led by a charge d'affair instead of an ambassador.

great market for her booming economy.In the eyes of some observers, the relations between Beijing and Paris elaborated "a median line of strategy"---one of independence and development in the face of the Soviet-American mutual understanding about the post-war world political structure."[10] In fact, the announcement of the establishment of Sino-Franch diplomatic relations in 1964 provoked outrage in Washington and displeasure in Moscow.

China's attitude toward the European Community developed almost along the same latitude. In the beginning, European integration and the establishment of the Common Market were viewed in Peking as negative outcomes of the contradictions among capitalist countries and a new intrigue to exploit underdeveloped nations. But Mao Tsetung stopped short at this point in his ideological imagination: he did not extend his contradiction theory to predict an automatic collapse of the capitalist world due to the internal split of Western Europe. Instead, his dialectics led him to reason from the reverse side and made him believe that if these countries wanted to increase their autonomy in decision-making, they must fight the big powers' hegemony, form new groups, and possibly achieve distinct political unity. With De Gaulle's ever-growing demand for "independence" and the rapid ascendence of the European Community in economic affairs, Mao Tsetung recognized Western Europe as a "third force" of international politics. China thus began to support further European integration and emphasized the

---

[10] Hsueh. Ibid. p.88.

collective power of Europe in counterbalancing superpowers. As New China emphasized on the admission of Great Britain into the Community,

> a Common Market of ten countries would surpass the United States in gold reserves, steel and automobile production, and exports: "This new situation in Western Europe would be a serious obstacle to the US-USSR hegemony in Europe.[11]

Thus Sino-EC relations expanded concurrently with the bilateral relations with its respective members.

The normalization of the Sino-Japanese relationship is even more delicate and subtle than that of Sino-France or Sino-EC. At the time of normalization in September 1972, Japan's prime minister, Tanaka, proposed that a number of agreements on technical aspects of Sino-Japanese relations, such as aviation, trade, shipping and fishery, be concluded. But the Chinese premier, Chou En-lai, dismissed them as mere "trifles". Instead, he proposed that the two governments sign a political protocol which was to include an anti-hegemony clause before they set to discuss operational agreements. The relevant questions concerning this abnormal procedure was again part of China's concerns about Japan's role in the world balance of influnce.

Along with political relations, trade relations between China and the second world also witnessed enormous expansion during this period. In 1970, the trade volume between China and Western Europe reached $1,427 millions, doubling that between China and

---

[11] Alain Bouc. Ibid. p.173.

the whole East Bloc. Trade with the then ten members of the European Community alone amounted to $604 millions.

Although the differences in scale and conditions with the second world were considerable, the diplomatic recognition of the Peking government by the second world enabled China to achieve significant influence vis-a-vis the superpowers. Viewed in retrospect, it was the second world connection that ultimately elevated China onto the world stage of powers. The event produced a clear moral: in international politics, when an influential force is neither friend nor enemy, the best policy is to win it over, or at least not to alienate it. Although it sounds a little Machiavallian, it is dangerous to make judgements in white and black.

Chapter V: A New Reality, A New Phase

If China's foreign policy in the 1960s and the early part of the 1970s was obsessed with courting the support of the third world to counterbalance the United States and the Soviet Union, the turn of the 1970s saw a dramatic movement toward cooperation with the United States. By 1979, China and the United States signed 15 bilateral agreements on trade, culture, science and technology, claims/assets, and even military cooperation. General consulates were opened in each other's major cities; American military jets were sold to Chinese armies and Chinese intelligence-gathering stations were used by American personnel; Chinese scholars and scientists were trained in American research institutes and American commodities were shipped in large quantity into Chinese ports. Above all, the defence ministers of the two countries frequently exchanged state visits.[1] What is the significance of this cooperation for Chinese foreign policy? Is it an expansion of or a deviation from the three world policy?

---

[1] In 1979, Chinese vice premier Deng Xiaoping and defense minister Geng Biao visited the United States and American vice president Walter Mondale and defense secretary Harold Brown visited China. 308 official Chinese delegations came to the United States while 40,000 Americans toured China. 700 Chinese students and visiting scholars were admitted into American research institutions. Bilateral trade between the two countries amounted to 2 billions dollars, an increase of 200 times from that of 1972. see Chun-tu Hsueh's statistics in China's Foreign Relations p.34.

