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OFFICIAL IDEOLOGY IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF
CHINA - EVOLUTION AND IMPACT ON FOREIGN POLICY

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June 1998

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EVOLUTION AND IMPACT ON FOREIGN POLICY**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

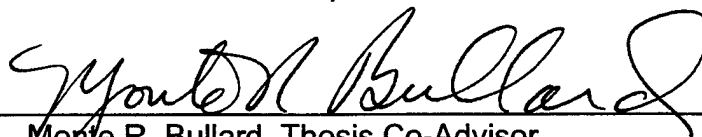
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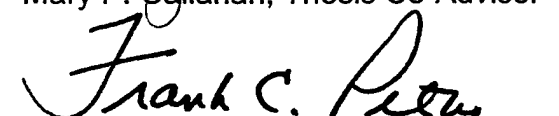
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ABSTRACT

After the demise of Soviet communism, the People's Republic of China (PRC) is often considered an anachronism and relic of a failed philosophy and system. Moreover, Chinese leaders are assumed to be abandoning their communist roots in all but official rhetoric as the country pursues economic modernization. In fact, the Chinese form of communism has evolved significantly. Struggle has given way to stability, austerity to prosperity, and hostility to peaceful co-existence. This transition has had tremendous ramifications for PRC foreign and security policies. What was once a highly articulated and systematic ideology, providing a distinct and accurate guide to policy choices in the international arena, has become more akin to a set of general principles to guide behavior in an increasingly complex system. This thesis asserts, however, that while many of the specific tenets of Maoism have fallen to the wayside or been modified, many of the concepts, language, and *thought processes* of Chinese communism continue to form the thinking of Chinese policy-makers, thus they interpret and justify foreign policy choices in ideological terms. Consequently, ideology is more relevant to political processes in China than is commonly recognized.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the post-Cold War era, communism as an "ideological force" is considered significantly diminished, if not eliminated, as a threat to U.S. security interests. In fact, some scholars suggest that ideology, depending on how the term is defined, is on the decline as a motivating force for revolution (or even less radical change). Yet the world's most populous country continues to embrace a form of communism as *official*, or formal, ideology. The recent official exaltation of Deng Xiaoping Theory by the 15th Party Congress, while expanding and accelerating economic reform, does not abandon the Four Cardinal Principles. These principles, adopted in the late 1970s under Deng Xiaoping's leadership, stress that all policies must be in conformity with: (1) Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, (2) the socialist road, (3) continuation of the people's democratic dictatorship, and (4) absolute political dominance by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

However, apparent contradictions between official ideology and policy decisions in many areas are seen as eroding the political legitimacy of the Party and foretelling a Chinese future reminiscent of the collapse of Soviet communism. In fact, official ideology has *evolved* to such an extent that present efforts to build a modern "socialist market economy" (socialism with Chinese characteristics) and relate peacefully to the international community are hardly contrary to ideology at all. With respect to those concepts most crucial to foreign and security policy, Beijing has officially rejected its simplistic view of an inherently hostile world consisting of "two camps" or "three worlds." Instead, it recognizes the international system as increasingly complex but perceives it as the most potentially peaceful the country has ever faced. It has rejected autarky for greater integration into world global regimes. And just as importantly, primary domestic goals of struggle and austerity have been rejected in favor of stability and prosperity.

Central to an understanding of this evolution, however, and potentially the most enduring aspect of the Marxist legacy in China, is the cognitive processes which have provided the framework for this ideological change. Far from rendering official ideology irrelevant, the Chinese application of the dialectical reasoning process encourages an ideological dynamism which permits the rejection of "practical" ideology that has been proven unsuitable. And not only has it evolved, but official ideology has also assumed a different role in the PRC. Official ideology now provides the general parameters, or principles, for governmental policies rather than providing rigid "templates" to which policies must conform.

While the substance and role of official ideology has changed, it has always influenced People's Republic of China (PRC) foreign and security policies. The case study concludes that in the early years of the PRC, ideology provided relatively clear-cut policy choices and served as a linking mechanism with the rest of the communist world, but that over time Maoist dogma proved to be unsuitable for China's long-term prospects. Yet for all its flexibility, the challenges of a highly dynamic international system, along with those of maintaining internal political stability and accommodating the rising forces of nationalism, official ideology has begun to constrain the PRC's ability to adapt.

Finally, the thesis explores prospects for further ideological development and considerations for U.S. China Policy over the short and long term. It concludes that the CCP leadership is still grappling with the principal contradictions of dogma versus pragmatism, China's role in the community of nations, and pluralism versus Leninism. The eventual synthesis of these contradictions will set the course for PRC relations with the international community and ultimately influence regional, and even global, stability.

I. INTRODUCTION

I have been the whole day without eating, and the whole night without sleeping – occupied with thinking. It was of no use. A better plan is to learn.
Confucian Analects

A. BACKGROUND

In the post-Cold War era, communism as an "ideological force" is widely considered diminished, if not eliminated, as a threat to U.S. security interests. In fact, some scholars suggest that ideology, depending on how the term is defined, is on the decline as a motivating force for revolution or even less radical change. Yet, the world's most populous country continues to embrace a form of communism as the *official*, or formal, ideology of the state and ruling party. The recent official embrace by the 15th Party Congress of Deng Xiaoping Theory, which exalts socialism and Communist Party leadership, even while expanding and accelerating economic reform, indicates that the People's Republic of China (PRC) has not abandoned this ideology.

There are, however, serious questions over apparent contradictions in official ideology and policy decisions in many areas. Experimentation with broadened forms of property ownership, such as corporate shareholding arrangements, and increased privatization of larger sectors of the economy suggest market forces are becoming relatively more important in the planned economy as China focuses upon modernization. Since the reform period began in 1978, many argue that official Party ideology has become increasingly irrelevant as a source for the future direction of society. The Party leadership is criticized as having no clear vision of the shape of the long-term future, apart from insisting that it will reflect "socialism with Chinese characteristics." In fact, former Party general secretary Zhao Ziyang was once quoted as saying that the process of rule through Party ideology is analogous to that of using stepping stones to cross a river, one step at a time, but it is never clear as to what one will

find on the opposite bank.¹ Chinese intellectuals speak today of a *sixiang weiji* (crisis of ideology) and a *jingshen weiji* (spiritual crisis).²

Conversely, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) remains in firm control of political processes and at the time of the 15th National Party Congress in 1997, the membership of the CCP stood at 58 million; 9.92 million more than at the time of the 14th National Party Congress in 1992. More than 43 percent of members had an educational background above that of senior high school, some 20 percent were women, and over 22 percent were below the age of 35.³ What this growth suggests for continued CCP's rule and implications for future ideological developments are important issues for this thesis.

B. RESEARCH QUESTION

In spite of the contemporary crisis, ideology is reputed to have been a powerful and pervasive influence in every aspect of Chinese life with Mao Zedong at the helm of the CCP. Is it really as irrelevant today as most observers suggest? This question must begin with an exploration of how official ideology in the PRC has evolved since the communist victory in 1949. Specifically, what is the nature of contemporary official ideology in the PRC? Further, to what extent has official ideology influenced Chinese foreign and security policy decisions in the past? Does official ideology propel the PRC toward greater international cooperation, isolation or confrontation?

I hypothesize that official ideology continues to shape the views of Chinese policy makers to a greater extent than most observers realize. More specifically, this study will affirm that while major tenets of official ideology have been re-evaluated, certain dogmatic elements remain important. And perhaps more importantly, the cognitive processes embedded in Chinese Communist

¹ Cited in Peter Ferdinand, "Social Change and the Chinese Communist Party: Domestic Problems of Rule," *Journal of International Affairs*, 49, no. 2 (Winter 1996): 479.

² Perry Link, "China's Core Problem," in *China in Transformation*, ed. Tu Wei-ming (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), 192.

³ Robert F. Ash, "Quarterly Chronicle and Documentation: July-September 1997," *The China Quarterly* (December 1997): 913.

philosophy have remained central in the decision-making processes of PRC leaders and thus continue to shape the direction of further change. Finally, many of the ideas brought to the foreign policy arena by the leaders of the PRC are derived from the ideology of Marxism-Leninism.

C. ORGANIZATION AND METHODOLOGY

The central research question will first be placed within a theoretical framework by exploring the origin and meaning of relevant political science concepts and the applicability of several policy-making models. With this foundation, the thesis turns to an historical examination of what Mao might refer to as the "dialectical interaction of theory and practice" by assessing the evolution of official CCP ideology to its current amalgam of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought-Deng Xiaoping Theory. More specifically, the evolution of the key concepts which have guided Chinese foreign and security policy processes will be identified and traced. The research will draw primarily upon the writings and speeches of China's "core leader" as a gauge of the Party's ideological perspective. This study will focus upon the "sinification" of Marxism-Leninism and its influence on foreign policy under Mao, the evolution of Deng Xiaoping Theory, and the increasing importance of nationalism to the "Third Generation" of communist leadership.

Chapter III will employ a longitudinal single case analysis to explore the relevance of ideology in PRC foreign and security policy-making processes since 1949. While it is possible to evaluate ideological influence on the evolution of policy in a number of areas, such as agriculture, science and technology, public health, or energy, the focus of this thesis is upon the foreign policy processes for several reasons. First, as a military officer, I am interested in the evolution of critical factors that influence foreign policy decisions and consequently the likelihood of military conflict. Second, authority over the foreign policy process is still considered highly centralized in China, unlike several other areas of public policy. This argument, as well as the next, will be developed more fully below.

Finally, the foreign policy process should prove more suitable than domestic policy processes for an analysis of this nature as it is relatively less affected by elite power politics and bureaucratic structure. These characteristics should allow a more definitive conclusion regarding the influence of official ideology, which approximates the independent variable on the outcome of several specific PRC policy decisions.

The longitudinal study will examine four significant Chinese foreign policy decisions in an attempt to determine the extent to which ideology played a role. The study relies upon content analysis of primary source material available through the Foreign Broadcast Information System (FBIS) and other translated official Chinese documents, periodicals, and speeches to identify prominent trends in ideological concepts likely to have influenced the policy process. Secondary source information is also employed to reinforce and broaden interpretations. Finally, Chapter IV considers prospects for further ideological development in the PRC and implications for its external relations. Chapter V concludes the thesis.

D. DEFINING KEY CONCEPTS

The concept central to this thesis, and therefore, requiring definition is "ideology." In political science literature, "ideology" appears as difficult to define as "democracy." In fact, it appears that political scientists are unable even to agree on whether ideology is a positive, negative or neutral feature of modern society. This debate will not be settled here. However, a definition must be arrived at before continuing.

In his comprehensive model addressing foreign policy processes, Joseph Frankel explores several definitions of ideology. One attempt is "a system of political, economic, and social values and ideas from which objectives are derived." This approach would likely incorporate the totality of what Steven

Levine defines as "formal" and "informal" ideology.⁴ The concept of informal ideology draws upon the anthropological notion of culture as ideology and considers the complex of cultural values, preferences, prejudices, predispositions, habits, and unstated but widely shared propositions about reality that condition the way in which political actors behave. In this sense, ideology is not a system of thought decision-makers choose, but something bestowed upon them by historical-cultural inheritance. This cognitive process is certainly interesting and highly relevant to political processes in China, but the focus of this study is formal ideology, at least until the prospects for future ideological development and their influence on PRC international behavior are considered. Accordingly, a definition more relevant to this study is:

An action program derived from certain doctrinal assumptions about the nature of reality, and expressed through certain stated, *not overly complex*, assertions about the inadequacy of the past or present state of affairs. Those assertions include an explicit *guide to action* outlining methods for changing the situation, with some general, *idealized notions about the eventual state of affairs*.⁵

Even though the concept has evolved and there are points of contention, this definition appears to possess the major elements most scholars associate with ideology. An excellent summary is also provided by Leon Baradat:⁶

- Ideology is foremost a political term, though it can be applied in other contexts.
- Every ideology consists of a view of the present and a vision of the future usually expressed in materialistic terms.
- Ideology is action oriented.

⁴ Steven I. Levine, "Perceptions and Ideology in Chinese Foreign Policy," in *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, eds. Thomas W. Robinson and David Shambaugh (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 33.

⁵ Joseph Frankel, *The Making of Foreign Policy: An Analysis of Decision-Making* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 121.

⁶ Leon P. Baradat, *Political Ideologies: Their Origins and Impact* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1979), 30.

- Ideology is intended to mobilize a large number of people.
- Ideologies are normally expressed in fairly simplistic and motivational terms.

As a final note on this concept, Levine argues that as China approaches 50 years of CCP rule, it is inevitable that the two aspects of ideology become less distinct. This proposition is supported by John Bryan Starr, who posits that in a "post-revolutionary system," ideology relates to culture as thesis relates to antithesis. The result of this relationship over the course of time is an altered ideology as well as an altered culture.⁷ Chapter IV returns to the implications of this relationship when considering prospects for China's future.

Another important concept which must be defined to delineate the scope of inquiry is "foreign policy." Accordingly, James Dougherty defines foreign policy as "the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of external choices *within* one country, viewed from the perspective of that country."⁸ Consequently, the study does not linger upon the various theories which address the nature of the international system except as necessary to consider systemic influence on Chinese strategic thought in specific instances. This is not to deny the significant linkages between international relations and domestic politics, but rather to acknowledge the former embraces "more than the aggregate of two or more national foreign policies." In other words, international relations theory focuses more upon the larger interactive processes between states while this study focuses on factors internal to the Chinese political process, specifically official ideology, which influence the perspective of PRC policy-makers.

E. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Before turning to the substantive issues of this study, it is necessary to place the research question within a more structured theoretical framework. Are

⁷ John Bryan Starr, *Ideology and Culture: An Introduction to the Dialectic of Contemporary Chinese Politics* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), 43.

⁸ James E. Dougherty and Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr., *Contending Theories of International Relations* (New York: Harper & Row, 1981), 19.

there theories or models, for example, which suggest that ideology can be expected to influence the policy-maker? If so, how does it influence the policy-maker, and specifically in the Chinese context?

There is certainly no shortage of scholarly literature which explores policy-making processes in general, and foreign policy processes as a subset of this phenomena. Moreover, efforts at better defining the nature of the Chinese policy-making system have become increasingly important for "sinologists." Kenneth Lieberthal, a noted China scholar, for example, explores the application of "rationality" and "power" models to Chinese policy-making before offering his own "bureaucratic structure" model which emphasizes the importance of formal structures.⁹ This approach, or variations thereof, seem increasingly common in contemporary China studies. "Bureaucratic authoritarianism," borrowed from conceptualizations of South American politics, is a similar approach used to emphasize the retention of ultimate, unlimited authority by the central party state with the highest power concentrated in the hands of a few individuals, or even one.¹⁰ Yet the applicability of many of these models appears more appropriate to the analysis of economic policy making and is of lesser use in Chinese foreign and security policy studies.

An analytical model which overcomes this weakness is the *micro-macro linkage approach*.¹¹ Employed by Quansheng Zhao in his analysis of the Chinese foreign policy, this model explores these processes on several dimensions. At the macro level, the model considers international system and structure as well as domestic social and other internal institutions. More pertinent to my thesis, however, is the exploration of the micro level, defined as "decision-makers," whether individuals or small groups, and the factors which

⁹ Kenneth Lieberthal and Michel Oksenberg, *Policy Making in China: Leaders, Structures, and Processes* (Princeton: NJ, Princeton University Press, 1988), 16.

¹⁰ Carol Lee Hamrin and Suisheng Zhao, eds., *Decision-Making in Deng's China: Perspectives From Insiders* (Armonk, NY: East Gate Books, 1995), xxv.

¹¹ Quansheng Zhao, *Interpreting Chinese Foreign Policy: The Micro-Macro Linkage Approach* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 23.

influence their interpretation of the internal and external environments. Policy decisions are considered "outputs" resulting from the complex interaction between the micro and macro levels as seen in Figure 1.

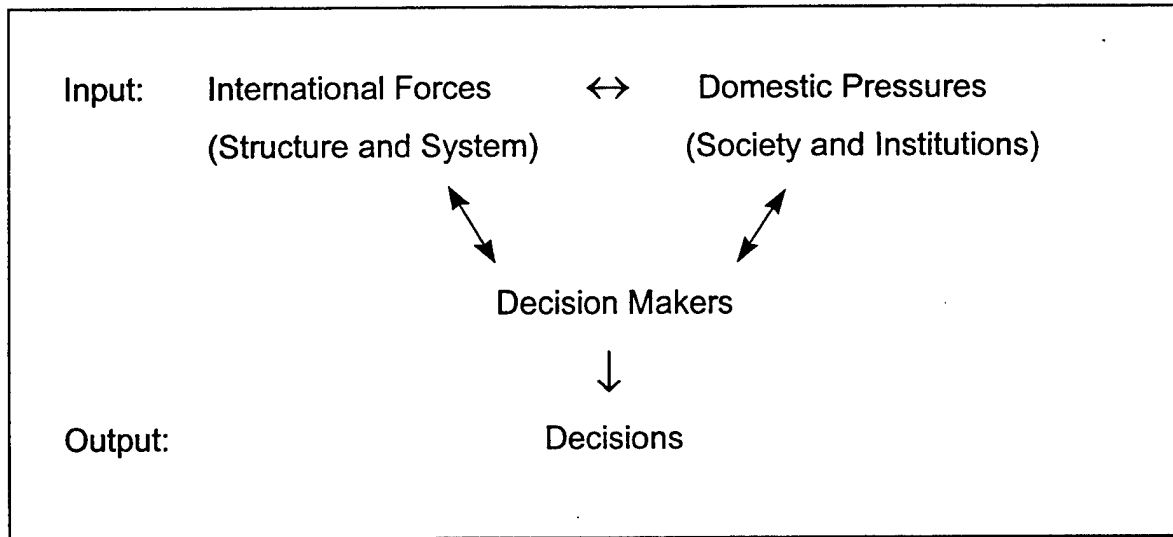


Figure 1. A Micro-Macro Model

The micro-macro linkage approach proposes that neither macrostructure, nor decision-makers at the micro level, have complete control over the state's policy processes, but that the level of influence is relative depending upon the policy arena. For example, in areas such as economic, urban, or energy resource development, policy-making has become increasingly decentralized and bureaucratized in response to the complexity of these concerns and to improve efficiency.