The United States As A Force of Strategic Deterrence Against the Soviet Union

The answer to these questions again rests on the changes in the international environment that surrounded China and the changes in China's domestic needs. The end of the 1960s saw great changes in the international configuration of power. Among these changes was the shift in the scale of balance of power between the two superpowers: the relative decline of the United States and the continuing expansion of the Soviet Union. While the United States, with the announcement of the Nixon Doctrine, gradually softened her past containment policy, the Soviet Union not only refused China's conciliatory gesture[2] but intensified her involvement in Asia, Africa and the Middle East, culminating in her invasion of Afghanistan and alignment with Vietnam against China. The stark reality dawned upon the Chinese that although the United States was still a superpower, the threat to China's security largely derived from the Soviet Union and that the withdrawal of US military forces from Asia would, in effect, result in an absence of deterrence against the Soviet Union in the region.

On the other hand, China's growing political and military capacity enhanced her position to be an important force in the global balance of power. While she still lacked sufficient power-

---

[2] In 1975, Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai suggested to his Soviet counterpart an agreement to prevent armed conflict on the border and to disengage the two nations' armed forces in the disputed area along the Ussuri River.

--both military and economic ---to compete with either the United States or the Soviet Union in global diplomacy, her enhanced diplomatic status, her political influence with the third world, and, above all, her gradually expanded military capability had lifted her into the position of a quasi-superpower. The United States, out of global strategic considerations, began to change her posture toward China. She not only denounced "hegemonism" in the Shanghai communique signed with China in 1972,[3] but endorsed some of China's military actions in South Asia. In short, the United States began to consider China a strategic force in international relations, especially in her relations with the Soviet Union.

All these factors contributed to fundamental alterations in China's perception of the world situation and her role in international affairs. The entire world system, in the Chinese view, though still essentially bipolar, had undergone significant alterations in the direction of multipolarity. The fathers of realpolitik prescribed for later politicians two rules: that the foreign policies of a nation, especially those of a great power, are made in calculation for the maximizing of power and national interests, and that in the game of balance of power, the balancer must shift alignment constantly, but always in support of the

---

[3] According to Chun-tu Huseh, one of the subjects of Deng Xiaoping's negotiation in Washington in 1979 was America's endorsement of China's actions against Vietnam. see Chun-tu Huseh's China's Foreign Relations

weak to weaken the strong.[4] The case of Sino-American cooperation evolved exactly along these dimensions. Both sides perceived different opportunities and threats in the new interactions and especially in the relative shift in the balance of power between the two superpowers. Both sides saw common interests in cooperating with each other at this point of time. At bottom, the Chinese leaders were concerned about the stability of China's surroundings in Asia in face of the unrelenting buildup of the Soviet military and political pressure throughout China's periphery and were increasingly aware of the absence of strategic deterrence left by the withdrawal of the American forces from the region. The top priority for China's foreign policy, therefore, had become to heighten the US-Soviet antipathy or to promote cooperation between China and the United States to check the Soviet expansion. As the former Chinese foreign minister Huang Hua was reported to have said,

> By winning the United States over, we could concentrate all our forces to deal with the archenemy---revisionist Soviet social-imperialism[5]

Once these assumptions were made, the reasoning behind the original differentiation of the three worlds became too natural to be refuted in the formulation of China's new policy respectively toward the United States and the Soviet Union. A content analysis of China's policy statements published in Peking

---

[4] see Cohen Realpolitik: Theory and Practice.

[5] Hsiung and Kim China In the Global Community. p.221

Review from 1972 to 1978 indicates that China had by that time not only abandoned the theme of superpower collusion, but had begun to emphasize contradictions and distinctions between the two rivals. A typical illustration is Deng Xiaoping's remark made during his visit to Washington in 1979,

> the root of unrest is in the contention for world hegemony between the two superpowers...but for quite some time, the Soviet Union is on the offensive, whereas the United States is on the defensive... The Soviet social-imperialism is the most dangerous source of war.[6]

Like the second world whose contradictions with the first world could be exploited to counterbalance the latter, the United States could be a force of the united international front in opposition to the archenemy, the Soviet Union. Thus in spite of their fundamental differences in ideology, social values, and political and economic systems, China found grave common concerns with the United States on a wide range of international issues such as the Soviet military incursion into Asia and Europe, the Soviet support for the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia, and Soviet strategic ambitions in Afghanistan and the Persian Gulf. As the United States took "the China connection"as a cornerstone in her global strategy, China considered "the American connection" a powerful guarantee of her security. As Huan Xiang, the late director of China's strategic centre, explained, the

---

[6] see Beijing Review Feb. 16, 1979. p. 18.

gist of China's three world strategy, as it entered the late 1970s, had been that

> Soviet social-imperialism is pushing a hegemonist policy of aggression and expansion and its spearhead is directed not only to the third World, and at the group of industrialized nations, primarily Japan and Western Europe[the second world] but more importantly right at the United States... and for the sake of safe-guarding world peace, all the countries and people opposed to Soviet expansion should united and wage a tit-for-tat struggle against Soviet hegemonism."[7]

The United States As A Source Of Modernization

Paralleling her security and political concerns, there was another calculation that drove China toward cooperation with the United States: the desire for modernization. In contrast with the radicals, the so-called Gang of Four, who put ideological advancement ahead of everything else, the reform-minded leadership that came into power after Mao Tsetung's death took economic development as the priority of their administration. At the Eleventh Party Congress, Hua Guofeng, then chairman of the party, declared,

> We must build up an independent and fairly comprehensive industrial and economic system in our country by 1980. By then, farming must be basically mechanized,considerable increases in production must be made in agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, side line production and fishery... [To realize this goal, China must] learn the strong points of all nations and countries, to learn from them all that is truly good in politics, economics, military affairs, science, technology, literature and arts.[8]

---

[7] Huan Xinag "On Sino-US Relations" in Foreign Affairs Fall/1981.pp.35-53.

[8] Hua Guofeng, "Political Report To the 11th National Congress of the CCP" Peking Review August 26,1977, p.50.

At the first mention of this program, it might sound strange to casual observers of Chinese politics and indeed to some Chinese themselves that China, a country so much possessed by desires to change the international status quo, would open herself up and embark on economic cooperation with the West. The fact is, however, that since modernization is a major indicator of power status and the world view of the Chinese people is such as described before, modernization had always been one of the central concerns to the Chinese leadership. As a matter of fact, the politics of modern China since 1949 had focused primarily, although not exclusively, on how China could be transformed as rapidly as possible into an industrialized nation, equal to nations on the forefront of technological development. As early as when the first Constitution of the PRC was drafted, Mao Tsetung had declared,

> Our general objective is to strive to build a great socialist country...How long will it take to accomplish socialist industrialization and the socialist transformation and mechanization of agriculture and make China a great socialist country? We won't set a rigid time limit now. It will probably take a period of three five-year plans, or fifteen years, to lay the foundation. I think for us to build a great socialist country, about fifty years, or even ten five-year plans, will probably be enough...[9]

The plan was not put into implementation for two reasons. On the one hand, there was a lack of unity among the leaders about

---

[9] Mao Tsetung "On the Draft Constitution of the People's Republic of China, June 14,1954" Selected Works Vol. V (Peking: foreign Language Press, 1977) pp.141-2

the relationship between self-reliance and open-door strategy. Policies and programs for modernization vacillated from one model to another, resulting in a long period of inaction. On the other hand, the threatening international environment did not foster a congenial climate for China to undertake modernization programs. Rather than concentrating on economic construction, China had to devote her major attention to gathering the support of the third world to break out of the diplomatic encirclement imposed by the superpowers.

The improvement of Sino-US relations and the fall of the Gang of Four ushered China into "a new historical period." In the first place, the United States' cooperation with China on international issues relieved China of her preoccupation with security matters. With the Soviet Union continuing to be China's major threat and at the same time NATO's major antagonist, the strategic force of the United States and her allies was a de facto deterrent to the Soviet expansion to Asia. The Soviet Union could not attack China without transferring some of her forces from Europe to Asia. This had been made impossible by the constraints of the United States. Secondly, China's leadership had achieved relative unity in their views on the relationships between superstructure and economic foundations, and between international position and domestic development. Both Hua Guofeng and Deng Xiaoping frankly admitted that China was lagging behind some of the advanced countries, such as the United States, by as

much as fifty years,[10] and that to catch up China needed both to learn from the advanced nations and to develop her own scientific capacities. In short, as Michael Oksenberg observed, the reform-minded leadership had three new visions about the contemporary internatonal situation which he termed as "confident nationalism".[11] First, they believed that the international status of a nation would ultimately depend on her comprehensive national capability and economic development in particular; second, they believed that the current international setting permitted China to concentrate on her domestic construction; and third, they believed that China could benefit from effective participation in the international economic system and her modernization needed the positive cooperation of the West.