In other policy areas, however, and even in the wake of the political and economic reforms since 1978, the Chinese political system and decision-making processes have remained fundamentally authoritarian in nature. Moreover, this characteristic is particularly noticeable in the formulation of foreign and security policy, which continues to be highly centralized and personalized and lacks

institutionalization. The model submits, for example, that "foreign policy is directed by and highly reflective of either one individual's or a certain set of individual's perceptions, tendencies, and preferences."¹² Therefore, efforts to understand Chinese foreign and security policy processes require a balanced approach with attention to individuals at the center as well as analysis of systemic and institutional factors. It is at the micro-level that ideology is perhaps most critical, influencing policy-makers perceptions, priorities, and preferences.

Affirming the validity of this model, Frankel argues that policy-makers are influenced by both an "external" and "internal" setting.¹³ The external setting includes the state's geopolitical position within the global setting and all relevant inter-state relationships. The internal setting includes the whole structure of the state's political and social system. While recognizing the interrelationship of these variables, Frankel gives emphasis to the internal setting and its influence. After all, he suggests, this environment largely determines the perspective, or "world-view," of individuals. Decision-makers, he logically posits, naturally internalize their societies values through partaking in the national culture and characteristics, and through being constantly exposed to influences and pressures in the play of domestic politics.¹⁴ Further, within any society are "reference groups" with whom decision-makers identify most closely and whose values they also internalize.¹⁵ This latter influence appears to approximate the ideological indoctrination attributed to communist regimes.

Ultimately Frankel's model embraces an interaction, or fusion, of environment with an element existing within the decision-maker. He explains that:

¹² Ibid., 79.

¹³ Frankel, 72.

¹⁴ Ibid., 71.

¹⁵ Ibid., 119.

Many terms are employed to denote this inner element: ideologies, doctrines, values and valuations, utilities, policies, commitments, goals, objectives, purposes, ends, programmes, interests or the national good, aims, principles, ethos, the way of life, etc.¹⁶

Echoing Frankel's emphasis upon value-systems, Steven Levine argues that Chinese leaders, like policy-makers everywhere, bring to their encounters with the complexities of foreign affairs sets of presumptions, values, expectations, preferences, and operating assumptions that derive from three sources. First is their socialization into a particular culture at a particular period in time or informal ideology. Second is their unique experiences as individuals and shared experiences as members of a group. Third is their conscious choices as thinking political actors from the menu of values, systems of thought, and so forth that are available to them. Each person is not only influenced by experience, but also actively creates a persona as a political actor through an ongoing process of conscious choice. Through this process of creation and self-creation, foreign policy actors acquire a particular *Weltanschauung* or ideologically-based world view.¹⁷ This view of political reality, whether simple and intuitive or highly complex and formally articulated, structures the policy-maker's environment for choice, informs his consideration of various courses of action, and provides rationalizations for the choices that are made.

These theories and concepts underscore the importance of both ideological and systemic factors to the internal processes of the decision-maker. The following considerations also urge continued evaluation of ideological developments in the PRC:

- Official ideology played and continues to play a significant role in the political, economic, and social *organization* of the PRC. This organization remains fundamentally Leninist and informs communications, reasoning, political-social structure, and population controls. Franz Schurmann argues that ideology, Party association,

¹⁶ Ibid., 111.

¹⁷ Levine, 33.

and the Party "cadre" have become the core elements in modern Chinese society.¹⁸

- While tempting to scorn CCP leadership's continued trumpet of ideology as fanciful, and even hypocritical, a more objective view acknowledges the political necessity of this behavior. Abandoning the ideology, which has provided the pillars of the Revolution, government, and social discourse for the past fifty years, would only further undermine whatever political legitimacy the Party possesses. Official ideology must be upheld and fine-tuned – to do otherwise would be detrimental to regime survival.
- While the CCP's track record has included some spectacular failures and disasters, its overall record as perceived by the general population has been one of great success.¹⁹ The Party is seen as having led the country from chaos and transformed it into a powerful nation-state. Its leadership, especially during the last two decades, has made China one of the most dynamic countries in the latter half of the twentieth century. The success of modernization and reform policies have added legitimacy and staying power to the Party, though a serious economic downturn could negate this trend. Thus, we need to be more familiar with its evolving official ideology.

Accordingly, this thesis explores the evolution of key ideological concepts which have shaped the Chinese world-view, and therefore the international behavior, of PRC leadership.

¹⁸ Franz Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 7-8.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 1.

II. FROM REVOLUTION TO REFORM – CHINA'S EVOLVING IDEOLOGY

This chapter focuses upon the *content* of Chinese ideology, and how it has evolved since 1949, as drawn primarily from the writings and speeches of the "core leader." Specifically, the focus is upon the premier leader's perception and portrayal of the key attributes of the domestic and international environments, as well as China's global role and strategic goals. While this viewpoint does not represent all aspects of official Chinese ideology, it generally serves as an excellent indicator of the consensus among senior leaders toward the major operating environments which influence foreign and security policy.

It is difficult to analyze any aspect of Chinese politics without being instantly drawn to the stark contrast associated with the change in leadership from Mao Zedong to Deng Xiaoping. Thus, most scholarly analysis divides the almost 50 years of PRC rule into two broad eras, the Revolutionary era under Mao and the Reform era begun by Deng. This organization is commonly recognized even within the PRC, and is frequently referred to in political discourse. The decisions made by the Third Plenum of the 11th Central Committee of the CCP in 1978, under the leadership of Deng, provide the mark of a new course for the PRC. Accordingly, this study emphasizes the distinctions between these two periods.

Two other considerations merit mention. First, recognizing that even the field of foreign policy is rather broad, this discussion will narrow its focus to the national security component of that field. Second, an examination of official ideology in China must begin with the precepts of Marxism-Leninism.

A. THE ORIGINS OF CHINESE COMMUNIST IDEOLOGY

China's official ideology is an adaptation of Marxism-Leninism. While a full review of the development of Marxist theory would be too cumbersome here,

a short survey of basic principles is useful in understanding the development of official ideology in China. Toward that end, the following is an outline of the most important concepts of this theory.

1. Economic Determinism

Marx built the rest of his theory upon this foundation. Essentially, this assumes that man's primary motivation is economic. That is, what people do politically, think, and say is determined by economic circumstances. Thus, the foundation of any society is material, and is topped by a *superstructure* made up of non-material things, such as ideology, law, religion, etc., which suits or assists the *class* which controls the forces of production.

2. Dialectical Materialism

Part of this idea, namely the dialectic process, was taken from the philosophy of Hegel. In short, Hegel developed a view of history in which change, brought about by struggle, is the central theme. This change was a process in which the world was progressing toward a goal, or "idea," that was predetermined by God. In the dialectic process, the existing state of affairs, or thesis, is challenged by a new idea, or antithesis, with the result being a synthesis at the higher level of truth than the previous two views. The process, as shown in Figure 2, was expected to continue until humanity arrives at the highest level of self-awareness and freedom.

Marx rejected the metaphysical aspect of Hegel's work, but did adopt the dialectic as the fundamental logic of history. Instead, where Hegel had seen the struggle between divinely inspired ideas, Marx substituted the conflict between worldly interests. In this view, ideas were the result of the dialectic struggle, and human conflict was caused by social class differences. This struggle was seen as closing the door on one historical stage and while opening to another, and that each stage was characterized by a particular economic system which, in turn, led to a specific political system. And while Marx was less clear about specific causes of the "revolution" and type of political system which would

evolve, he did expect the proletariat to subject itself to a dictatorship whose purpose was to eliminate all but a single class.²⁰

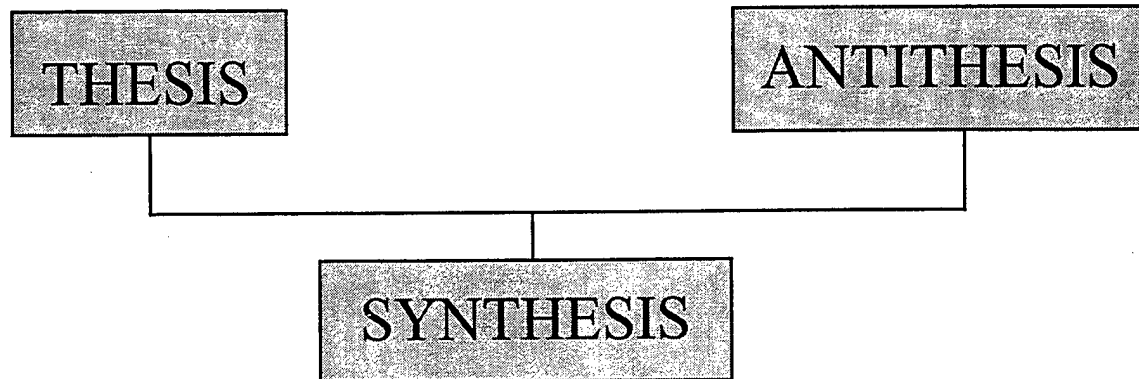


Figure 2. The Dialectical Reasoning Process

3. Lenin's Contribution

Marx is said to have spent much more time analyzing capitalism rather than studying requirements of the coming "utopia." Lenin, by contrast, was reputed to be more a revolutionary and practical politician than scholar, and devoted himself to developing a revolutionary doctrine and applying Marxism to real life. His contributions to Marxism include:²¹

- Restoring a sense of urgency and spirit to the socialist movement lost after the death of Marx and in the absence of revolution predicted by the theory, as detailed mainly in the Communist Manifesto of 1848. Lenin also saw the need for a small, disciplined, and totally dedicated group or *vanguard of the proletariat* to stimulate the revolution.
- Modifying the theory to satisfy questions arising from historical events which seemed to contradict Marxist theories, as well as allowing it to apply to developing countries. Lenin's concepts of *imperialism* helped explain why the anticipated proletarian revolution failed to materialize,

²⁰ Baradat, 156-61.

²¹ Ibid., 191-99.

why capitalists continued to experience success, and conditions of workers actually improved in industrial countries. His theory of the *weakest link*, which focused on competitive advantage between advanced and less developed states, explained why the revolution occurred in Russia and not Western Europe and the United States.

- Adjusting the theory to function in a "real state." Lenin held the vanguard of the proletariat would become a collective dictatorship and govern by the principle of *democratic centralism* until the state of utopia was reached. The economic system prescribed by Lenin was *state socialism*.

4. Mao Zedong Thought

Mao's major contributions to Marxism-Leninism was adjusting the theory to fit Chinese culture and society. Fairbank suggests that one factor encouraging this "sinification" was the overwhelming sentiment of Chinese nationalism based on cultural and historical pride. In other words, the Chinese would only accept Chinese Marxism.²² The reality of the Chinese situation also provided other justifications. To accomplish this application Mao made modifications to the theory itself, focusing on social class, the results of which were something of a Chinese populism.

In the heady days of Marxism-Leninism early in the 20th century, China was overwhelmingly rural. In fact, Lieberthal states that during this period it is hard to imagine a society less subject to class analysis than was China.²³ Yet while the theory was apparently inappropriate considering the nature of Chinese society, it did provide a foundation from which to begin the effort to fundamentally change Chinese society and culture. Moreover, and extremely important, it provided an explanation for and solution to imperialist aggression, seen as the principle cause of China's "century of shame." That solution was nationalistic struggle.

²² John K. Fairbank, *China: A New History* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1992), 322.

²³ Kenneth Lieberthal, *Governing China: From Revolution Through Reform* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1995): 74.

The importance of Mao's emphasis on the dialectic reasoning process for resolving contradictions and its subsequent application by Chinese communists cannot be overemphasized. Theoretical thinking in the PRC draws heavily on the theory that the laws of development in the world are based on the unity of opposites. Nature in its entirety is determined by the objective dialectic in things. Dialectics in itself is the process whereby contradictions are disclosed and synthetically resolved.

Mao's interpretation of the philosophical principle of dialectic materialism submitted that all things, animate and inanimate, are motivated by the incessant occurrence and resolution innate to all phenomenon. And all phenomenon exist in a world of continual and constant change. In his philosophical treatise *On Contradiction*, Mao asserted:

The interdependence of the contradictory aspects present in all things and the struggle between these aspects determine the life of all things and push their development forward. There is nothing that does not contain contradiction; without contradiction nothing would exist.²⁴

The theory of contradictions, according to Maoist thinking, can be further extended to social phenomena. It enables man to arrive at the proper methods or thought processes for resolving conflicts and contradictions within society, and can therefore be used to determine policy and the correct "political line." Further, achievement of a higher level of social development hinges upon the correct identification of a "principle contradiction," the resolution of which will permit "all other problems to be readily solved."²⁵ Accordingly, PRC decision-makers adhere to the thesis that contradictions are the basis for all social change, and refer to the Maoist interpretation of dialectic materialism to guide the analysis and conduct of domestic and international affairs.²⁶ This interpretation of the

²⁴ Mao Zedong, "On Contradiction," *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* Vol I (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1965), 316.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 315.

²⁶ Mohammad Habib Sidky, "The Theory and Conduct of Chinese Foreign Policy in South Asia" (Ph.D. diss, University of Miami, 1978), 13.

dialectic reasoning process has remained consistent in Chinese ideological work even through the Reform era.

Other key features of Mao Zedong Thought included:

- *Mind over matter.* While Mao embraced the Marxist philosophic theory of materialism, he consistently based his decisions on the conviction that properly motivated people could overcome virtually any material odds to accomplish their goals.
- *Self-reliance.* Also influenced by his views of imperialist aggression and the years of decline under the unequal treaties, Mao insisted that China's social and economic transformation should achieve a measure of self-reliance which would ensure survival if attacked by an external enemy or experienced other adverse circumstances.
- *Guerrilla Warfare.* Perhaps the most "exportable" Maoist idea and arguably still relevant today. This strategy envisions a three-stage protracted war which evolves from guerrilla tactics against the enemy's conventional force in a war of attrition, to eventual strategic stalemate, and then a transition to conventional offensive. In the guerrilla warfare phase the revolutionary seeks to avoid decisive combat unless victory is assured, and de-emphasizes territorial gains and losses as indicators of success or failure while seeking to destroy the enemy's will to continue fighting. Thus the key concept is the political nature of warfare.
- *Human nature.* Mao firmly believed that man could be perfected through proper education and placed considerable value in techniques such as mass lines and campaigns for ideological indoctrination and the value of physical labor.
- *Cultural confidence.* Mao was an avid student of Chinese history and was heavily influenced by his understanding of the glory and splendor of China's past.

B. THE DOMESTIC FACTOR

This section begins with an examination of the domestic environment given its prominence in setting the course for PRC foreign policy. Thomas Robinson suggests that one of the most important determinants of Chinese foreign policy post-1949 has been the nature of the domestic political and

economic situation.²⁷ Moreover, Quansheng Zhao points out that each of China's principal domestic strategies – from the First Five Year Plan and the Great Leap Forward through the Cultural Revolution and Four Modernizations – have had clear and direct implications for its posture toward the rest of the world.²⁸ Accordingly, the CCP's ideologically guided efforts and policies to remake Chinese society serve as the foundation of this study.

1. The Revolutionary Era

When a country is well-governed, poverty and a mean condition are things to be ashamed of. When a country is ill-governed, riches and honor are things to be ashamed of.

Confucian Analects

During the Mao era the focus was "politics in command." He and most CCP leadership considered the decisive outcome of the period of revolution, civil, and foreign wars that began in 1839 with the Opium Wars a mandate to embark upon a radical transformation of society. The emergence of the PRC in 1949 was welcomed by thousands of well-educated and patriotic Chinese who were not originally communists.²⁹ These felt, in essence, that the CCP had gained the right to govern by triumphing over both internal divisions and foreign imperialism. Furthermore, in the 1940s, communism, in its Stalinist form, had considerable economic credibility and seemed to offer the means whereby China could develop its way rapidly out of the devastated state left by decades of war.

Another important aspect of early Chinese ideology as the CCP consolidated its rule was that the primary impetus for change was external forces. Just as the opium trade, gunboat diplomacy, missionary inroads, and unequal treaties had spurred the Manchu dynasty grudgingly toward reform in the early 20th century, these lingering influences, along with Japanese barbarism

²⁷ Thomas R. Robinson, "Chinese Foreign Policy from the 1940s to the 1990s," in *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, eds. Robinson and Shambaugh, 592.

²⁸ Zhao, 41.

²⁹ Edward L. Dreyer, *China at War* (New York: Longman Publishing, 1995), 366.

and extraterritorial concessions meant that ideology was fundamentally reactive in nature and directed against imperial powers.

In considering foreign policy during the Revolutionary era, Mao is described as being relatively less concerned with international relations than with domestic questions.³⁰ Two significant exceptions to this rule – Sino-Soviet and U.S.-Sino relations – provide the basis for the case study in the following chapter. For now however, we consider the dominant ideological themes which influenced China's foreign relations during the Revolutionary era via the domestic macro structure. These key concepts include:

- a focus on continuous revolution
- class struggle
- moral superiority and "mind over matter"
- autarky and separation from the international system
- an emphasis on nationalism, anti-imperialism, and anti-capitalism
- focus on principles of Leninist and Stalinist rule³¹
- a gradual embrace of neo-Marxism principles (emphasis on north-south divide and redistribution of global wealth)³²

a. *Remaking Chinese Society*

The CCP under Mao clearly considered itself a "revolutionary regime." The central thesis of this self-image was that PRC leaders, especially Mao, did not regard the goals of the their revolution as having been accomplished with the seizure of state power in 1949. So great was the magnitude of these goals – the transformation of man and society in the world's oldest and most populous state – that they could only be accomplished over what Mao referred to as a "very long historical period." Protracting the revolution, however, meant opening up the possibility of the institutionalization of the revolutionary forces – a process that would likely work to the detriment of the revolutionary goals. To Mao, this meant that state power must be wielded in a "revolutionary" way – a way that minimizes the degree of institutionalization and

³⁰ Starr, 242.

³¹ John R. Faust and Judith F. Kornberg, *China in World Politics* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995), 72.

stability in the society and *maximizes the degree of instability, flexibility, and innovation.*³³

Within the dialectic process, according to Mao, conflict and change are the normal conditions of society. Stability and consensus are temporary aberrations from that normal state. While conflict is natural, rather than a malfunction of society, it does not resolve itself spontaneously in a progressive direction.³⁴ It requires analysis and action by a revolutionary to bring about progress.