Different environments posed different opportunities for China, and, to be sure, different objectives would also require different strategies and tactics.[12] In this schematic design, it is quite clear, particularly when looked at from the economic and technical point of view, what role China was going to assign respectively to the third world, the second world and the first

---

[10] C.H.G.Oldham "Science and Technological Policies" China's Developmental Experience, Michael Oksenberg, ed. (Praeger:NY,1973) pp.80-94.

[11]Michael Oksenberg "China's Confident Nationalism" in Foreign Affairs winter/1986.p.156.

[12] Classical scholars such as Rousseau and Grotius argue that because "actors touch each other at so many points" their behaviours could be understood as a complex pattern of action/reaction in which individual acts serve as feedback for targets---Ferguson.p.194.

world. Two reasons are obvious why China would have to adjust her previous posture toward them. One is that a corollary of the four modernization program is a recognition of China's technological backwardness. To improve that situation, China had to undertake scientific exchange programs to train her scientists abroad to raise the level of scientific knowledge at home. She would also have to import large quantities of advanced industrial techniques and to transfer the most advanced technologies. As her practice in the following years indicates, a major part of China's strategy was to open joint research projects and to purchase complete industrial plants from abroad, the so-called "turn-key" projects. Given the fact that advanced technology was almost monopolized in the United States, Western Europe and Japan, these countries would certainly draw more and more attention from China's policy makers. In fact, Japan, the United States, and Western Europe have been for years China's three largest trade partners.

Secondly, the program called for an intimate political relationship with the United States. Although the world order was moving increasingly into multipolarity, the United States was still the political, economic and military leader of the West. It ran the biggest economy, possessed the most advanced technology, and above all remained the strongest member, if not the leader, of the "Group of Seven", the GATT, the Paris Organization, and the World Bank, etc.. To some extent she influenced the decisions of other Western nations. If China was to have the

economic and technical cooperation of the West, she must first obtain the political endorsement of the United States.

All these factors, on the other hand, considerably downplayed the political role of the third world in China's global strategy. Although the third world was still professed in China's policy pronouncements as the basic focus of China's overall foreign policy, for some time it had been, in fact, China's periphery concern. Obviously, the third world, with whom China had so far identified herself, could neither provide the technology and investment China's modernization program required, nor could China, upon whom third world countries had so far laid expectations, afford to divest herself any more to support them. In one instance of departure, China organized a commercial engineering company which was comprised of many former foreign-aid personnel to build bridges, water-supply projects, and railways in third world countries. As one article in the Beijing Review said, China had always supported the construction of the third world countries, but as China was going through economic adjustment herself, she had to reduce the scale of her international assistance.[13] The diminished importance of the third world in Chinese global policy was also evident in the sharp decline of the People's Daily's coverage of the NIEO, a conceptual and normative linkage between China and the third

[13]Beijing Review Feb.16,1986.

world in what Samuel Kim calls global ecopolitics.[14] The trend promised that as China's modernization program heightened in scale and her interactions with the Western countries increased, her relations with the third world would be increasingly restrained within the boundaries of moral support, if not a total reversal of her role from champion to competitor. In the view of Lilian C. Harris, China had already begun to face credibility problems with the third world countries and would probably be burdened by negative political implications in the long run as the developed countries had been in the past.[15]

---

[14] Samuel Kim "China and the third world in NIEO Politics" in Contemporary China 3, winter/1979.

[15] Lillian C. Harris China and the Third World:Champion or Challenger Auburn House: 1986. p.5.

Assessment

Now China is at another crossroad. After the Tiananmen Incident of 1989, the government of China is once again faced with diplomatic isolation. The Western industrialized countries, led by the Group of Seven, have declared that they would not resume normal relations with China unless her government continues to undertake political and economic liberalization. Thus, she is now fast caught in the dilemma of having to choose between giving up her communist ideology to go along with the world trend or to resist the West and be cut off from the international political and economic system. Just as when the communists came into power in 1949, China has again to answer the question of where to go.

In Beijing, the view has been that the diplomatic isolation, though damaging to China's international image, will not last long, because her large market is so attractive that computer and other industrial manufacturers will be compelled to come back into China. The dynamic Pacific Rim economies, in particular, with their large foreign exchange earnings and rising labour costs at home, will not be able to wait long before seeking outlets in China for their export industries and capital. Thus, as long as China remains receptive to such investment, the attempts at diplomatic isolation will not succeed. The priority

of China's current foreign policy, accordingly, is to sustain her diplomatic vitality by means of reviving diplomatic relations with the third world and to wait for opportunities to break the weak link in the Western line.

Evidence from the last two years suggests that China is retreading her past road of the three worlds. During the last two years, her president, premier and foreign minister have paid frequent visits to such countries as Pakistan, Burma, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Mexico, Paraguay, Chile, Argentina and so on. China has made initiatives to reestablish diplomatic relations with Indonesia and Singapore, and has also moved in the direction of normalizing relations with Vietnam, Laos and Cuba. Clearly, China is again hoping to use the third world as a source of diplomatic leeway and as a counter-point against the perceived Western attempts of diplomatic isolation.

Those attempts may in some degree ease her diplomatic difficulty as they have in the past, and, indeed, as business news from China on ventures by Japan's NEC and America's IBM and Boeing suggest, China may be succeeding on that score. The dilemma is, nevertheless, a fast knot. Unlike her struggles in the past, which were aimed to overthrow the international status quo of the time, she is now caught between the functional requirements of modernization, as defined in the mainstream thinking in the world's advanced capitalist countries, and the normative requirements of Marxism, which are the premise of her political existence. Because she had already attained the

international status she desired, and because she does not have the intention to upset the present international political and economic system, there does not exist the question of standing with one world against another. Instead, China knows very well what the USA MFN status, the World Bank loans, and the Japanese investment mean to her political and economic existence. For example, as soon as the G-7 made its political declaration in the November of 1989, Deng Xiaoping stressed to his subordinates that "China must return to the world stage."[1] These considerations will limit China's foreign behaviour to a very pragmatic design. Thus, while it is still not clear how China is going to clear the mud---what policies she is going to carry toward the third world and the industrialized capitalist countries---it is certain that her revived interest in the third world will not last long and that her principal thrust is again to regain her diplomatic status among the major countries of the world.

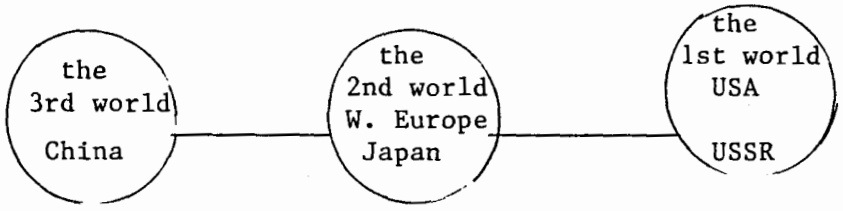
All in all, in spite of the current uncertainties in China's foreign policy behaviour, two conclusions may be safely drawn from the above analysis. One is that her foreign policy is built upon the premise of realpolitik, in spite of her value-laden rhetoric; the other is that her foreign policy undergoes constant shifts in order to better adjust to the external environment. During the first phase, from 1960 to 1970, the dominant value of China's global policy had been to break out of the diplomatic

---

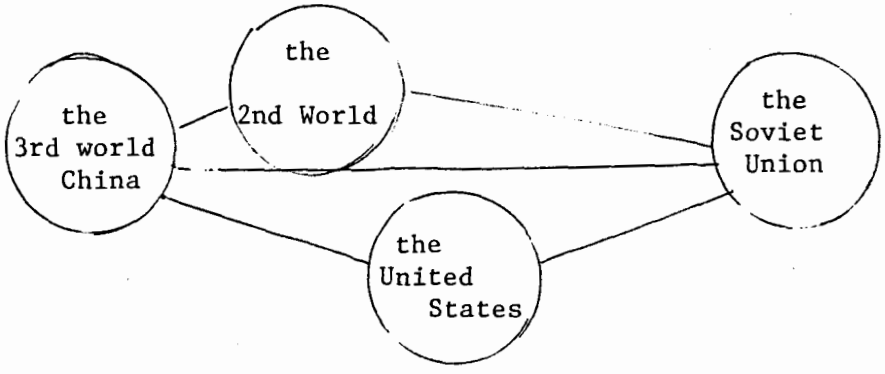
[1] The content of the talk was circulated within the government, but not published---author.