Mao's focus on social conflict centered upon the analysis of the *conflicting groups or categories* into which the society was divided. And like Marx and Lenin before him, the most important method of grouping society was along *social class lines*, with the critical division occurring between proletariat and bourgeoisie. This was the principal contradiction and struggle in the social realm. More than Marx or Lenin, however, Mao's political thought suggested that class status was determined as much by ideological and political consciousness as economic status, thus allowing a more diverse group of people to be assembled under the proletariat category. And though the salient categories associated with each group changed over time, the method for determining the composition of these categories, such as attitude and behavior, and their relationship to one another remained substantially unaltered.

b. Remaking the Chinese Economy

Given the emphasis on rebuilding society during the Revolutionary era, it is sometimes easy to forget that Mao and other senior PRC leaders were concerned about the requirement to remake the country's economy as well. In fact, it was Zhou Enlai who first raised the call for China's modernization in 1954, and the term "Four Modernizations" was coined ten years later, although with different priorities than Deng's – industry, agriculture, defense, and science and

³² Ibid.

³³ Starr, 8.

³⁴ Ibid., 27.

technology.³⁵ It was not until the issue was revived by Zhou at the Fourth National People's Congress in 1975, and later championed by Deng, that serious reform efforts began.³⁶ Yet Zhou's initial call was overshadowed by Mao's focus on political and social campaigns, and was somewhat perverted by his strong desire to secure China's independence and autarky. Economic development policy was also influenced by the concepts of self-reliance and moral superiority. Further, he drew heavily from the Soviet model of central planning and emphasis on heavy industry. These ideological pre-dispositions toward isolation and organization would contribute to the disastrous economic policies and programs such as the Great Leap Forward and rural communalism.

It is interesting to note that Mao's conception of self-reliance did not totally prohibit economic relations with other states, even though Mao remained deeply suspicious of dependence on foreigners, especially in his later years. Underscoring this central assumption was one of the historical "lessons" from the century of shame at the hands of imperialists. Mao was convinced that there had existed a historic and contemporary conspiracy between foreign and domestic enemies that had served to keep China politically weak, and that Chinese elites with close relations to foreigners needed, at the least, strong state supervision. However, PRC leaders recognized very early that, although close and uncontrolled interaction with foreign powers had been dangerous politically and economically costly, foreign co-operative relationships, properly managed, were essential to both China's international security and domestic development.³⁷

c. *Institutionalizing Instability*

The Mao era culminated with the Great Proletariat Cultural Revolution, an ideologically motivated event which saw the replacement of what

³⁵ Zhao, 50.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ William C. Kirby, "Traditions of Centrality, Authority, and Management in Modern China's Foreign Relations," in *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, eds. Robinson and Shambaugh, 14.

remained of existing political, economic, and social structures with others that were barely functional. This period is widely considered a disaster both in and outside China, setting back modernization and production and further isolating China from the rest of the world. Perhaps its most lasting impact, however, has been an increasingly pervasive cynicism among the Chinese people about the credibility and legitimacy of CCP ideology.³⁸

One author suggests that if Mao had retired before the Great Leap Forward, he would undoubtedly be remembered as one of the greatest Chinese leaders of all time.³⁹ However, the legacy of Mao's leadership is mixed. He will always be remembered as the leader who created a modern, relatively classless Chinese nation free from imperialist interference. Yet at the time of his death, China was still in chaos. The chaos continued as the dominant factions centered around Hua Guofeng and Deng Xiaoping struggled for control of the Party and nation. By 1978, Deng had emerged victorious and set in motion a major ideological re-evaluation.

2. The Reform Era

When you have faults, do not fear to abandon them.

Confucian Analects

As the CCP leadership under Deng Xiaoping looked at the rest of the world in the mid to late 1970s, they realized that China was not only far behind the developed countries, such as the US and Japan, but also behind its small neighbors. Even Hong Kong and Taiwan, Chinese territories ruled by capitalist governments, were far more prosperous than the socialist mainland. Further, Chinese society was reeling from the aftershocks of the Cultural Revolution. Consequently, and almost a decade before Mikhail Gorbachev announced his "new thinking" ("glasnost" and "perestroika") for the Soviet Union in 1985, Deng Xiaoping had started a new economic, political, and social revolution in China.

³⁸ Faust and Kornberg, 37.

³⁹ Ibid., 38.

After consolidating his power following the Cultural Revolution and two years of succession struggle, Deng proclaimed that the previous two decades of PRC policy had been misguided in many areas and set about to shift Party focus in favor of economic development and modernization.⁴⁰ Deng stated explicitly after reforms were underway:

Comrade Mao Zedong was a great leader, and it was under his leadership that the Chinese revolution triumphed. Unfortunately, however, he made the grave mistake of *neglecting the development of the productive forces*. I do not mean he didn't want to develop them. The point is, not all the methods he used were correct. For instance, neither the initiation of the Great Leap Forward nor the establishment of the people's communes *conformed to the laws governing socio-economic development*...We must observe the laws governing socio-economic development and follow an open policy both internationally and domestically.⁴¹

He would add later:

For many years we suffered badly from *one major error*. After the socialist transformation of the ownership of the means of production had been basically accomplished, *we still took class struggle as the key link and neglected to develop the productive forces*.⁴²

This change in domestic focus, combined with dramatic developments on the international scene discussed below, caused a major redirection in foreign and security policy. Under Deng's leadership, the broad work of the Party congresses during the 1980s and 1990s seems to have confirmed China's embrace of another CCP-led revolution. Specifically, the Twelfth Congress is credited with anointing the post-Mao reform effort, the Thirteenth Congress as legitimizing non-state ownership, and the Fourteenth Congress as providing a major boost to market-oriented reforms.⁴³ The Third Generation of communist

⁴⁰ Levine, 31.

⁴¹ Deng Xiaoping, *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping Vol III (1982-92)* (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1994), 122.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 144.

⁴³ Lieberthal, 59.

leadership, under Jiang Zemin, has taken the reins of power and appear committed to following the Deng mandate. In fact, Deng Xiaoping Theory has now been elevated to the position of official ideology by the 15th Party Congress in 1997. Accordingly, considerable emphasis will be placed upon Deng's philosophy at the height of his influence in the 1980s. This philosophy was expressed in the three dominant themes outlined below.

a. Questioning the Revolutionary Emphasis

Deng indicates that the Eighth Congress of the Party held in 1956 had "correctly analyzed the situation in the transformation of private ownership of the means of production and set the task of all-around socialist construction." Yet while this political line was correct, the country "suffered many setbacks because the Party was still *inadequately prepared ideologically* for all-around socialist construction."⁴⁴ This ideological shortfall existed because the Party had misunderstood the central thesis of Marxism.

What is socialism and what is Marxism? *We were not quite clear about this in the past.* Marxism attaches utmost importance to *developing the productive forces* (italics added).⁴⁵

An analysis of his writings indicate that Deng carefully laid the foundation through the late 1970s for supplanting Mao's revolutionary ideals. As the comments above indicate, however, Deng was somewhat circumspect in this effort. While critical of the ideological direction favored by Mao, he was careful to limit criticism of the man. In 1981 he would state

During the 17 years preceding the "cultural revolution" our work, in the main, proceeded along a correct path, though there were twists and turns and mistakes. Comrade Mao Zedong should not be held solely responsible for everything; we ourselves should share the responsibility.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Deng Vol III, 14.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 73.

⁴⁶ Deng Xiaoping, *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping (1975-82)* (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1984), 357. Hereafter referred to as Volume II.

Deng reserved his harshest criticism for the "Gang of Four"⁴⁷ and their "Leftist" thought which became prominent during the Cultural Revolution. He observed, for example, in the early 1980s that the Gang of Four had "clamored for 'poor socialism' and 'poor communism', declaring that communism was mainly a spiritual thing." Declaring this approach "sheer nonsense!" and arguing "pauperism is not socialism, still less communism", he would state

...in building socialism, we must do all we can to develop the productive forces and gradually eliminate poverty, constantly raising the people's living standards. Otherwise, how will *socialism triumph over capitalism*?⁴⁸

This statement demonstrates that while Deng was moving the PRC in a new direction, he continued to perceive the fundamental nature between the two economic systems as competitive, a view that would carry over to foreign security policy. Even so, he also recognized that excessive isolation from the international economic system was partly responsible for China's lack of economic development. Claiming "one important reason for China's backwardness after the industrial revolution in Western countries was its closed-door policy,"⁴⁹ Deng would lay the groundwork for opening to the world.

b. Proclaiming a New Direction

Deng emphasized stability and unity where Mao had valued instability and conflict, stressed market incentives over Mao's reliance on political consciousness, and opened China to the world vice Mao's emphasis on self-reliance. He would go on to discarded or severely restricted revolutionary slogans about resistance, struggle, turmoil, and transformation. Peace and development were emphasized. This effort was officially launched in 1978 at the Third Plenum of the Party's Eleventh Central Committee.

⁴⁷ Described as the "counter-revolutionary clique" that gained significant influence during the Cultural Revolution. Consisting of Mao's wife Jiang Qing and Zhang Chunqiao, Yao Wenyuan, and Wang Hongwen, this group apparently sought to position itself to seize supreme authority following Mao's death.

⁴⁸ Deng Vol II, 21.

⁴⁹ Deng Vol III, 74.

This event confirmed Deng's ascendancy to the position of "core leader" and officially discarded "take class struggle as the key link" for socialist modernization. The Committee also criticized the self-preserving policy of Mao's designated successor Hua Guofeng of "two whatevers"⁵⁰ and affirmed the need to have a "correct understanding of Mao Zedong Thought as an integral whole and scientific system." This meant "recognizing the importance of practice as the sole criterion of truth, and deciding on the guiding principles of emancipating minds, seeking truth from facts, and uniting as one in looking to the future."⁵¹ Deng's successful offensive against "two whatevers" as a rejection of the basic principles of Marxism, by portraying it as frustrating the continued dialectic development of Chinese society, underscores the acceptance of ideological dynamism to Chinese Communism.

Declaring China would "concentrate on economic development," Deng became convinced that modernization of the nation's economy was the most important goal for the regime, and that improved living standards for the population would contribute to a return of Party credibility, both domestically *and* internationally. Consequently, the dominant concepts associated with this new direction in the domestic environment were:

- a focus on peace, stability, unity
- acceptance of a dual economy
- "empowerment" of the rural population
- an Open Door Policy and entry into the global economic system
- acceptance of basic economic and social, but not political, liberalization
- partial shift from Leninist to authoritarian rule⁵²

To attain its developmental goals, the CCP would have to approach socialism "in terms never used by the founders of Marxism-Leninism,"⁵³ as well as an end to autarky. "Nevertheless, while holding to self-reliance, we should

⁵⁰ This policy, proposed by Hua Goufeng, declared "we shall resolutely uphold whatever policy decisions Chairman Mao made and unswervingly follow whatever instructions he gave."

⁵¹ Deng Vol II, 371.

⁵² Faust and Kornberg, 72.

open our country to the outside world to obtain such aid as foreign investment capital and technology." Moreover, Deng would emphasize the mutual global benefit associated with China's growth, proclaiming "China's development will benefit world peace and the world economy."⁵⁴

Still, and undoubtedly reflecting the influence of civil strife associated with the Cultural Revolution and civil war, no concept received greater emphasis under Deng's tutelage than domestic stability and unity.

Without order, we would have to devote all our energies to combating interference of one kind or another...⁵⁵

In fact, as the perceived threat of "bourgeois liberalization" intensified during the 1980s, with its associated "unrest" and "practices of the cultural revolution," Deng would step up his calls to "keep this evil trend in check" by declaring "our goal is to create a stable political environment; in an environment of political unrest, it would be impossible for us to proceed with socialist construction or to accomplish anything."⁵⁶ In discussing the relative merits of "liveliness," which appears in context to refer to an increasingly spirited domestic debate over political, cultural, and social development, Deng would argue emphatically for order.

In addition to stability and unity, we must maintain liveliness. Under the socialist system, both aspects form a unified whole and are not – or ought not to be – fundamentally contradictory. But what if, at a certain time and with regard to certain questions, liveliness comes into conflict with stability and unity? Then what should we do? We should try to achieve liveliness on condition that stability and unity are not adversely affected...if we are to make progress in an orderly way, when liveliness clashes with stability and unity, we can never pursue the former at the expense of the latter. The experience of the Cultural Revolution has already proved that chaos leads only to retrogression, not to progress, and that there must be good order if we are to move forward.⁵⁷

⁵³ Deng Vol III, 97.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 86.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 199.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 129.

⁵⁷ Deng Vol II, 236-37.

This attitude was not limited to the central leadership. One author has argued that, with regard to the conflict at Tiananmen Square in 1989, "for older Chinese, the massive demonstrations against the communist regime in the spring and summer of 1989 held out, not the promise of a new and more humane political and social order, but the threat of a return to the anarchic warlordism and civil unrest of the 1920s through the 1940s."⁵⁸

c. *Traditional Communist Themes*

While simultaneously reminding the Party of the essentially utilitarian nature of official ideology, Deng held firmly to many of the dogmatic elements of communism. He believed, for example, the promise of domestic stability and economic modernization could only be achieved in China through adherence to CCP leadership and Marxist-Leninist philosophy. Thus a movement toward economic modernization and liberalization should not be confused with political liberalism. Proclaiming "we regard reform as a revolution" and adhering to the roots of official ideology, Deng would emphasize:

Democratic centralism is another of our advantages. This system works to foster unity among the people...and once we make a decision, it can be immediately implemented.⁵⁹

Only socialism can eliminate the greed, corruption and injustice that are inherent in capitalism...⁶⁰

Discipline and freedom form a unity of opposites; both are indistinguishable. How can a vast country like China be united and organized? Through ideals and discipline. Strength comes from organization.⁶¹

What attitude should we take towards the bourgeois culture of the West? In learning things in the cultural realm, we must adopt a Marxist approach, analyzing them, distinguishing the good from the bad and making critical judgment about their ideological

⁵⁸ Dreyer, 370.

⁵⁹ Deng Vol III, 252.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 146

⁶¹ Ibid., 117.

content...The corruption of our young people by the decadent bourgeois culture of the West is no longer tolerable.⁶²

Commitment to these ideals have been expressed most prominently in the official policy of the "Four Cardinal Principles," which upholds the commitment to democratic centralism, absolute authority of the CCP, Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong Thought, and the "socialist road."

Deng stated in 1983, "The Four Cardinal Principles boil down to upholding socialism and upholding leadership by the Party. These two principles are the basis for building our country and uniting all our people in a common struggle."⁶³ And in rationalizing China's political organization to President Bush in February 1989, Deng would offer that "if we conducted multi-party elections among one billion people, the country would be thrown into chaos...Democracy is our goal, but we must keep the country stable."⁶⁴ Further, "bourgeois liberalization would plunge the country into turmoil once more. Bourgeois liberalization means rejection of Party leadership; there would be *no centre around which to unite our one billion people*...The reason the imperialists were able to bully us in the past was precisely that we were a heap of loose sand."⁶⁵ Concern over the "polarizing" effect of income disparities associated with capitalism also encouraged the emphasis on the "predominance of public ownership and common prosperity as the two fundamental socialist principles that we must adhere to."⁶⁶

Finally, while Deng was frequently critical of the more aggressive methods employed during the Revolutionary era to control the population, he never discounted authoritarian methods. When responding to concerns of instability associated with the increasing "bourgeois influence" well into the Reform period, he stated

⁶² Ibid., 54.

⁶³ Ibid., 55.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 277-78.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 196.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 117.

...our socialist *state apparatus is so powerful* that it can intervene to correct any deviations. To be sure, the open policy entails risks and may bring into China some decadent bourgeois things. But with our socialist policies and state apparatus, we shall be able to cope with them. So there is nothing to fear.⁶⁷

Moreover, "if some people are bent on disturbing our tranquillity, we shall have to resort to disciplinary and legal action when necessary, or even to *dictatorial means* of dealing with them."⁶⁸

3. The Third Generation

By 1989, and after a fall from grace of two proposed successors in Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang, Deng anointed Jiang Zemin as the core of the Third generation.⁶⁹ While Jiang was widely believed to be an interim leader, it appears that he has successfully consolidated his position and will continue to lead the PRC, at least over the short-term. The recent elevation of Zhu Rongji to replace the retiring Li Peng as prime minister, for example, appears to benefit Jiang.

Of particular relevance to this study, however, is the apparent commitment of Jiang and other senior leaders in Beijing to stay the course set by Deng. Moreover, and as has been the case since its founding, domestic influences will continue to weigh heavily upon decision-makers in Beijing. Premier Li Peng stated during a speech in Tokyo in November 1997:

China is committing itself to building a modern socialism. The 15th National Congress of the Communist Party of China held recently summed up the success stories in the country's reform and opening, such as the ongoing endeavor to achieve modernization for the past twenty years, defining Deng Xiaoping's Theory as our guiding ideology, electing a new central leadership with Jiang Zemin at the core, and drawing up the blueprint for China's future development.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Ibid., 143.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 211.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 300.

⁷⁰ "Li Peng Speaks at Reception in Tokyo," *Beijing Review* 40, no. 48 (1 December 1997): 10.