encirclement set by the first world and to increase her political influence in the international community. Being a much weaker nation, both in military power and economic capability, the three world strategy enabled China to make capital of her very weakness. By disclaiming any superpower ambitions and by championing the cause of the poor and the proud, she was able to form a grand coalition in opposition. The 1970s, however, saw China moving ambiguously back and forth between the three worlds. The triangular relationship with the two superpowers permitted her to play upon the persisting tensions and divisions between the United States and the Soviet Union and, with the support of her growing capability, to act as a balancer between the two competing powers. The 1980s saw China move further away from the third world and closer to the industrial West. In order to gain the advanced technology and capital investment her modernization program needed, she undertook all-out cooperation with the United States and other Western industrialized countries. And finally, in the last two years, when her relations with the West suffered decline and faced another diplomatic isolation, she again turned to the third world. The following diagrams show how China's relations with the three worlds have changed during the past forty years in light of the changes in the world's political situation.

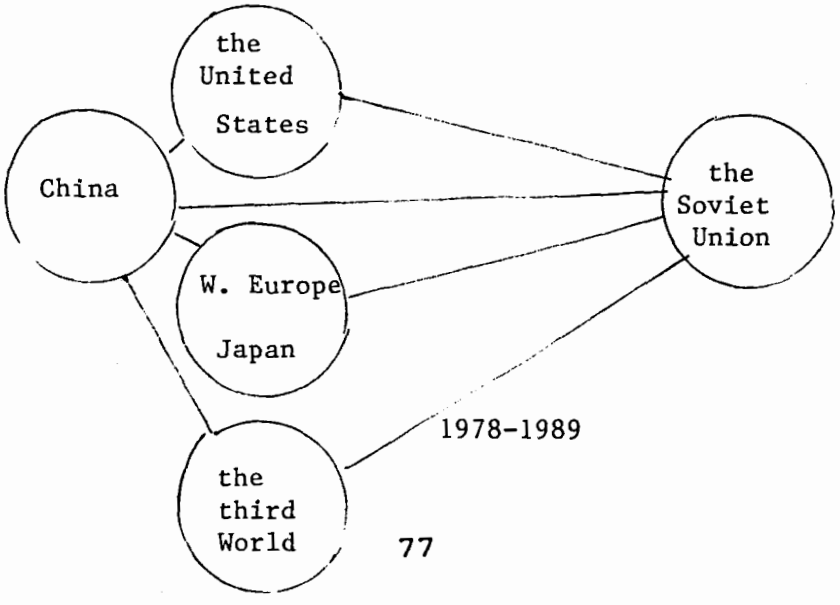
1949-1960



1964-1972



1972-1978



1978-1989

In every one of the above cases, by the very nature of the three world differentiation, China attempted and was often able to thwart the threatening options available to her antagonists. To put it more straightforwardly, in the game against the first world, the three world strategy allowed China to play the cards of the third and second worlds, and, in the game against her archenemy, she played the card of one superpower against the other. Neither the cooling of her attitude toward the third world nor the warming of her relations with the first and second worlds, therefore, indicates China's abandonment of the three world strategy. They merely suggest the different dimensions and dialectics along which the doctrine is operated in practice. Above all, it is not difficult to discern that the concerns with the third world and, to some extent the second world, at best have a secondary role to play in determining China's approach to foreign affairs. China's foreign policy is based primarily on her perceived need for stability, security, and development, a policy that depends chiefly on China's relations with the United States and the Soviet Union.

Selected Bibliography

Armstrong, J. D. "The United Front Doctrine and China's Foreign Policy" ANU Press 1975.
"Peking's foreign Policy: Perception and Change" Current Scene June 1973.

Bouc, Alain. "Peking Now Wants a United Europe" European Community No. 154. [Mar. 1972]

Bressi, G. "China and Western Europe" Asian Survey 12:819-45 O'72

Camelleri, Joseph. Chinese Foreign Policy University of Washington Press: Seattle 1980.

Cluub, O. E. Chinese and Russian:The Great Game NY: Columbia University Press, 1971.

Cohen, Ira S. Realpolitik, Theory and Practice Encino, Calif: Dickenson Pub. Co.:1975.

Copper, J. F. China's Global Role Stanford, Calif: Standford University Press, 1980.
Current Scene 15 nos 4-5 [April -May 1977]"National Conferences Focus On Economy".

Fairbank, J. K. The Chinese World Order: Traditional China's Foreign Relations Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968.

Feeney, William R. "Sino- Soviet Competition in the UN" Asian Survey Sept 1977.

Ford, Harold P. "Modern Weapons and the Sino-Soviet Estrangement" China Quarterly No. 18 [April-June 1964]

Geertz, C. "Ideology as a Cultural System" in D. E. Apter (ed.)Ideology and Discontent London: Free Press Of Glenocoe, 1964.

Gelber, H. Nuclear Weapons and Chinese Policy Adelphi Paper No. 99. International Institute For Strategic Studies, London. 1973.
Technology, Defense and External relations in China Boulder: Westview Press, 1979

Gittings, John. Survey of the Sino-Soviet Dispute London: Oxford University Press, 1968.
"China's Foreign Policy: Continuity or Change" Journal of Contemporary Asia Vol. 2. No.1.
"The Great Power Triangle and the Chinese foreign Policy" China quarterly July/Sept.1967.

Halperin, Morton H. China and the Bomb NY: Praeger, 1965.

Harding, Harry Jr."China After Mao"Problem of Communism 26 March-April 1977.

Harris, Lillian Craig. China and the Third World :Champion or Challenger Auburn House:1986.

Herz, J.H. Political Realism and Political Idealism Chicago: Chicago University Press. 1951.

Hinton, Harold C. China on the World Stage Macmillan 1966.
The Bear At The Gate: Chinese Policy Making Under Soviet Pressure American Enterprise Institute, 1971.
"Conflict On the Ussuri: A Clash of Nationalism" Problem of Communism 20 Nos. 1-2, [Jan-April 1971].

Holsti, O.R. Unity and Disintegration In International Alliances NY: Wiley Co. 1973.

Horvath, J. Technology Transfers To Third World NY: Praeger, 1976.

Hsiao, G.T. Sino-American Detente and Its Policy Implications Praeger, 1974.
"Prospect For A New Sino-Japanese Relationship" China Quarterly No.60, 1974.
"Sino-Japanese Repproachment:A Relationship of Ambivalence" China quarterly no 57:101-23 Ja '74

Hsiuh, Alice Langley. Communist China's Strategy in the Nuclear Era NJ: Prentice-Hall Press 1962.

Hsiung,J.C. China in the Global Community NY: Praeger:1980.

Huck, A. The Security of China NY: Columbia University Press.1970.
The Military Balance London: International Institute For Strategic Studies: 1978

Ito, Kikuozo. "The Dilemma of Mao Tsetung" China Quarterly No. 35. 1968.

Jansen, G. H. Afro-Asia and Non-Alignment London: Faber 1966.

Kahin, George McT. The Asian-African Conference Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1956.

Kalicki, J. The Pattern of Sino-American Crisis Cambridge Press 1975.

Kapur, Harish. China and the EEC Boston:M. Nijhoff Publishers. 1986

Khrushechev, Nikita. Khrushchev Remembers Boston: Little, Brown. 1970.

Kim, Samuel S. "Behavioural Dimensions of Chinese Multilateral Diplomacy" China Quarterly No.72.

Larkin, Bruce D. China and Africa 1949-1970--The Foreign Policy of PRC Berkeley University of California Press. 1971.

Lenart, E. "Peking Puts On a French Accent On Unity" Far E Econ R 88:20 My 30 '75

Levi, Werner. "Ideology, Interest and Foreign Policy" International Studies Quarterly Vol. 14, No.1. 1970. pp.1-31.

Li, Wei-han. "The Characteristics of the Chinese People's United Front" Red Flag No.12, June 16,1961.

Liu, Shao-chi. On Nationalism and Internationalism Peking: Foreign Languages Press. 1951.

Liu, Melinda. "China Stops to Rethink Its Development Priorities" Far Eastern Economic Review 103, No.11 [16 March 1979].

MacFarqhar, Roderick. Sino- American Relations NY: Praeger 1972.