Moreover, a recent article in *Beijing Review* on current developmental policy recognizes significant progress and specifies the path that Beijing will follow while acknowledging the significant challenges ahead:

...the 13th Party Congress put forward the scientific thesis that China is still at the primary stage of socialism. The current Party Congress (15th CPC Congress) reaffirms this thesis. According to the theory of scientific socialism, socialism itself is a primary stage of communism, and China is and will be in the primary stage of socialism, or the undeveloped stage at present and for a considerably long period to come. This is the most fundamental national condition. It is the basic starting point for Chinese leaders to formulate the political line and policies. The current congress' reaffirmation of the thesis aims to help the Chinese remain cool-headed before the nation's success. Although the reform and opening have helped China lift itself out of poverty step by step and embark on the road leading to initial prosperity, such progress is approached in relevance to past dire poverty and backwardness.⁷¹

Domestic issues such as political legitimacy, regional pressures, and further reform of the state-owned sector promise to be daunting and influential to the PRC's international behavior. However, the embrace of Deng Xiaoping Theory by Beijing's current leadership suggests that in the dialectic struggle over the broad approach to societal development, pragmatism and flexibility are still in favor. Moreover, the key domestic watch words of stability, prosperity, and openness in the pursuit of economic growth and improved living standards are seen as key to regime survival. As Deng himself once said:

Only when the masses see concrete evidence that the Party and socialism are good will our teachings about ideals, discipline, communist ideology and patriotism be effective.⁷²

C. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Another significant influence shaping the formation of Chinese foreign and security policy is leadership perceptions of the characteristics of the international

⁷¹ Yuan Pingzhou, "15th CPC Congress: Succeeding and Developing Deng's Theory," *Beijing Review* 40, no. 40 (6 October 1997): 4.

environment. It is somewhat artificial to attempt to draw a significant distinction in perceptions of the domestic and international order when considering the communist ideological influence. After all, Marxist ideology projected its vision of proletariat revolution from the national to the international level. Even within Mao's lifetime, however, dialectical thought and a dynamic international environment encouraged a dramatic evolution in Beijing's perception of the world order. Thus, this study traces the more critical elements of the PRC's world view and will focus upon the core leader's perceptions of the nature and likelihood of military conflict.

1. The Revolutionary Era

By nature, men are nearly alike; by practice, they get to be wide apart.
Confucian Analects

As a communist, Mao inherited a distinctively Marxist-Leninist world view. He accepted class struggle as the conceptual framework explaining the origins and nature of modern conflict. As long as there were classes with conflicting interests and different social strata, as Engels had asserted, the war between the classes would never be extinguished. Lenin attributed the origins of war more directly to the existence of private property.⁷³

a. The "Two Camps" and the Nature of War

Based on these teachings, Mao articulated in December 1936 his own view of the nature of conflict that "war is the highest form of struggle for resolving contradictions, when they have developed to a certain stage, between classes, nations, states, or political groups, and it has existed ever since the emergence of private property and of classes."⁷⁴

Further, since the existence of class struggle made war inevitable, Mao regarded war and politics as identical. Paraphrasing Clausewitz in 1938,

⁷² Deng Vol III, 147.

⁷³ Shu Guang Zhang, *Mao's Military Romanticism: China and the Korean War, 1950-1953* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1995), 13.

⁷⁴ Quoted in Zhang, 13.

Mao stated that "war is the continuation of politics," and added that "war is politics and war itself is a political action; since ancient times, there has never been a war that did not have a political character."⁷⁵ This view had a significant impact on early PRC security policy with regard to the application of military force. As Mao considered conflict normal, or even inevitable, at the international as well as domestic levels, he became convinced that military strategies significantly different from "People's War" were appropriate. Engaging imperialist countries at the "front door," such as on the Korean Peninsula, allowed China to face the inevitable on their own terms. On the other hand, Mao stressed that war had its own peculiar characteristics and in this sense should not be equated with politics in general. Violence was the particular feature of war lacking in other types of politics. Thus "when politics develops to a certain stage beyond which it cannot proceed by the usual means, war breaks out to sweep away the obstacles from the way."⁷⁶

Concepts more unique to Maoist thought are reflected in his philosophical essay "On Protracted War." Included in this treatise are notions that war as a phenomenon was comprehensible, which means that, while characterized by greater uncertainty than other social phenomenon, it is, nevertheless, "in no way supernatural, but a mundane process governed by necessity." However, while military capability in the "objective" or material sense shapes victory and defeat in an indisputable way, "subjective conditions" which included the army and population's attitude, belief, political quality, and morale were much more important. After all, military capability functioned according to the law of the unit of opposites, as did everything else in society. The two "opposites" intrinsic to military capability were inferiority and superiority. Mao's view of the historical record suggested that wars were usually fought between states with relatively weak and strong military strength. Further, the ability to transition from the weak to the relatively strong position was largely a function of

⁷⁵ Zhang, 13.

"subjective ability" or moral superiority. Mao acknowledged that "the stage of action for the military man is built upon objective material conditions, but on that stage he can direct the performance of many a drama."⁷⁷

Mao would go on to differentiate between revolutionary and counterrevolutionary wars, with the former being "just" and latter "unjust." This aspect of warfare would later influence Mao's decisions about military interventions as, in his view, the common masses would only support a "just" war, creating "a vast sea in which to drown the enemy, create the conditions that will make up for inferiority in arms and other things, and create the prerequisites for overcoming every difficulty in the war."⁷⁸ Mao would also emphasize the importance of political mobilization of the entire population. Mao defined political mobilization, generally accomplished through popular propaganda, as a means of "telling the army and the people about the political aim of the war. It is necessary for every soldier and civilian to understand why the war must be fought and how it concerns him."⁷⁹

As a consequence of the influences outlined above, and based upon his experiences, Mao shared a number of ideological predicates relating to foreign and security policy with earlier communists at the foundation and early years of the PRC. This dogma asserted that:⁸⁰

- The world is divided into two inherently hostile and warring camps that mirror the basic class division of contemporary society.
- The socialist camp and its allies, including the proletariat and other so-called progressive forces in imperialist states, are engaged in a world-wide, historic struggle against imperialism that will eventually lead to the victory of socialism.
- Beneficial relations between socialist states and members of the imperialist camp are desirable, but such relations will always be limited

⁷⁶ Ibid., 13.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 16-19.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 13.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 13.

⁸⁰ Levine, 37-8.

by their instrumental and transitory character. Genuine, long-term cooperation with imperialist states is impossible given the historic conflict between the two opposing world systems.

- Relations between socialist states are based on a common identity rather than transitory interests. Socialist international relations are a new type characterized by peace, long-term mutual interests, genuine co-operation, and fraternal solidarity.
- Socialist states can forge coalitions with nationalist states and political movements even when these are non-socialist in character on the basis of shared opposition to imperialism.

b. The "Three Worlds"

Events of the 1960s, however, rendered the "two camps" concept of the international political situation obsolete. The emergence of Soviet "revisionism" in the ideological arena, to include the abandonment of the principal of "inevitable war" for détente with the United States, and its pursuit of "social imperialism" placed the two communist giants at fundamental odds. The result was the synthesis of a new Chinese world view, publicly declared in 1971, which divided the world into three parts: a First World of the superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union; the Second World of developed countries or medium powers; and the Third World of the developing states of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The First World, in Mao's eyes, was the source of most global problems.

Ultimately, the "three worlds" formula placed the capitalist-imperialist United States in collaboration with the revisionist, social-imperialist Soviets within the category of the exploitative world forces. China, on the other hand, was seen joining, sometimes leading the revolutionary forces of the Third World – the category consisting of the exploited and oppressed nations. Thus, while the ideological model of international structure evolved, the final objective remained the same – Mao continued to believe that global war was inevitable

and that PRC foreign policy should be an instrument for achieving the tangible goal of world communism.⁸¹

2. The Reform Era

To have faults and not to reform them, this indeed, should be pronounced having faults.

Confucian Analects

The international dynamics of the last decade of the Cold War, combined with China's new commitment to economic modernization and reform, placed significant stress upon the PRC's political system and the cognitive processes which had encouraged greater "pragmatism" and international interaction than in the past. In fact, the PRC's international behavior shifted from almost complete isolation to what has been described as conforming to that of essentially every other actor in the international system.⁸² The demands of the Cold War system forced China to be creative in defense of its security and in seeking support from other nations. It attempted to balance changing external threat perceptions with possible opportunities for increased power and influence; often with mixed results. China's solution was to "play the international system for all it was worth" by siding with either superpower when necessary, courting the Third World when isolated, and acting as a great power when it was in Beijing's interest to do so.⁸³ Even before Mao's death, it had pursued a policy of "leaning to one side" or the other between the U.S. and the USSR, as appropriate, even though it explicitly and consistently rejected the conception of this role in the triangular balance of power paradigm.⁸⁴ All the while its rhetoric asserted the centrality of independence.

Nevertheless, when focusing upon PRC perceptions of the most fundamental characteristic of the international order in the Reform era, it is

⁸¹ Sidky, 10.

⁸² See Faust and Kornberg, 15-20, and Zhao, Chapter 5.

⁸³ Faust and Kornberg, 19.

⁸⁴ Sidky, 18.

abundantly clear that a new "synthesis" had been reached. At a speech during a meeting of the Central Military Commission in June 1985, Deng's comments provide definitive insights as to the Party's changing view of the world order. In arguing for a reduction by one million men in the PLA, Deng indicated

The first change is in our understanding of the question of war and peace. *We used to believe that war was inevitable and imminent.* Many of our policy decisions were based on this belief, including the decision to disperse production projects in three lines, locating some of them in the mountains and concealing others in caves. In recent years, after careful analysis of the situation, we have come to believe that only the two superpowers, the Soviet Union and the United States, are in a position to launch world war. But neither dares to do so.⁸⁵

He would go on to argue that the fear of nuclear annihilation, combined with strategic setbacks experienced by both superpowers, severely constrained the international actions of both countries, lessening the potential for war.

...the world forces for peace are growing faster than the forces of war. The forces for peace are, first of all, the Third World, to which China belongs...The world is vast and complex, but if you analyze the situation you will find there are only a few people who support war; most people want peace...Thus we conclude that it is possible that there will be no large-scale war for a fairly long time to come and that there is hope of maintaining world peace. In short, after analyzing the general trends in the world and the environment around us, *we have changed our view that the danger of war is imminent.*⁸⁶

Deng would further explain that this fundamental change in perspective on the international operational environment, along with the domestic focus on economic modernization, had logically contributed to a significant change in the ultimate objectives of China's foreign policy from revolutionary Marxism to *peace and development*.

In view of the threat of Soviet hegemonism, over the years we formed a strategic line of defense – a line stretching from Japan to

⁸⁵ Deng Vol III, 131.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 131.

Europe to the United States. Now we have altered our strategy, and this represents a major change...We pursue a correct, independent diplomatic line and foreign policy, opposing hegemonism and safeguarding world peace.⁸⁷

By 1990, as the strategic and economic balance of power had shifted decisively to the United States and the Soviet Union struggled to redefine its position, Deng would revisit the issue of further restructuring of the international order, again emphasizing the importance of international peace and its focus on economic development. Anticipating the coming collapse of the bipolar world and likely emergence of the multi-polar order, Deng stated that even though weakened, the USSR would remain a "pole" in an emerging multi-polar world.

The situation in which the United States and the Soviet Union dominate all international affairs is changing...In the so-called multi-polar world, China too will be a pole...Our foreign policies remain the same: first, opposing hegemonism and power politics and safeguarding world peace; and second, working to establish a new international political order and a new international economic order.⁸⁸

3. The Third Generation

Beijing's current view of the international system may best be reflected in an April 1997 joint statement released by the PRC and the Russian Federation on the "Multipolarization of the World and the Establishment of a New International Order" on the occasion of President Jiang Zemin's official visit to Moscow. In the outline below, the most relevant portions of the agreement with the term "both sides" referring to the PRC and Russia are highlighted.

- The two sides shall, in the spirit of partnership, strive to promote the multipolarization of the world and the establishment of a new international order.
- Both sides maintain that mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, peaceful coexistence and

⁸⁷ Ibid., 132-3.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 341.

other universally recognized principles of international law should serve as the basic norms governing state-to-state relations and the basis for the establishment of a new international order.

- Both sides stand for the establishment of a new and universally-applicable security concept, believing that the "Cold War mentality" must be abandoned and bloc politics opposed. The differences or disputes between states must be settled through peaceful means without resorting to the use of threat of force.
- Both sides are of the view that the role of the UN and its Security Council should be strengthened and that the UN efforts in maintaining world peace and security merit a positive appraisal.
- Both sides underscore that the vast number of developing countries and the Non-Aligned Movement are important forces in promoting world multi-polarization and building a new international order. The developing countries have enhanced their awareness of self-strengthening through unity...They are entitled to take a rightful place in the future new international order, participating, on the equal basis, in international affairs free from any discrimination.⁸⁹

D. NATIONAL IDENTITY AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Having examined the re-evaluation of domestic priorities and evolution of the Chinese external world view, the study considers the influence of official ideology upon the PRC's perception of its role in world affairs and strategic goals.

1. The Revolutionary Era

The superior man, in the world does not set his mind either for anything, or against anything; what is right he will follow.

Confucian Analects

Official ideology is described as having served a dual purpose in the early years of the PRC. As an international linking mechanism, it connected China with its socialist brethren. At the same time it served as a boundary marker, demarcating the inner world of socialism from the outer world of China's

ideological adversaries in the imperialist camp.⁹⁰ Thus, it provided a strong means of defining the PRC's national self-identity and global role.

More specifically, and as discussed in detail in the next chapter, Mao's perception of China's international role and strategic interests was largely defined by evolving relations with the USSR, since his conception of the "socialist camp" was a major element in his view of the international system for most of his life.⁹¹ Accordingly, in 1949, Mao established three principles on which Chinese foreign policy would be based:

- *Lingqi luzao* – literally 'to start up the fire in a new stove' – in this context meaning that the new China should initiate diplomatic relations with every country on a new basis.
- *Dasao ganjing wuzi zai qingke* – 'to clean house first then invite quests' – meaning to consolidate the regime first and then develop foreign relations.
- *Yibiandao* – 'leaning to one side' – meaning, under Mao anyway, to favor the Soviet Union.⁹²

By the mid-to late-1960s, however, as Sino-Soviet relations became increasingly strained and Mao's focus had turned inward, Beijing had isolated itself from the outside world as much as possible, leaving its population one of the least informed about international issues in the world.

By the time it emerged from this self-imposed isolation in the early 1970s, and under the influence of the "three worlds" model, the PRC identified itself most closely with the developing world. In fact, one author suggests that Chinese "official historiography" came increasingly to emphasize guerrilla warfare, peasant mobilization, and the leadership role of the CCP as a means of achieving worldwide revolutionary success. The concept of "People's War," a

⁸⁹ "Joint Statement by the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation on the Multipolarization of the World and the Establishment of a New International Order," *Beijing Review* 40 no. 19 (12 May 1997): 11.

⁹⁰ Levine, 38.

⁹¹ Stuart Schram, ed. *Chairman Mao Talks to the People, Talks and Letters: 1956-1971* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974), 36.

name popularized by Lin Piao during the Cultural Revolution, was presented as an unbeatable formula by which all Third World countries could throw off the shackles of imperialism and colonialism. Using this argument, the PRC placed itself at the head of the Third World and said all such countries should look to Peking rather than Moscow for leadership.⁹³

During its most belligerent phase of the Revolutionary era, Beijing was fighting against both superpowers, with border clashes against the USSR and an undeclared war with the United States in Vietnam. It also had major differences of opinion with many of its socialist "brothers" and friends in the Third World, which included Indonesia, Burma, North Korea, Japan, Thailand, and India, caused by both traditional and ideological conflicts.⁹⁴ Even though Mao made efforts to break the isolation and lessen tension in the early 1970s with several Western powers, his revolutionary rhetoric and dogmatic principles remained fundamentally unchanged.

2. The Reform Era

To rule a country of a thousand chariots there must be reverent attention to business, and sincerity; economy in expenditure, and love for men; and the employment of the people at the proper seasons.

Confucian Analects

Deng's reassessment of both the domestic agenda and international environment meant the watchwords of stability, development, prosperity, and openness were increasingly extended to foreign and security policy. Furthermore, there appears to be an increasing unofficial appreciation for the more comprehensive view of the elements of national security favored in other parts of the region, especially Japan.⁹⁵ This view incorporates the political,

⁹² Zhao, 46.

⁹³ Dreyer, 367.

⁹⁴ Zhao, 66.

⁹⁵ Andrew Mack and Pauline Kerr, "The Evolving Security Discourse in the Asia-Pacific," *The Washington Quarterly* 18, no.1 (Winter 1995), provides an engaging discussion of this concept and other post Cold War security issues in Asia.

economic, and cultural components of society in addition to the military as a measure of national power.

In a January 1980 speech to Party cadres, Deng outlined the three major tasks facing China as it entered the new decade. The first addressed international affairs and expressed the importance of "opposing hegemonism and striving to preserve world peace." The second task was to work for "China's reunification" with Taiwan. The last, and "core of the three major tasks," was to "step up the drive for China's four modernizations."⁹⁶ He would later identify modernization as the "essential condition for solving both our domestic and external problems."⁹⁷ Moreover, "to attain these two goals, we need two conditions: a peaceful international environment and political stability and unity at home." These goals are echoed throughout Deng's works as the decade progressed. In May 1984 Deng remarked:

China's foreign policy can be summed up in two sentences. First, to safeguard world peace we oppose hegemony. Second, China will always belong to the Third World...China's foreign policy is independent and truly non-aligned...the aim of our foreign policy is world peace.⁹⁸

These comments continued to reflect the influence of and the "three worlds" view as Deng placed emphasis upon China's solidarity with the Third World. His concern for the establishment of a "new international economic order" also revealed the Neo-Marxist concern with global resource and income disparities. Deng in the early-to-mid 1980s frequently drew attention to the "North-South problem" and called for greater "South-South cooperation." The tenor of Deng's pro-Third World rhetoric gradually changed, however, as the realities of "great power" status, such as responsibilities on the U.N. Security Council, and the requirements of development pushed the PRC towards the West.

⁹⁶ Deng Vol II, 224-5.

⁹⁷ Deng Vol III, 73.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 66.

We feel that although the danger of war still exists and we still have to remain vigilant, the factors that can prevent a new world war are growing. Our foreign policy is to oppose hegemonism and safeguard world peace...We have made some substantive progress in improving relations with the United States. We are also trying to improve relations with the Soviet Union, while sticking to our principles...The last thing China wants is war...Since we want a peaceful environment, we must cooperate with all of the world's forces for peace".⁹⁹

In 1986, Deng remarked that "we believe that there is not, and cannot be, any centre in the international communist movement."¹⁰⁰ Further, statements in 1989 and 1990 would verify that, while still encouraging an emerging multipolarity, PRC support for the Third World had become only symbolic. To the president of Uganda he would remark:

Hegemonists and imperialists always bully the developing countries...If a big developing country like China still has to safeguard its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, it is obvious that the other developing countries of the third World will have a hard time maintaining their sovereignty and independence. They should therefore unite to struggle together...We are not rich and cannot offer you much financial help, but we can share our experiences with our friends.¹⁰¹

Deng would later confirm the change in strategy in a talk to leading members of the CCP Central Committee:

The current situation is more complex and chaotic than in the past...Some developing countries would like China to become the leader of the Third World. But we absolutely cannot do that...We cannot afford to do it and besides, we aren't strong enough. There is nothing to be gained by playing that role; we would only lose most of our initiative. We do not fear anyone, but we should not give offense to anyone either. We should act in accordance with the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and never deviate from them.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Ibid., 89.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 191.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 282.

¹⁰² Ibid., 350.

In December 1989 and the aftermath of Tiananmen, Deng would again sound another prominent theme – that of China's "national sovereignty and security." He would claim that on the "pretext of human rights concerns," some Western countries were attempting to "play power politics" to "jeopardize our national sovereignty." Making reference to China's suffering since the Opium Wars, Deng stated that "The Chinese people will never accept any action that violates the norms of international relations, and they will never yield to outside pressure."¹⁰³

Thus while the trend in Chinese foreign and security policy during the Reform era was away from the revolutionary to a post-revolutionary theme, issues of nationalism and sovereignty became increasingly important as the regime fought to maintain control of the forces for change. The result was a policy that can best be summarized with key phrases from the "28-character strategy" developed in response to the disintegration of the Soviet Union and end of the Cold War. These principles include:¹⁰⁴

- Watch and analyze developments calmly
- Secure our own positions
- Deal with changes with confidence
- Conceal our capacities
- Keep a low profile
- Never become the leader
- Make some contributions

3. The Third Generation

With the official adoption of Deng Xiaoping Theory by the Party, Deng's vision of China's role in the international order appears basically unchanged. In March 1997, when questioned about potential changes in foreign policy since the passing of Deng, Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen responded:

China's diplomatic activities are being carried out in accordance with the policy set out by Deng Xiaoping. The basic goal of the policy is to create a peaceful environment for our country's

¹⁰³ Ibid., 335.

¹⁰⁴ Zhao, 53-4.

modernization drive. The basic tenets of that policy include: safeguarding world peace, opposing hegemonism, promoting international cooperation and seeking common development. Though Deng has passed away, his policies will be inherited and remain unchanged.¹⁰⁵

Chinese Premier Li Peng added during a speech in Tokyo in November 1997:

China is committing itself to building a modern socialism. The 15th National Congress of the Communist Party of China held recently...defining Deng Xiaoping's Theory as our guiding ideology, electing a new central leadership with Jiang Zemin at the core, and drawing up the blueprint for China's future development. Our goal is to achieve basic modernization by the middle of the next century. To achieve that we need to secure a long-term peaceful international environment and maintain good relations with surrounding countries. China is a staunch force safeguarding world peace. China's development will pose no threat to any other country. China will never seek hegemony even when it becomes developed in the future. China upholds an independent foreign policy of peace and attaches great importance to developing good relations with surrounding countries.¹⁰⁶

In a 1992 official statement at the United Nations, the PRC outlined its goals in the new world order. These goals are summarized as:

- All countries are equal, sovereign members of the international community entitled to participate on an equal footing.
- Every country has the right to chose independently its own social, political, and economic systems and course of development in light of its specific conditions.
- There must be mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity. No country should invade or annex the territory of other countries under any pretext.
- In order to attain common development and prosperity for all the countries on the world, the economic exchanges among countries should be carried out on the basis of equality and mutual benefit, a just

¹⁰⁵ "Top Diplomat Addresses World Issues," *Beijing Review* 40, no. 13 (31 March 1997), 8.

¹⁰⁶ "Li Peng Speaks at Reception in Tokyo," *Beijing Review*.

international economic relationship should be established, and the assistance should be supplied without attaching any political conditions.¹⁰⁷

Turning to the perspective of the core leader, and during his 1997 state visit to the U.S., Jiang Zemin emphasized "four strategic Chinese traditions" in speech at Harvard. Highlights included:

- The tradition of solidarity and unity. People of all nationalities have worked together to establish economic and cultural links and joined hands in developing the vast land of our country. Despite occasional division in Chinese history, ethnic harmony and national unity have remained the main stream in the history of the Chinese nation, and an important guarantee for China's development and progress.
- The tradition of maintaining independence. Our ancestors always regarded the spirit of maintaining independence as the foundation of a nation.
- The peace-loving tradition. Today, the Chinese people who are committed to modernization need more than ever a long-term international environment of peace and a favorable neighboring environment. China's foreign policy is peace-oriented. We will establish and develop friendly relations and cooperation with all countries in the world on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, especially the principles of mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. We all never impose upon others the kind of sufferings we once experienced...China will never seek hegemony even if it is developed in the future.
- The tradition of constantly striving for self-perfection. Through observing the changing nature of the universe and all earthly matters, ancient Chinese philosophers proposed the following doctrine: 'As Heaven maintains vigor through movement, a gentleman should constantly strive for self-perfection.' This idea has become an important moral strength, spurring the Chinese people to work hard for reform and renovation.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ Faust and Kornberg, 20-21.

¹⁰⁸ "Enhance Mutual Understanding and Build Stronger Ties of Friendship and Cooperation," *Beijing Review* 40, no. 47 (24 November 1997): 15.

Jiang's comments again echo the broad themes sounded by Deng throughout the Reform era, placing stability over struggle and reform over revolution. The final point could just as easily have included a quote from Mao explaining the inevitable growth and change of "thought and practice" in dialectical terms. The shifting of fundamental ideological tenets and resultant modification in practice is portrayed as simply the process of identifying and resolving the correct primary contradiction. Through this process societies grow and change, a normal movement toward "self-perfection." However, some aspects of Chinese foreign policy have remained relatively constant.

E. CONTINUITIES

Despite the reassessment and reordering of major ideological concepts central to the Chinese world-view, several key themes have remained remarkably consistent. These concepts cut across the domestic and international arenas and represent basic principles to which the CCP leadership clings. The predominance of these themes reflect the complex interaction of a number of factors introduced here but which are expanded upon through the remainder of the study. These concepts include:

- Political independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. Despite the fact that most countries consider these issues implicit¹⁰⁹, the prominence of these concepts in PRC rhetoric undoubtedly reflect the lingering influence of the "century of shame" beginning in the mid-19th century at the hands of western and Japanese imperialists. More immediately, it is suggested that appeals to these themes, along with supporting policies, are attempts by the Party to bolster regime legitimacy and survival.
- Anti-imperialism. Whether economic or social, this theme has become less pronounced in recent years but continues to influence policy, especially in the PRC's calls for a "new economic order." Developing countries are portrayed as continuing to suffer from the influence of this capitalist phenomena.

¹⁰⁹ See Louis Henkin, *How Nations Behave: Law and Foreign Policy*, 2d ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), 17.

- Support for developing countries. China has maintained this support, even though it is more moral than material since late 1970s. There is certainly no longer a hint of revolutionary Marxism, but rather a focus upon the more "just international economic relationship" in which the developed countries are obligated to assist the undeveloped. Calls for an effort to "assist the oppressed" are somewhat self-serving as well, given China's self-assigned label as a developing country.
- Nationalism. Appeals to this theme have become more prominent as appeals to the dogmatic elements of official ideology have become less so. The Third generation's emphasis on "patriotism" is likely another effort to overcome a fragile political legitimacy by linking China's domestic program and foreign policy with the larger strategic objective of building a rich country and strong army that will allow China to assume its rightful place as a global power. The nature this concept assumes may ultimately determine the degree of aggressiveness China asserts in external relations.
- Socialism over bourgeois liberalization. This theme is highlighted, though primarily of a domestic nature, to emphasize the Party's determination to stay the course as defined by the Four Cardinal Principles. Central to regime survival, the Party continues to mute the pressure for movement toward political liberalization, despite external criticism.

One study suggests that "until China's leaders are able to regain a sense of public mandate for its leadership, it will not be inclined to compromise on what they regard as the core issues of foreign and national security policy."¹¹⁰ These concepts will figure prominently in considering prospects for the future.

F. SUMMARY – THE DIALECTIC AT WORK

This chapter has examined the evolution of major ideological concepts considered most likely to have influenced the perceptions of PRC foreign policy-makers. It has explored how the Chinese leadership shifted from the single-minded concern with political-strategic considerations to a more complete approach to national interests, embracing the importance of economic development and social stability. Broadly, this evolution has occurred within the

¹¹⁰ 1997 *Strategic Review*. Online. Available: <http://www.ndu.edu/ndu/inss/sa97/sa97ch4.html>. 5 March 1998.

framework of the dialectic reasoning process so significant to Chinese Communism, and reflects the ongoing effort to achieve a synthesis between the dogmatism reflected in the "two whatevers" and the more pragmatic approach of "seeking truth from facts." Figure 3 summarizes the transition of key concepts.

	<u>Revolutionary era</u>	<u>Reform era</u>
Domestic Factor:	conflict →	stability
	austerity →	prosperity
	autarky →	openness
International Environment:	simple →	complex
	hostile →	peaceful coexistence
	two camps →	three worlds → multipolarity
Chinese Self-Perception:	revolutionary →	key player
	isolation →	greater integration
	aligned →	great power/independent

Figure 3. Evolving Key Concepts

This incredible transition has been explored from a variety of angles. Quansheng Zhao, for example, posits that shifting priorities to modernization and increase openness were encouraged by several developments during the 1970s and 1980s. These include a greater sense of Party self-confidence as the domestic situation was consolidated, a growing sense of international legitimacy in the years following its replacement of Taiwan as the sole Chinese representative in the U.N., and the fact that many countries surrounding China had experienced rapid economic growth with relative political stability, encouraging fundamental changes in Beijing's interpretation of the requirements

of national strength and survival.¹¹¹ Thomas Robinson argues that the CCP has realized that its time in power as a Marxist-Leninist entity is limited, and, therefore, it must adopt other concepts to promote its political legitimacy.¹¹² Recognizing that the transformation outlined above is the result of an interaction of many factors, there are elements of truth in each.

However, there seems to be a lesser effort at understanding the role of the Chinese cognitive processes at work in official China. John Bryan Starr provides a good start point by describing the fundamental difference between the Chinese Communist and Western approaches to the "three-stage process of cognition."¹¹³ He argues that in the Chinese approach to the relationship of "theory and practice," the Chinese cognitive process approximates "practice-theory-practice" rather than "theory-practice-theory" common in western philosophy. Thus reasoning begins not with abstraction but with concrete problems, or more accurately *contradictions*, which require resolution. Further, according to Starr, the Chinese objective of the cognitive process is *action for change*, not mere understanding. Combined with the conceptual flexibility of dialectic reasoning, therefore, the Chinese Communist have an "eminently pragmatic ideology."

Franz Schurmann suggests that what is extraordinary about this manner of thinking is its simplicity.¹¹⁴ Having accepted "a few basic philosophical premises from Marxism-Leninism," it proceeds to combine ideas into a never-ending series of dualities. These over-arching philosophical premises are termed "pure ideology" by Schurmann and are further described as "a set of ideas designed to give the individual a unified and conscious world view." Practical ideology, on the other hand, is a set of ideas designed to "give the individual rational instruments for action." And while the pure ideology of the

¹¹¹ Zhao, 51-54.

¹¹² Robinson, "Chinese Foreign Policy from the 1940s to the 1990s," in *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, eds. Robinson and Shambaugh, 592.

¹¹³ Starr, 29.

¹¹⁴ Schurmann, 18-20.

CCP consists of a fixed set of universal ideas, its practical ideology consists of an ever-changing and ever-expanding set of particular ideas, derived from the dialectic combination of ideological thinking with concrete problems. That some combinations may have been wrong or useless makes little difference, since the products of such thinking will always be particular, not universal, ideas. The *manner of thinking*, and not necessarily its particular products, will always be universal and true.

Not only has it evolved, but it appears official ideology has assumed a different role in the PRC as well. During the Revolutionary era, all policies and programs had to measure up to or even sprang from official ideology. Official ideology now appears to provide the general parameters, or principles, for governmental policies. Marxism as seen through the lens of Deng Xiaoping Theory appears to embody principles such as social equality, common prosperity, sovereignty, and independence, while allowing the technical details for accomplishing these ends to conform to those widely adopted elsewhere. This appears to be the essence of "learning truth from facts."

G. CONCLUSION

The Chinese Communist's utilitarian conception of theory and practice has allowed official ideology to evolve to meet the changing needs of the CCP. As certain dogmatic elements became obsolete, the intrinsically dynamic nature of dialectic thinking allowed the flexibility to move toward more a more pragmatic approach rather than reject the philosophy that had always guided the Party to victory in the Revolution. This process, however, was not without internal conflict, and the "new" theory took the better part of a decade to acquire a sense of widespread legitimacy within the Party.

The central themes of this evolution, as depicted above, have been prominent in the works of the core leader. And given the highly centralized nature of the Chinese foreign policy decision-making, the transition from a revolutionary to post-revolutionary state is almost certain to have a tremendous

impact upon the PRC's behavior in the international system. The case study that follows examines more fully the influence of official ideology in the PRC's external security behavior.

III. OFFICIAL IDEOLOGY AND PRC FOREIGN POLICY

The Moral Law causes the people to be in complete accord with their ruler, so that they will follow him regardless of their lives, undismayed by any danger.

Sun Tzu

A. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter explored the evolution of key ideological concepts most influential to PRC foreign and security policy. These included key domestic priorities and leadership perceptions of the characteristics of the international environment and China's role within it. This chapter develops more fully the linkage between official ideology and the PRC's international behavior. In doing so, the case study examines four significant foreign policy decisions that occurred from 1965 to 1996 and focuses upon PRC relations with the U.S. and former Soviet Union. Specifically, it considers:

- PRC support for the Democratic People's Republic of Vietnam from 1965-68
- The Sino-Soviet border conflict of 1969
- The Sino-Soviet rapprochement in 1989 and border demarcation in 1991
- The Taiwan Straits crisis in 1996

This approach is taken in light of the primacy of Sino-American and Sino-Soviet relations to PRC leadership. Thomas Robinson posits that "so long as Chinese policy focused primarily on the U.S. and USSR, many other aspects of Beijing's foreign relations tended to follow."¹¹⁵ While this assessment reflects a Cold War strategic mentality, it appears accurate for much of the period under analysis and underscores the importance of current and future PRC relations with the United States and Russia. Also, selected episodes primarily feature decision-making in external use of force circumstances in keeping with the focus on PRC security policy.

¹¹⁵ Robinson, "Chinese Foreign Policy from the 1940s to the 1990s," in *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, eds. Robinson and Shambaugh, 563.

B. PRC SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM AGAINST THE UNITED STATES FROM 1965-68

1. Course of Events

In February 1965, the United States began a program of air strikes known as Operation Rolling Thunder against military targets in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam). This campaign was designed to hinder the North's material and psychological support to the communist insurgency in the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam). The U.S. military effort was expanded in March by the introduction of ground forces in South Vietnam when two battalions of U.S. Marines came ashore. By July 1965, the Johnson administration had decided to deploy 75,000 U.S. troops to full-scale ground combat operations in South Vietnam. Later that year, American expeditionary forces numbered some 180,000. This escalation, following years of steadily increasing military and economic support, prompted a decision by Beijing to begin more extensive support of its "brotherly comrades" in North Vietnam. Accordingly, in September 1965, PLA railway engineer and construction battalions together with anti-aircraft divisions began deployment into Vietnam. The PRC also granted \$110-200 million (estimated) worth of military and economic aid to Hanoi.¹¹⁶ This support continued until mid-1968, when these forces withdrew after President Johnson had reduced the level and area of bombing in exchange for Hanoi's agreement to peace negotiations in Paris.

During the PLA presence in North Vietnam (and Laos), U.S. aircraft and Chinese ground forces repeatedly exchanged fire despite intentions in both capitals of minimizing the chances of direct confrontation. The Chinese repaired bridges, roads, and rail lines between Hanoi and its southern border following American attacks. They also constructed a large base in northwest Vietnam that included a 5,000 foot runway and more than 100 buildings which were protected by anti-aircraft guns on rails throughout the adjacent hills. A 1979 *People's Daily*

article claimed that a total of 320,000 troops served in Vietnam during the nearly three year period, with units rotated through to gain combat experience. Chinese casualties were placed at 20,000 with 1,000 dead remaining in Vietnam. Beijing's announcements during the war correctly reported a dozen U.S. planes shot down over China.¹¹⁷

2. Analysis

Based on logical inference, combined with a basic understanding of events in 20th Asia and CCP ideology, it would seem inconceivable that China would fail to support, in some capacity, North Vietnam's revolutionary effort. After all, twice in the previous 15 years the PRC had committed military forces beyond its borders in support of national interests. The first was on the Korean peninsula in support of communist North Korea against "U.S. aggression," and the second against India in a border conflict involving disputes over the extreme western and eastern sectors of their shared border in Xizang province (Tibet). In Vietnam, like in Korea, Beijing once again perceived a neighboring communist regime under attack by U.S imperialist forces. Further, not only was China's identity as an Asian and communist power at stake, but Beijing perceived that the fall of North Vietnam to a government friendly to the U.S. could eventually make China's southern border vulnerable to invasion by Nationalist forces from Taiwan. Thus the PRC clearly had ideological and practical security justification to pursue this policy. The *Peking Review* in February 1965 would declare:

The Democratic Republic of Viet Nam is a member of the socialist camp and all other socialist countries have the unshirkable international obligation to support and assist it with *actual deeds*.¹¹⁸

A closer examination, however, reveals that the PRC by the mid-1960s was in a very different situation than when it committed the PLA against U.N.

¹¹⁶ King C. Chen, "China and the Indochina Crisis," in *The Role of External Powers in the Indochina Crisis*, ed. Gene T. Hsiao (New York: Andronicus Publishing Co., 1973), 65-67.

¹¹⁷ Cited in Allen S. Whiting, "Forecasting Chinese Foreign Policy," in *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, eds. Robinson and Shambaugh, 515-16.

forces in Korea. Not only had the PRC leadership's ideological perceptions of the international order begun to change radically, but the dynamic nature of the PRC domestic scene might have mitigated other motives for commitment of forces. Specifically, China's relations with Vietnam were complicated by the formers' growing dispute with the Soviet Union and the complex internal political conflict which would lead to the Cultural Revolution. This interplay of external and internal events and perceptions led to a significant shift in China's relationship with North Vietnam during the 1960s and its levels of support for that country's war efforts. In this event, the primary focus will be on the influence of the domestic dimension in shaping Chinese security decisions.