Mao, Tsetung. "Revolutionary Forces of the World Unite", Selected Works Vol. IV.
"On the People's Democratic Dictatorship" 30 June 1940. Selected Works vol.IV.
"On Contradiction" Selected Works Vol. 1, Peking:1969.
"On Tactics Against Japanese Imperialism" Selected Works Vol.1.
"Urgent Tasks Following the Establishment of Kuomintang-Communist Cooperation" Selected Works Vol. 2.
"Concentrate a Superior Force To Destroy the Enemy Force One By One" Selected Works Vol. 2. Peking:1965.

McCutcheon, J.M. "Tremblingly Obey:British and Other Western Responses to China" Historian 33:557-77 Ag'71

Morgan, P.M. Theories and Approaches to International Politics New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Books. 1987

Morganthau, H.J. In Defense of the National Interest" New York,1951.
Politics Among Nations NY. 1966.

Peking Review No. 6, 1968. "What Kosygin Was Up To In India".
No. 8, [1968] "The Soviet Revisionist Clique is the Vicious Enemy of the Asian People and Japanese Militarist Yes-men".
No.32, [1968] "The Americans, Russians and others were intensifying the encirclement".
No.29, [1969] "Trap is the Word for So-called "Asian Collective Security System".
No.37, [1969] "Another Step In New Tsars' Expansion: The so-called Asian Collective Security System".
No.45, [1977] "Chairman Mao's Theory of the differentiation of the Three Worlds".
No.27, [1975] "Soviet Social-Imperialism---Most Dangerous Source of world War".
No. 12 [1976] "Soviet Social Imperialism is the Root cause of Unrest in South Asia."
No.24 [1960] "Form a broad United Front to Defeat Imperialism".
No.30 [1973] "Hegemony Cannot Decide the Destiny of World History".
10 Jan. 1975 "Rise of The Third World and Decline of Hegemonism".
Nov.1,1974. "The Third world : The great Motive Force in advancing World History".

Beijing Review 13 June 1969."Soviet Revisionism Heavily Besieged By Soviet And World Revolutionary People".

Economists 248:50 S 15'73. "Pompidou Heads the Queue".

Problems of Communism March/April 1958. "Ideology and Power Power Politics: a Symposium".

"Rivals"[Symposium] Far E Econ R 88:22-30 Je 13 '75

Rivera, Joseph de. The Psychological Dimension of Foreign Policy Ohio:Charles E Merrill Pub. Co., 1968.

Robinson, T. W. "View From Peking:China's Policies Toward the US,Soviet Union and Japan" Pacific Affairs 45:333-55 Fall'72

Rosenau, James N. ed. Linkage Politics NY: Free Press. 1969.

Schram, S. R. The Political Thought of Mao Tsetung Penguin Books 1969.

Schwartz, Benjamin I. Ideology in Flux Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1968.

Shih Chieh Chih Shis(Beijing) 6 June 1956. "Western European Countries Demand Peaceful Coexistence"

Slyke, L. P. Van. Enemy and Friends:The United Front in Chinese Communist History Stanford, 1967.

Scalapino, R. A."Sino-Soviet competition in Africa Foreign Affairs July 1964.pp.640-654.

Strong, Anna Louise. "The Thought of Mao Tsetung On Intermediate Zone Amerasia 11. No. 6 [June 1947]

Sun Tzu (6th B.C.) Art of War translated and with an introduction by Samuel B. griffith. London: Oxford University Press. 1963.

Ukraintsev, M. "Asia and the Peking Empire builders" New Times [Moscow] June 9, 1970.

Wang, G.C. "Chinese Society and Chinese Foreign Policy" International Affairs 48:616-24 O'72

Wang,Gungwu. China and the World Since 1949: the Impact of Indepence NY: St Martin's. 1977

Weng, Byron S. Peking's UN policy:Diversity and Change NY:Praeger. 1972

Whitson, William W. "China's Quest For Technology" Prolems of Communism July-August 1973.

Whiting, Allen S. The Chinese Calculus of Deterrence Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. 1975.
"Contradiction in the Moscow-Peking Axis" The Journal of Politics 20 No.1, Feb. 1958.
China's Future Mcgraw-Hall Book Company:NY. 1977

Wilcox, Francis O. China and the Great Powers: Relations with US, the Soviet Union and Japan NY: Pareger, 1974.

Wilson, Dick. "China and the European Community" China Quarterly No.56.1973. pp. 647-666.

Wilson, Ian. China and the World Community Augus and Robertson, 1973.

Yahuda, Michael R. China's role in World Affairs NY: St Martin's Press.1978.