Following the Geneva Agreement on Indochina of 1954, and with a focus on domestic problems as well as a desire to minimize the chance of another U.S. military intervention in Asia, the Beijing leadership neither hindered nor encouraged Hanoi's efforts to "liberate" the South by military means until 1962. Until that time, and when questioned formally by the Vietnamese Politburo about strategies of the "Southern revolution," Beijing reportedly responded by emphasizing the importance of socialist revolution and reconstruction in the North.¹¹⁹ Beijing would go on to suggest that Hanoi should adopt in the South a strategy of "not exposing our own forces for a long period, accumulating our own strength, establishing connections with the masses, and waiting for the coming of proper opportunities."¹²⁰ This apparent lack of enthusiasm toward a more aggressive revolutionary struggle by their Vietnamese comrades suggests the Chinese leaders had become consumed by the domestic crisis associated with policies of the Great Leap Forward.

Realizing the Soviet model of industrial growth was not suitable for China, the Great Leap Forward had represented Mao's vision for achieving economic

¹¹⁸ "China is Well Prepared to Assist D.R.V. Against U.S. Aggression," *Peking Review* VIII, no. 7 (12 February 1965): 6.

¹¹⁹ Chen Jian, "China's Involvement in the Vietnam War, 1964-69," *The China Quarterly* (June 1995): 357.

¹²⁰ Cited by Jian, Guo Ming et al., *Zhongyue guanxi yanbian sishinian*, 66.

and social modernity by leaping over the preliminary stages of development anticipated by socialism. This idea rested on Mao's faith in "mind over matter" and belief that the masses possessed great latent productive power if properly motivated and mobilized to action. Its influence touched almost all aspects of Chinese society: the countryside was organized into giant agricultural communes intended to be self-sufficient; urban society and industrial concerns were reorganized into small production units emphasizing egalitarianism and increased output at the expense of quality and investment; and the military abandoned Soviet manuals for their own while de-emphasizing professionalism in favor of guerrilla war traditions. The result was disorganization, dislocation, and eventual national tragedy as roughly thirty million people died of famine in 1960-61.¹²¹

Issues surrounding these domestic developments are significant to this case for two reasons. First, the adoption of this domestic developmental program represented an abandonment of Soviet leadership and contributed to the hostile split between the two allies as described later in this study. Second, the CCP leadership splintered over the appropriate response to the disaster, eventually influencing Chinese policy in Vietnam and contributing to the initiation of the Great Proletariat Cultural Revolution.

The details of Party efforts to correct for Great Leap failures are beyond the scope of this study. Critical, however, is that two agendas emerged within the Party in the early 1960s. Many leaders, like Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, and Chen Yun, favored more pragmatic economic policies, expert management, and individual responsibility to regain social stability and get development back on track. Mao and his supporters, by contrast, became obsessed with the fear that the appeal to material concerns would undermine the emphasis on revolution.¹²² This fear was exaggerated by evolving relations with the USSR and the implications of Soviet "revisionism." Ultimately, by 1962 Mao successfully

¹²¹ Lieberthal, 104-5.

refocused the Party upon "class struggle" and called for a renewed ideological emphasis, thus launching the "two-lines struggle" between the revolutionaries and reformers and a "socialist education" movement across the country.

Kenneth Lieberthal argues that the resulting mix of policies was schizophrenic.¹²³ While more practical economic policies from 1962-65 brought about a remarkably rapid recovery, mass campaigns advocated ideological commitment to egalitarianism and class struggle along with denouncements of internal and external enemies linked to the United States and Soviet Union. Mao had also dictated the start of a new program of economic investment deep in the interior of the country called the "third line" or "third front" intended to provide strategic depth in the event of war with the United States if hostilities in Vietnam continued to escalate.

Against this backdrop, and even with the lukewarm response to Hanoi's earlier request for assistance in the Vietnamese revolution, Beijing incrementally expanded its security commitment to North Vietnam through 1967 when PLA forces reached a peak of 170,000.¹²⁴ Further, Zhou Enlai in December 1965 would underscore the PRC resolve by stating:

The Chinese people have long been prepared. Should U.S. imperialism insist on going further along the road of war expansion and having another trial of strength with the Chinese people, we will resolutely take up the challenge and fight to the end...the Chinese people will unswervingly side with the fraternal Vietnamese people and contribute all our efforts to the defeat of U.S. imperialism until final victory.¹²⁵

What factors were dominant in this change of heart? Certainly Beijing's decision to actively support North Vietnam had its own logic and a plethora of considerations. The impact and threat of imperialism had been central to the Chinese world view for quite some time. Other important reasons the PRC

¹²² Fairbank, 375.

¹²³ Lieberthal, 110.

¹²⁴ Jian, 378.

committed its forces to the fight and risked direct confrontation with the United States are outlined by King Chen.¹²⁶ He posits that by mid-1965, Beijing held a different view on global strategy than either the Soviets or the North Vietnamese. In light of the collapse of the "two camps" model of world revolution and "Khrushchev revisionism," Beijing had rejected the concept of "unified action" on the part of a single communist movement, and had begun to assert its position as the role model for communist revolution in the world.¹²⁷ Consequently, it saw a significant advantage in the continuation and participation of the war; it served as a model for the war of national liberation in the Third World, undermined a possible American-Soviet détente, created domestic anti-war disturbances and economic difficulties in the United States, and aroused anti-U.S. sentiment abroad.¹²⁸

In keeping with the focus upon the domestic factor, however, Beijing's policy of "forward attack" in Vietnam also provided Mao the justification for increased emphasis on political and social mobilization at home. Despite the failures of the Great Leap Forward, Mao remained firmly committed to revolutionizing the CCP and remaking Chinese society. Thus, not only did the Vietnamese revolution conform to Beijing's evolving world view and perceived role in the strategic environment, but it supported Mao's domestic ideological agenda as well. Keenly aware of the strong psychological effect of the perception of China facing a serious external imperialist threat, Mao used foreign policy to facilitate the mobilization effort and strengthened his hand in the ideological confrontation with other senior leaders in the Party.

The strategic challenge lay in finding the right balance of support to achieve the desired domestic result while minimizing the risk of direct military

¹²⁵ "China is Ready to Take Up U.S. Challenge," *Peking Review* VIII, no. 52 (24 December 1965): 5.

¹²⁶ Chen, 66-67.

¹²⁷ See "Refutation of the New Leaders of the C.P.S.U. on 'United Action'," *Peking Review* VIII, no. 46 (12 November 1965): 10.

¹²⁸ Chen, 66.

confrontation with the United States. This consideration likely prompted the decision to commit primarily combat support troops and ground-based air defense units in the North Vietnam while avoiding the more aggressive posture of committing combat troops and Chinese aircraft to provide advanced air cover. Intentional efforts at communicating the PLA presence and disposition in North Vietnam to American intelligence through aerial photography and electronic intercepts were also interpreted as attempt to lessen the chance for direct engagement and deter a U.S. invasion of the North.¹²⁹

3. Conclusion

The ideological factor played a key role in guiding China's military involvement in Vietnam. The North Vietnamese struggle increasingly conformed to Beijing's world view as it evolved through the 1960s, supported Mao's ideologically motivated efforts to *rebuild Chinese society*, and served to anchor the *revolutionary mindset* in power politics at the center. At the same time, the intervention was tempered by the realities of the nuclear age. While compelled to support another communist regime and developing country in its struggle against imperialism, China took pains to avoid direct confrontation with the United States. Even though Beijing would ultimately break ranks with North Vietnam over the decision to accept peace talks in 1968, it would have to count its overall strategy in Vietnam a success in that it helped secure the status of a fellow communist state and deter the United States from further escalating the war.

C. THE SINO-SOVIET BORDER CONFLICT OF 1969

1. Course of Events

This incident, the first involving a direct military clash between the PRC and the Soviets, involved skirmishes over Zhenbao Island, located on the Chinese side of the main channel of the Wusuli (Ussuri) River, which demarcated the Sino-Soviet border. While border disputes between Russia and

¹²⁹ Whiting, 517.

China have a long historical tradition, the more immediate causes of this incident date from the 1964 termination of "consultations" over the existing border regime, established by the Border Rivers Navigation Agreement of 1951 signed by the PRC and USSR.¹³⁰ This agreement, signed by the PRC at a time of economic and military dependence, had ceded to the Soviets armed control of the Wusuli River (among other border rivers) and of more than 600 of the 700 islands located in these strategically important waterways in the extreme northeastern border region. The consultations, begun in 1962, stalemated over Chinese claims to large territories in Siberia, demands for recognition of the "unequal" nature of the historical border arrangement, and issues regarding the exact borderline. Further, the Soviets were unwilling to relinquish control over most of the 700 islands in the frontier rivers. Mao's public criticism of Soviet "imperialism" prompted Khrushchev to suspend the talks in October 1964.

Subsequently, the Chinese became increasingly aggressive in asserting claims of sovereignty in the border areas, with numerous encroachments by Chinese fishermen and soldiers in the disputed waterways and islands. Border incidents increased dramatically, with over 4,000 incidents documented by the Chinese from 1964 to 1969, though most were minor and handled at the local level.¹³¹ Simultaneously, the Soviets began a process of reinforcing its military presence along the Sino-Soviet border, and in 1966 signed a pact with Mongolia allowing stationing of Soviet troops in strength within that country.¹³² By 1967, China began to match some of the Soviet buildup.

In late January 1969, a serious military clash occurred at Zhenbao Island which precipitated a more aggressive Chinese tactical posture. Following an exchange of propaganda barrages and threats, two major clashes occurred in March. The first was reportedly launched by Chinese forces and resulted in

¹³⁰ Christian F. Ostermann, "East German Documents on the Sino-Soviet Border Conflict, 1969." Online. Available: www.seas.gwu.edu/nsarchive/CWIHP/BULLETINS/b6-7a13.htm. 24 April 1998.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Gerald Segal, *Defending China* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 177.

relatively high casualties by the Soviets. In the second, apparently orchestrated by the Soviets to teach the Chinese a lesson, superior Soviet numbers and firepower decimated Chinese troops.¹³³ One report indicates several thousand troops from each side were involved during this conflict with the PLA suffering at least 800 casualties, while the Soviets suffered about 90 casualties.¹³⁴

Diplomatic maneuvers throughout the following spring and summer resulted in agreements by both sides to resume river navigation talks but not before Chinese and Soviet troops had also clashed in Xinjiang. The military conflict surrounding the issue was finally resolved in October 1969 by a meeting at the Beijing airport between the two countries' premiers – Zhou Enlai and Aleksei Kosygin – followed by more lengthy negotiations over the border issues at the deputy foreign minister level. Nevertheless, this confrontation, along with other disputes, contributed to the shift in the Chinese external threat perceptions and ensured a high level of tension existed between the two communist giants over the next two decades.

2. Analysis

The Treaty of Nerchinsk, signed by China and Russia in 1689, was China's first formal border treaty.¹³⁵ Since that time, the issue of where Russia meets China has been an important theme in relations between the two countries. At a deeper level, however, motives for this confrontation go far beyond issues of territory and sovereignty. One author writes that "it now seems evident that the border issue was a symptom rather than a cause of heightening tensions between both countries...both sides, however, found the issue extremely useful as an instrument in their ideological and power-political rivalry."¹³⁶ This view is underscored by the observation that there seemed to be virtually no attainable, or significant, military objective for either side.¹³⁷ The

¹³³ Ibid., 177.

¹³⁴ Zhao, 44.

¹³⁵ Faust and Kornberg, 101.

¹³⁶ Ostermann.

¹³⁷ Segal, 176.

incidents were largely firefights between frontier patrols, despite relatively large-scale re-positioning of conventional forces by both sides, thus emphasizing the *pre-eminently political nature* of the crisis.

A great paradox of international relations throughout the 1960s was that the harshest criticism of Soviet foreign policy emanated from another socialist power.¹³⁸ Ironically, China viewed the Soviet Union as the "most dangerous" of the two superpowers; a determination which influenced the nature of Beijing's relations with the rest of the world. Central to this view was the concept of *hegemonism*, generally defined as the political and economic expansion of power and the exercise of control and influence. Mao reasoned that as U.S. imperialism was being defeated in Asia, the Soviets were taking advantage of U.S. weakness to strengthen and augment their own position. Beijing, therefore, increasingly warned Asian leaders to "guard against the tiger (Soviets) at the back door while expelling the wolf (United States) from the front gate."¹³⁹

With respect to Sino-Soviet bilateral relations, and complementary to the developing theme of anti-hegemony, Mao came to contend that there was no difference whatsoever between "social" and "capitalist" imperialism. This key concept, which had served to unite his party and army through revolutionary struggles and civil war, would eventually color his views in later years in relations with his former major ally. More specifically, Maoist theory indicated that with the usurpation of party and state power by the "revisionist renegade Khrushchev-Brezhnev clique," capitalism had been restored in the Soviet Union "in an all around way." The Soviet Union, "once a socialist state," was reclassified as a "socialist-imperialist superpower." Moreover, and within the "three worlds model, Mao saw humankind as divided into "two families." The two "families" consisted of the exploiting class and the proletariat. There could be no third family. Therefore, the revisionists were merely a variant of the bourgeoisie. Mao publicly stated:

¹³⁸ Sidky, 8.

The rise to power of revisionism means the rise to power of the bourgeoisie...The Soviet Union today is under the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, a dictatorship of the big bourgeoisie, a dictatorship of the German fascist type, a dictatorship of the Hitler type.¹⁴⁰

The change in attitude and ideology obviously did not occur overnight, but evolved as Mao grew increasingly agitated over Soviet interference, and influence, in PRC affairs. Soviet criticism, for example, of the Great Leap Forward and subsequent withdrawal of developmental assistance essentially formalized the ideological rift. Mao also reportedly watched with growing apprehension in the late 1950s as the Soviet Union underwent the process of de-Stalinization.¹⁴¹ He apparently was fearful not only that the process might lead to a re-evaluation of other leaders, to include himself, but a repudiation of ideological principles he considered worthy of respect and emulation.

By January 1962, Mao was ready to state explicitly, though not for public consumption, that the Party and state leadership in the Soviet Union had been "usurped by revisionists," thus ending the solidarity between "fraternal parties."¹⁴² As relations deteriorated following the suspension of border consultations, Mao severed party relations with the CPSU in 1966 and reduced communications with Moscow to low-level contacts. Even state-to-state relations reportedly had little appeal for Mao. After attempts by the Soviets to expand commercial relations between the two countries, perceived as an attempt to keep China dependent upon Soviet industrial expertise, Mao concluded that it was better to deal with the French bourgeoisie, "who still have some notion of business ethics."¹⁴³

From the Chinese perspective, the external threat took on a new dimension in 1968 by the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and the proclamation of the Brezhnev doctrine. Suddenly, the conflict of ideas assumed a more militant posture and many senior PRC leaders recognized that greater

¹³⁹ Cited by Sidky, 8.

¹⁴⁰ Cited by Sidky, 13.

¹⁴¹ Schram, 36.

¹⁴² Ibid., 181.

vigilance against Moscow was needed. Georg Segal posits that even though Sino-Soviet relations had steadily deteriorated during the 1960s, Mao probably never felt particularly vulnerable to actual Soviet aggression until late in the decade.¹⁴⁴ As a consequence, the Central Military Commission issued a directive which put the country on "war footing"¹⁴⁵ and the PRC assumed an even more belligerent tone in its bilateral relations with the Soviets.

A final point relates to the Chinese domestic component of the decision to initiate the early incident in March. Several domestic issues might have influenced Chinese actions in this incident. First, and by far the most important, China was in the midst of the Great Proletariat Cultural Revolution. The influence of this period upon the decision-making institutions in the PRC, while too complex to analyze here, cannot be overemphasized. Another brewing issue revolved around succession politics, which eventually led to Defense Minister Lin Biao's challenge to Mao's rule, and increasing factional intrigue. Finally, and identical to the logic associated with PRC policy in North Vietnam, the presentation of an imminent external threat was likely seen by Beijing as advantageous in mobilizing the population to achieve domestic ideological goals. While it would be difficult to outline a definitive theory regarding the influence of the domestic situation, perhaps the most important dimension may be the overarching sense of *domestic unrest* which heightened the sense of vulnerability on the part of Chinese leaders.¹⁴⁶

3. Conclusion

Ideological estrangement between the two belligerents was the primary motivator for the dispute, magnifying differences over territory, sovereignty, strategy, and security. Further, the ideological conflict was not an abstract philosophical dispute. It impacted directly on numerous issues of domestic and

¹⁴³ Ibid., 198.

¹⁴⁴ Segal, 183.

¹⁴⁵ Ostermann.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 188-90.

foreign policy that affected the distribution of power and authority inside China and within the international communist movement. Evolving Soviet security policy in the late 1960s likely provided the final incentive for the PRC to assume a very aggressive military posture in an attempt to display political independence and sovereignty.

D. SINO-SOVIET RAPPROACHMENT IN 1989 AND BORDER DEMARCATION IN 1991

1. Course of Events

On May 15, 1989, the long-awaited summit that marked the normalization of relations between China and the Soviet Union took place in Beijing. This event marked the culmination of steadily improving relations between the two socialist powers since 1982, and signaled the end of an era that had helped define international politics for a quarter century.¹⁴⁷ Mikhail Gorbachev, general secretary of the Soviet Communist Party and president of the Supreme Soviet, visited China and held talks with Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping, who described the summit as "ending the past and opening the future." Further, to the Chinese, the changing relationship was finally placed in the context of the "principles of peaceful co-existence" which it claimed to apply in all its international relations.¹⁴⁸

Normalization brought new impetus to the development of bilateral ties. Bilateral exchanges in the political, economic, trade, science and technology, and military sectors increased markedly. Premier Li Peng visited the Soviet Union in April 1990 to sign inter-governmental agreements on reducing the military presence and establishing building confidence measures along the Sino-Soviet border and another on long-term cooperation in economy, science, and technology. During a visit to Moscow in May 1991 by Jiang Zemin, general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, both sides reiterated their desire to

¹⁴⁷ Steven I. Levine, "The Uncertain Future of Chinese Foreign Policy," *Current History* (September 1989): 264.

¹⁴⁸ Shi Ze, "Chinese and Russian Partnership Growing." Online. Available: www.Zhuhai.gd.cn/chinawin/publication/bjreview/april/96-18-7.html. 15 April 1998.

further expand ties and pledged to respect the choice of social systems made by the citizens of the other country.

Also during this visit, and of specific interest to this study, is the agreement signed ending the dispute over the eastern section of shared borders between the countries. The agreement specified that demarcation would follow international guidelines by adopting the thalweg of river as the dividing line for their common border, and recognized that Zhenbao Island was Chinese territory. The two parliaments ratified the agreement in February 1992, and instruments of ratification were exchanged in March. Further border demarcation efforts were subsequently implemented. The resolution of the border issue, a long-standing obstacle to better relations between the PRC and Soviet Union, paved the way for more extensive cooperation between China and Russia, which declared itself successor to the former Soviet Union in December 1991.¹⁴⁹

2. Analysis

The border demarcation efforts of the late 1980s provide an interesting focal point, in light of the conflict discussed above, in considering evolving Sino-Soviet relations and PRC security policy well into the Reform era. What conditions had changed to allowed a peaceful resolution of this issue? Certainly this historic development involves a host of complicated international and domestic factors in both countries that cannot be treated adequately here. In fact, the evolution in Sino-Soviet relations were undoubtedly influenced as much, maybe even more, by developments in the former Soviet Union than in the PRC. The study focuses, however, upon Chinese political and strategic considerations and the ideological component.

The Soviet Union had been China's principal security threat since the late-1960s. For nearly two decades, China had been obsessed with several major aspects of the perceived Soviet threat. The first was the effects of the ideological estrangement discussed above. Another was the sense of geo-

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

strategic encirclement caused by its lengthy border with the USSR as well as Moscow's "alliance" or support of Hanoi and New Delhi, both of which had territorial disputes and other traditional animosities with Beijing.¹⁵⁰ The Soviet influence in North Korea as well as the large troop concentrations along the Sino-Soviet border also contributed to perceived efforts to destabilize China's periphery. Finally, the threat posed by Soviet nuclear missiles, including the SS-20 intermediate-range missiles, had significantly influenced Chinese security policy and defense preparations.¹⁵¹

Most analysis indicates, however, that conditions conducive to reconciliation between the two countries had begun to take shape in the early 1980s, and actually had its roots in the "economic warming" of that period.¹⁵² Chinese bilateral trade with USSR in 1976-80, for example, had increased 276 percent over the comparable period a decade earlier, and continued to increase rapidly.¹⁵³ With the succession issue largely settled in China and Deng's plan for economic reform and "opening to the world" endorsed by the Twelfth Party Congress in 1982, PRC leadership had begun mulling over the prospects for a long-term peace and reductions in military expenditures. Deng had realized that economic modernization would require an influx of foreign capital and technology and, therefore, a foreign policy that would ensure access to markets and resources of many countries, regardless of political system. In fact, Deng himself confirmed the domestic-economic foreign policy linkage by stating: "when we decided on the domestic policy of (economic) construction, we adjust our foreign policy (accordingly)."¹⁵⁴

Several years later in the Soviet Union, and assuming that its stagnant economy could only be revived by reducing international hostility and reducing

¹⁵⁰ Guocang Huan, "The New Relationship with the Former Soviet Union," *Current History* (September 1992): 254.

¹⁵¹ James C. Hsiung, "Sino-Soviet Détente and Chinese Foreign Policy," *Current History* (September 1988): 247.

¹⁵² A useful summary is provided by Hsiung.

¹⁵³ Hsiung, 248.

¹⁵⁴ "Europe-A Force for Maintaining Peace," *Beijing Review* 31, no. 2 (11 January 1988): 18.

the size of its military, Gorbachev's "perestroika" was intended to place the Soviet Union on the path toward economic reform that in many ways paralleled China's. Moscow reportedly was interested in paring down its planned economy and in China's use of "special economic zones" and joint ventures.¹⁵⁵

Still, ideological considerations factored heavily in bilateral relations. It was not, for example, until the Soviets displayed a willingness to address China's "three obstacles" to improved relations that Beijing would officially move forward in this area. Specifically, Soviet involvement in Afghanistan, support to Vietnam in Cambodia, and troop concentrations along the Sino-Soviet border were perceived by Beijing as classic *hegemonic* behavior and a lingering symptom of Soviet imperialist tendencies. Gorbachev's July 1986 speech in Vladivostok signaled Moscow's willingness to begin negotiating these key issues, and during the course of 1988, these were satisfied by a number of Soviet diplomatic initiatives. The Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan was begun in the spring of 1988 and completed on schedule in February 1989. China and the Soviet Union had agreed to pursue a political settlement to the Cambodian issue and reduce aid to their respective clients, and Gorbachev had announced in a speech at the United Nations in December that the Soviet Union would withdraw most of its troops from Mongolia.¹⁵⁶ Finally, the INF treaty signed in December 1987 by the United States and Soviet Union helped lessen the fear of nuclear warfare.

Given these developments, and from the Chinese perspective, efforts to move forward with normalization of Sino-Soviet relations and resolution of the border issue were finally possible. In fact, improved relations with the Soviets had been considered increasingly beneficial by CCP leadership for several major reasons. First, it significantly reduced anxiety over the security threat along China's northern border, thus allowing Beijing to rein in the military budget essential to the economic reform effort. Second, it substantiated China's claim to an "independent" foreign policy, facilitating China's diplomatic maneuvering

¹⁵⁵ Hsiung, 247.

between Moscow and Washington. This was especially important given the "quiet crisis" brewing in China's relations with the U.S. in the late 1980s.¹⁵⁷ Tensions with the U.S. had been steadily mounting over human rights issues in Tibet, trade problems, and reports of Chinese arms sales to Iran. All this was against a background of condemnations by the United States Congress and sanctions imposed by the Reagan Administration.¹⁵⁸ Third, it opened an additional potential source of foreign aid and assistance to the modernization effort.¹⁵⁹

Finally, and just as important, an important link in the socialist world was reestablished at a time when the younger generation in China had already expressed, quite vividly in fact at Tiananmen Square in June 1989, deep skepticism about the alleged superiority of socialism and leadership of the Party. Therefore at one level, rapprochement was encouraged by a sense of renewed ideological compatibility, with the CCP leadership hoping to bolster its fading political legitimacy. In fact, this connection proved to be of dubious value as events in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe unfolded over the next couple of years. By early 1990, Chinese leaders sensed another ideological threat in the Gorbachev reforms. The Soviet leader's decision to amend the constitutional provision which required the political dominance of the Communist Party was in direct contradiction to Deng's "Four Cardinal Principles" for the development of socialism in China. An internal Party document, in fact, accused Gorbachev of being a "traitor to the socialist cause" and labeled his line a "total betrayal of the fundamental precepts of Marxism-Leninism."¹⁶⁰

3. Conclusion

An examination of the economic incentives and strategic environment confronting China in the 1980s certainly seems to justify greater efforts to reduce

¹⁵⁶ Levine, 264.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 262.

¹⁵⁸ Hsiung, 247.

¹⁵⁹ Levine, 264.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 261.

tension with its neighbors. Still, and even though the Party had abandoned or re-evaluated much of its Maoist dogma for a more pragmatic approach, several basic tenets of official ideology served to temper the forces for improved relations between the PRC and USSR. Most critical was Beijing's view of lingering Soviet hegemonic behavior throughout the region. However, once Moscow displayed a willingness to modify its international conduct in this regard, or at least the more overt aspects, the ideological constraints to improved relations were minimized. Hopes for a renewed socialist "solidarity," however, were quickly dispelled as Gorbachev lost control of his own reform processes and the USSR collapsed.

E. TAIWAN STRAITS CRISIS IN 1996

1. Course of Events

In June 1995, Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui paid an "unofficial visit" to the U.S. to attend a class reunion of his alma mater, Cornell University. Also in that month, Taiwanese Premier Lien Chan made a "private trip" to Austria and the Czech Republic. It represented the first trip to Europe by a top leader from Taiwan. Subsequently, Beijing announced the suspension of cross-strait talks with Taiwan, and in July 1995, that the PLA would conduct a series of missile exercises just north of Taipei. From 22-24 July 1995, China conducted the first round of missile exercises into waters north of Taiwan, firing six surface-to-surface tactical ballistic missiles. A second round of exercises were conducted in early August during which Beijing declared an area 50 times larger than the first exercise off limits, effectively amounting to a partial blockade of Taiwan. The ten-day exercise, which included anti-ship cruise missiles, eventually included the firing of live artillery. The exercises are credited with interrupting shipping and aviation in and around the Straits as well as influencing fluctuations in the Taiwanese stock market.¹⁶¹ The exercise was concluded amid a barrage of harsh statements from both sides of the Straits but minimal interference from

forces outside China. The situation remained tense for the remainder of the year.

In February 1996, the PRC began positioning significant forces along the coastline of the southeastern Fujian Province facing Taiwan. These forces reportedly included some 150,000 troops, an increase in warplanes by 88 to a total of 226 deployed at various airfields, and four amphibious landing craft to the Fujian port of Xiamen and Pingtan.¹⁶² Following this redeployment, Beijing in March reported that the PLA would stage a new series of missile exercises in the Taiwan Straits from 8 to 15 March, and would employ surface-to-surface missiles in two target areas; one site northeast of Taiwan about 21 miles from the port of Keelung, and the other 32 miles west of the southern port of Kaohsiung, which together handle approximately 70 percent of Taiwan's external trade. The exercise was also scheduled to include military maneuvers in a 6,600-square-mile zone that stretched to the mid-point of the Taiwan Strait which would partially obstruct shipping and air traffic as in 1995. Taiwan responded by placing its 400,000 member military on heightened alert as the exercise began according to schedule.

The PRC exercises evoked a significant international response, especially in the United States. On March 10, Secretary of State Warren Christopher, referring to China's actions as "reckless," announced the dispatch of a carrier battle group led by the USS Independence to the waters off Taiwan. White House spokesman James Fetig declared the exercise a "provocative act," while Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich labeled it an "an act of terror." The next day, President Clinton authorized the reinforcement of the Independence group by sending the USS Nimitz carrier battle group into the area. A statement by

¹⁶¹ "Chronology of Recent Events in U.S.-Taiwan-China Relations." Online. Available: www.taiwanc.org/hst-9596.htm. 20 April 1998.

¹⁶² Ibid.

U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali appealed for restraint by all parties to the crisis.¹⁶³

In an apparent response to PRC exercises, and following Taiwan's presidential and National Assembly elections in late March, Taiwan's Defense Minister Chiang Chung-ling announced Taiwan would conduct military exercises in its front-line Matsu Islands in early April, yet subsequently postponed these plans in a presumed effort to ease tensions in the region.

2. Analysis

While PRC leadership would vehemently oppose the consideration of its policies with regard to cross-strait relations as foreign policy, it certainly would fail under the purview of Chinese security policy. The U.S.-PRC-Taiwan relationship is widely regarded as one of the most potentially destabilizing issues in the region. This study will not retrace the entire development of the Taiwan issue in U.S.-PRC strategic relations, but will look to the immediate causes of the 1996 incident and consider the influence of CCP ideology.

The Communists came to power following a long revolutionary struggle which drew heavily upon nationalistic themes. Moreover, Mao declared that "China had stood up" and promised the reestablishment of territorial integrity and an end to foreign interference in the nation's domestic affairs. Throughout the years the PRC has achieved gradual but significant successes, such as the return of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty in 1997 and anticipated return of Macao in 1999. At the same time, there remains a small island some one hundred miles across the Taiwan Straits, rightfully Chinese, which maintains international political and economic relations as if it were an independent country. This situation serves as a constant reminder to the Party and entire mainland of the humiliations and struggles of the past. More specifically, it suggests an incomplete civil war and national revolution, and is perceived as contributing to the erosion of Party authority and legitimacy. Accordingly, and to

¹⁶³ Quotes cited in "Chronology of Recent Events in U.S.-Taiwan-China Relations."

justify its nationalistic credentials, the CCP feels strongly that it must reclaim this "renegade province" and put an end to its independent behavior in the international arena. Because the United States has provided significant support to the Nationalists on Taiwan since the end of the Chinese civil war, the status of the island has played a central role in U.S-Sino relations over the years.

With this background, cross-strait relations became increasingly tense during the early 1990s under the policies of Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui's, who assumed power following the death of Chiang Ching-kuo in 1988. Focusing on the diplomatic front, Lee began pursuing new forms of international recognition for Taiwan using an approach labeled "pragmatic diplomacy."

The essence of this policy was described in the spring of 1996 by Kuomintang Secretary-General Hsu Shui-teh:

As a pragmatist, President Li has been sparing no effort to implement pragmatic diplomacy since taking office to *win national dignity and to raise international profile*. Up to now, we have achieved the following in international relations: (1) up to the end of 1995, the ROC maintained formal ties with 30 countries, an increase of seven over 1985. We set up consular and trade offices in 61 countries, up 23 from 1985. (2) we sought to take part in activities of APEC, GATT and WTO. (3) from 1990 to 1995, we contributed US\$2.9 billion to disaster relief in the world, and we stationed 44 technical assistance missions in 32 nations by 1995, an increase of 10 over 1985. (4) we sought to expand trade and investment ties in the Asia-Pacific area, being the largest investor in Vietnam and Malaysia...He has earned greater respects from people at home and abroad...While we are eager to reduce the hostilities between the two sides of the Taiwan strait, *we shall not retreat from the international community*.¹⁶⁴

As part of this effort, Lee made unofficial trips throughout Southeast Asia, Central America, Europe and South Africa in 1994. In April 1995, he visited the United Arab Emirates and Jordan in a "Middle Eastern tour." Two months later, however, his most controversial outing was made to the United States. While labeled "unofficial" or "private," Hsu Shui-teh admitted that "all these trips were

significant in strengthening international relations and cooperation." In the same text, however, Hsu argued that:

We have to emphasize that our pragmatic diplomacy has nothing to do with separatism as alleged by Beijing. We have never advocated a "two Chinas" or "one China, one Taiwan" policy as suspected by Beijing...the ROC's mainland China policy is to seek eventual reunification with China under the condition that freedom, democracy and social equality prevail in entire China.¹⁶⁵

PRC leadership obviously perceived the Taiwanese president's actions and policies quite differently, prompting the more aggressive response in the spring of 1996. In referring to the missile crisis of March, an editorial in *Renmin Ribao* in July 1996 stated:

As is known to all, the direct cause of this tempest was Lee Teng-hui's visit to the United States in 1995. Yet a deeper cause is that since the beginning of the 1990's, the Taiwan authorities have made a series of substantive changes to both their internal and their external policies; and it is increasingly obvious that these changes have departed from the principle of "one China," and are openly moving in the direction of "two Chinas" or "one China, one Taiwan."¹⁶⁶

International travel by senior Taiwanese leadership represented only one aspect of Lee's pursuit of more pragmatic diplomacy, or what Beijing referred to as "de facto independence."¹⁶⁷ The PRC military actions in 1995-96 must also be considered against a backdrop of other Taiwanese international initiatives and internal events in the early and mid 1990s. Regular efforts to gain representation in the U.N., arms purchases from the U.S. and France, and the transition to representative democracy, to include popular elections, are but a few examples. The last issue is significant in many respects, but in this context, participation by candidates who explicitly advocated independence for Taiwan,

¹⁶⁴ "KMT Secretary General Views Li's Agenda," *Taipei CNA*, FBIS, 23 Apr 1996.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ Han Zhuping and Yao Xiaomin, "Report on Symposium on Cross-Strait Relations," *Renmin Ribao* (Overseas Edition-Beijing), FBIS, 11 Jul 1996.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

such as some representing the Democratic Progressive Party, were perceived by Beijing as pushing the envelope a bit too far, prompting such stern warnings as:

The Taiwan authorities should be aware of this fact: The stability and prosperity of Taiwan is inseparable from its attitude toward its reunification with the motherland. The Chinese Government has the determination and the ability to safeguard national unification and territorial integrity, and will not sit and watch Taiwan splitting itself from the motherland.¹⁶⁸

Just prior to the initiation of the March 1996 PLA exercises, PRC President Jiang Zemin stated that the missile exercises were "normal military exercises" aimed at "improving China's military capability for safeguarding national security and unity." Moreover, and in light of doubts about the China's capability to employ military force to pursue its reunification policy, a likely PLA objective was to exercise and display its capability to coordinate a complex, large-scale operation to control the Straits. Ultimately, however, Jiang's simultaneous warning against Taiwan independence, in which he stated that "our struggle will not stop for a single day so long as Taiwan authorities do not cease their activities to split the motherland," reveal the real purpose of the exercise. He further reiterated that even while the PRC embraced a policy of peaceful reunification, it would "on no account allow any forces to change, in any way, Taiwan's status as part of China."¹⁶⁹

3. Conclusion

The transition in mainland calls from "liberate Taiwan" to the policy of "peaceful reunification" and "one country, two systems" reflect a legitimate application of the Chinese penchant to "action for change" and flexibility in light of evolving domestic priorities and external environment. Concurrently, the nature of Beijing's response to Taiwanese actions through the early 1990s, culminating in the 1996 missile crisis, reflected the enduring influence of the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity to China's Communist leaders.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ "Jiang Zemin's Comments on Missile Exercise," FBIS Foreign Media Note, 11 March 1996.

Jiang, like the core leaders before him, appears committed to taking whatever steps are necessary, including the use of military force, to prevent the integrity of China's sovereignty and territory from being violated. Consequently, Taiwan presents Beijing with perhaps its most vexing security dilemma in an otherwise relatively tranquil regional environment.

Chinese leaders realize that the application of military force in an attempt to resolve the stand-off would severely undermine the long-term developmental goals embraced by official ideology. On the other hand, the fragile nature of the CCP's political legitimacy could ill afford a loss in "face" in the Taiwan issue. Consequently, contemporary official ideology, among other factors, likely serves as a constraint to what might otherwise be a more aggressive reunification policy.

F. SUMMARY

This case study, while recognizing that multiple variables influence a state's external security responses, affirms that official ideology has been a key variable in PRC foreign and security policy. As would be expected given the transition in substance, emphasis and role of ideology, the character of the influence has evolved as well. During the Revolutionary era, official ideology provided a clearly defined world view and framework for action. Ideology dictated aggressive action in a world dominated by class struggle, imperialist forces, and inevitable warfare.

The recognition of a more complex international order and adoption of fundamentally different domestic strategies encouraged greater flexibility in foreign policy in the Reform era. Still, official ideology provided a set of more general tenets which defined acceptable state behavior in the international arena which served to guide, or limit, policy decision-making. The embrace of nationalistic themes by the Party may further limit Beijing's disposition for compromise on some issue. Anticipating the direction of China's on-going pursuit of equilibrium in principle and practice represents a valuable indicator of the

probable direction of PRC international behavior. Accordingly, it is to this topic and its implications for the future of PRC foreign and security policy that this thesis turns.

IV. PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

If you can correct yourself, what problem will you have in governing? If you can't correct yourself, how can you correct others?

Confucian Analects

A. INTRODUCTION

This study has traced China's ideological transformation from revolutionary to post-revolutionary state, and the resulting impact on its foreign and security policy. It has argued that changes in the perceptions and priorities of senior leaders make a difference in policy-making. In other words, "ideas serve as roadmaps" in foreign policy issues.¹⁷⁰ This roadmap has been continuously updated in the natural theoretical processes embraced by Chinese communism.

This chapter will look to the future, exploring the possible trajectories for further ideological change. Specifically, what forces will contribute to continued dynamism in the ideological realm, and how is PRC official ideology likely to develop? What is the likely impact upon Chinese foreign and security policy? And what are relevant U.S. policy considerations? It is always risky to predict the character of a country's foreign policy, but at present Jiang Zemin appears to have solidified his position as a core leader of the Third Generation and has explicitly committed the PRC towards the general trends developed in the Reform era towards modernization and increased openness and international cooperation. Still, China faces a myriad of domestic challenges which will undoubtedly influence its external behavior, to include corruption, demands for greater regional autonomy, environmental degradation, and growing energy requirements, to name only a few. Beijing's response to these "dangers and opportunities" will result from the interaction of many variables, but ideological perspectives will continue to play a role.

¹⁷⁰Zhao, 230.

B. THE DIALECTIC IN CONTEMPORARY CHINA: A NEW IDEOLOGY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY?

Chapter II concluded by considering the evolution of official ideology in light of the unique Chinese cognitive process and the relationship of theory to practice, the influence of the dialectical reasoning model adopted from Marxist philosophy, and the diverging realms of pure and practical ideology. The evolution of official ideology in the PRC was the product of all these processes and was, in fact, considered a normal feature – absent of contradiction – of Chinese Communist thought. Domestically, the Party reinterpreted development of the "forces of production" and consequent modernization and stability as the primary contradiction over class struggle. Perceptions of the international environment rejected the inevitability of conflict envisioned by Mao for a much greater chance for "peaceful co-existence." Party ideology stresses that China is no longer a revolutionary power seeking to undermine the status quo, and public statements explicitly reject a role as global ideological adversary to the United States and expansionist goals.

Accordingly, China's primary foreign policy goal for the 21st century has been identified as the cementing of political friendships and a stable international environment that will allow Beijing to develop its economy and its trade and to acquire advanced technology.¹⁷¹ This has been emphasized in our exploration of PRC ideological trends during the Reform era and is echoed by the 1992 comments of Qian Qichen.

China is experiencing a period of vigorous development, with economic construction as the focus. Its foreign policy must help create a long-standing and steady international environment of peace for its economic construction...At present, all nations, developed or developing, share the view that a country's national strength, especially in the economic sense, will decide its status in the 21st Century. Therefore, they are generally turning their attention to domestic affairs, attaching great importance to

¹⁷¹ Wayne Bert, "Chinese Politics and U.S. Interests in Southeast Asia," *Asian Survey* 23, no. 3 (March 1993), cited in Faust and Kornberg, 21.

economic construction and cooperation. All nations are becoming more interdependent, harmonious, complementary, and mutually restricted.¹⁷²

This statement appears to express the essence of Beijing's perception of the international environment and China's security approach in the post-Cold War world. Third generation leadership has explicitly reject any deviation from the course set by Deng. Still, CCP ideology continues to display great dynamism in the post-Cold War. In the economic policy arena, for example, cooperative shareholding, seemingly nudging the PRC closer to capitalism, has been embraced for some sectors of the Chinese economy as "enterprise ownership with Chinese characteristics."¹⁷³ The machinations of the Chinese dialectical reasoning process ensures there is no contradiction between the ultimate goals of communism and official policies espoused in the pursuit of material wealth and stability. Thus "China will continue to undergo profound changes, but at its own pace and its own distinctive way."¹⁷⁴

In other policy areas, and even as Deng Xiaoping Theory has endorsed "scientific socialism" and exalted modernization, stability and peace, other more traditional Chinese themes and forces have become centerpieces in Party propaganda, especially since 1989. The increasing importance of these traditional concepts are likely to require dialectical solution if conflict with national goals set by Deng's Theory is to be avoided. An understanding of these forces is fundamental in grasping the challenges the PRC leadership face in the ideological realm.

1. The Forces for Change

China's official ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought-Deng Xiaoping Theory will continue to be refashioned and reinterpreted as current

¹⁷² "PRC Washington Embassy," Press Release No. 11 (30 December 1992), cited in Faust and Kornberg, 248.

¹⁷³ See Li Ji, "Cooperative Shareholding System: Enterprise Ownership With Chinese Characteristics," *Beijing Review* 40, no. 37 (15 September 1997).

¹⁷⁴ Doak Barnett cited in Zhao, 33.

needs require. As we have seen, this is partly driven by the thought processes and theoretical model inherent in Chinese Communist system. Two other forces will contribute to the continued evolution of Chinese ideology: first, the declining distinction between formal and informal ideology as the two systems exist side by side over an extended period; and second, the pursuit of political legitimacy and regime survival by the CCP. These concepts are developed separately and more fully below yet they are intricately connected.

a. A More "Authentic" Ideology?

The elements, or perspectives, that comprise China's informal ideology, which were briefly introduced in the first chapter, tend to be more stable than those examined advocated by official ideology. Generally considered to include the "assumptions, prejudices, cultural values, and expectations not explicitly formulated or linked together," informal ideology derives from an "individual's socialization into a specific culture at a specific point in time" and tends to be consensual rather than divisive.¹⁷⁵ In a post-revolutionary system, posits John Bryan Starr, ideology relates to culture as thesis relates to antithesis. The result of this relationship over the course of time is an altered ideology as well as an altered culture.¹⁷⁶ This argues not only for the increased prominence of traditional perspectives over time, but that the precepts of official ideology will continue to inform the thinking of Chinese political leaders.

Even Mao is said to have recognized the combined influence of ideology and traditional thinking when he declared that the PRC had "two parents" – the October Revolution and KMT society.¹⁷⁷ By "October Revolution" Mao was referring to the influence of Marxism-Leninism adopted by China from the Russian Bolsheviks. By "Kuomintang society," he referred not only to the

¹⁷⁵ Levine, 33.

¹⁷⁶ Starr, 43.

¹⁷⁷ Cited in Zhao, 116.

influence of the ideas, attitudes, and institutions that developed during the period of KMT reign, but throughout China's long history.¹⁷⁸

Other sources reinforce the inevitability of this process. Franz Schurmann, in the first edition of his book *Ideology and Organization in Communist China*, argued that a true revolution destroys the value structure and the division of labor, or social system, in which it takes place until a new value structure and division of labor have grown up.¹⁷⁹ The value structure, which represents the conceptual compilation of the values shared by most members of a society, is at least temporarily replaced by ideology and organization, with ideology as the product, at the outset at least, of a creative act on the part of the revolutionary ideologue.

In the supplement to the revised edition of his book, however, Schurmann notes that he might have better titled the book "Ideology, Organization, and Society in China" because of the important role that he now sees the society as continuing to play after the revolutionary act that he once saw as destroying that society.¹⁸⁰ In referring to the "resurgence of the forces of Chinese society," he appears to be arguing that a society does not die as the result of a revolution, but that the pre-revolutionary society and the revolutionary ideology continue to exist side by side over a protracted period. The element of the society that is equivalent to the ideology in this prolonged relationship, it would appear, is not the value structure but the culture as a whole. It is the pre-revolutionary culture that continues to exist after the revolutionary act and the ideology that acts as a kind of counterculture. The relationship between the two is a dialectical one and the synthesis that results from this relationship coincides with neither but contains elements of both.¹⁸¹

With regard to China's external relations, the influence of informal ideology imparts several key perspectives of national identity to policy-makers:

¹⁷⁸ Zhao, 116.

¹⁷⁹ Schurmann, 2-8.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 504-5.

- The Chinese People are a great people, and China is a great nation
- The Chinese nation deserves a much better fate than that which it has experienced in the modern world
- China should be accorded compensatory treatment from those powers which have insulted or injured it in the past
- As a great nation, China naturally occupies a central position in world affairs and must be treated as a Great Power
- China's national sovereignty must be respected absolutely, and such respect precludes any foreign criticism of China's internal politics
- China's special virtue in international affairs consists in the fact that its foreign policy is based not on expediency but on immutable principles that express universal values such as justice and equity¹⁸²

It is interesting to note that these concepts address China's *status as a nation* and call to mind most of the common themes reviewed earlier. Drawing from the historical experiences of the past one and a half centuries, informal ideology is shaped by Chinese nationalism which, in addition to those above, sound the recurring themes of independence, self-reliance, and non-alignment.

b. Pursuit of the "Mandate of Heaven"

Certainly a driving force in the ideological dynamism of the Reform era is the Party's ongoing pursuit of *regime legitimacy and survival*, reinforced by an overwhelming desire for social and political *stability*.¹⁸³ Issues surrounding this concept of Chinese political thought, which lean heavily upon traditional views discussed above, has been extensively explored by a number of

¹⁸¹ Starr, 10-11.

¹⁸² Levine, 44.

¹⁸³ Zhao, 115.

sinologists.¹⁸⁴ There is almost universal agreement that the damage inflicted on China and on communist ideology by Mao's ideological crusades, both domestic and international, were enormous, at least, among intellectuals and majority of the population. In the international arena, the conflict between China and the Soviet Union, for example, with each claiming a monopoly on the communist ideological truth, gravely weakened the universalist claims of Marxism-Leninism. Domestically, the results of Mao's radical efforts to remake society, most explicit in the Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution, significantly contributed to an erosion of the ideological foundations for leadership by the Party. As a result, the self-initiated assault on official ideology has threatened to undermine the central role of the Communist Party, producing not only a crisis of faith but a crisis of power.¹⁸⁵

As a consequence, the Party has increasingly incorporated more acceptable nationalist themes in ideological work to bolster claims of legitimacy. This trend has significant implications for Chinese security policy. While Deng Xiaoping Theory encourages international behavior that contributes to China's role as a mature, stable, and responsible international player, issues that are motivated by nationalistic fervor might direct Beijing toward a more aggressive or confrontational stance, especially over key principles such as sovereignty and territorial integrity.¹⁸⁶

2. Critical Dialectics

The competing forces outlined above will continue to mold Beijing's view of the world and influence Chinese foreign and security policy. Given the enduring nature of the Chinese Communist system of thought, these ideological issues, or contradictions, are certain to be confronted within the framework of dialectical reasoning. The most important of these dialectics are outlined below

¹⁸⁴ See Lucian W. Pye, "Chinese Democracy and Constitutional Development," and Lu Xueyi, "Prospects for Social Development," in *China in the Twenty-first Century: Politics, Economy, and Society*, ed. Fumio Itoh (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 1997).

¹⁸⁵ Levine, 31.

¹⁸⁶ Deng Vol III, 147.

in Figure 4. Particularly interesting in this process is the gradual reversal of opposing forces in this process. Starr's early proposition expressing the relationship of ideology to culture no longer appears completely valid. In light of the resurgence of more traditional themes during a relatively lengthy period of Communist rule, "culture" seems to have increasingly assumed the role as thesis with official ideology the antithesis.

The eventual synthesis of these processes is difficult to project, but is certain to maintain characteristics of both formal and informal ideology and remain fundamentally different from Western approaches to social and international discourse. Whatever the synthesis, the redefinition of the Chinese world view and security requirements will do much to determine regional and global stability and define China's place in the post-Cold War era. To establish a timeframe for the following discussion, the short-term is considered the next five to ten years while the intermediate term through the middle of the next century.

These dialectics contrast ideological struggles in three areas: first, over the primary guiding principle in international relations; second, over perceptions of China's status and role in the post-Cold War era; and finally, the domestic factor.

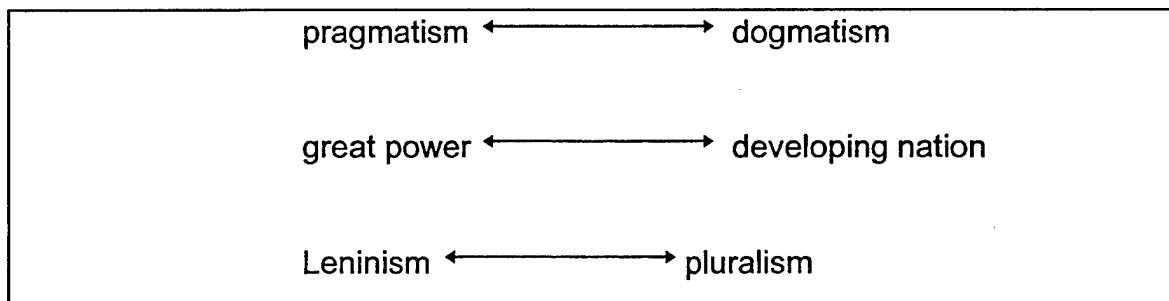


Figure 4. Critical Dialectics

a. *Pragmatism vs. Dogmatism*

This study has traced not only the evolution of Maoist dogma, but its declining influence since the beginning of the Reform era. This does not, however, suggest that all Marxist-Leninist-Maoist dogmatic precepts are irrelevant, but that most have been remolded, reprioritized, and reinterpreted as well as become less prescriptive in policy formation. Some have even been rejected. Still, the process is not resolved, and continues to represent China's primary contradiction, as is perhaps best exemplified by continued adherence to the Four Cardinal Principles. This evolution will continue over the intermediate to long term and is almost certain to be governed by the Party and within the unique Chinese Communist system of thought, and its resolution or ultimate synthesis will transcend almost every facet of PRC external relations and behavior.

Over at least the short term, however, and even though the ideological struggle between the two basic approaches has tilted significantly toward pragmatism, increasingly the dialectic equation has had to accommodate the forces of nationalism. Whereas dogma once clearly dictated proper international associations and behavior in external relations, nationalism has become a primary limiting factor in PRC foreign and security policy decisions, at least with regard to several concrete foreign policy issues. Specifically, nationalistic concerns could undermine China's long-term economic goals and relatively stable external relations by tipping the scales in favor of military force to resolve highly sensitive territorial issues, such as over the relationship with Taiwan, the disputes over South China Sea Islands, or with Japan over Diaoyu Islands. More broadly, the fragility of Party legitimacy and self-perception seems to push Beijing toward reliance on issues of sovereignty and territorial integrity as it struggles to replace discredited dogma.

This duality in Chinese strategic goals, or pragmatic efforts to achieve national prosperity through investment and interaction with the rest of

the world while simultaneously protecting the viability of the regime through nationalist-centered rhetoric and policies, will continue to influence PRC leaders into the next decade. Accordingly, an important question to consider is how nationalism might manifest itself in foreign relations? Allen Whiting posits that three types of nationalism have been distinguished in this regard: affirmative, assertive, and aggressive.¹⁸⁷ Affirmative nationalism is described as focusing exclusively upon the "us" as a positive in-group referent with pride in attributes and achievements. Assertive nationalism adds a "them" component as a negative out-group referent that challenges the in-group's interests. Finally, aggressive nationalism identifies a specific foreign enemy as a serious threat that requires action to defend vital interests. Whiting goes further to describe the functional attributes of each of these types of nationalism. Briefly, affirmative nationalism fosters patriotism and targets attitude, while the aggressive variant arouses anger and mobilizes behavior. Assertive nationalism lies somewhere between these two.

Both domestic and external factors may contribute to nationalistic posture and policy. Factional politics and leadership instability at the domestic institutional level, in terms of the macro-micro model for example, surrounding issues such as succession or political legitimacy may heighten basic emotive appeals for unity and support. Foreign negotiations, perceived external threats, or changes in the global power balance can be portrayed as threatening national survival and used to spur more assertive or aggressive nationalism.¹⁸⁸ These factors are certainly not mutually exclusive, and a combination, such as those surrounding the Tiananmen incident in June 1989, could evoke a significant departure from the PRC's overall relatively cooperative international behavior during the mid-to-late 1990s.

¹⁸⁷ Allen S. Whiting, "Chinese Nationalism and Foreign Policy After Deng," *The China Quarterly* (June 1995), provides a concise appraisal of nationalistic trends and official responses during the five years following the Tiananmen massacre in 1989 and implications for future PRC foreign policy postures.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 296.

The implications for foreign and security policy are minimal for the affirmative, or more positive variant, of nationalism but are potentially major when moving along the spectrum toward the aggressive or demagogic sort of nationalism. Still, this study has shown that while there have been exceptional instances, such as the Tiananmen massacre and the Taiwan Straits crisis of 1996, leadership perception has judged the external environment as the most stable and least threatening the PRC has experienced since its founding. Domestically, Jiang has apparently weathered the succession and has pledged a continuation of Deng's policies, contributing to political stability throughout the system. However, the Party's "mandate" remains a key issue as do the specific territorial issues surrounding Taiwan and the Spratly Islands. These and other issues linked to state sovereignty, such as economic trade and human rights with the U.S., typically draw more assertive nationalistic responses from Beijing and will likely contribute to a cyclical pattern in China's external relations. Further, as China's military strength increases, should assertive behavior more regularly accompany assertive rhetoric, such as its military activities in the South China Sea in the late 1980s and early 1990s, its relations with neighboring Asian nations and the entire international community could be threatened.

Finally, nationalistic pressures and rhetoric are certainly not a product of the Reform era as they played a key role in the War of Resistance against Japan and the Chinese civil war. But while they have been encouraged and exploited in pursuit of both external and domestic security objectives since the founding of the PRC, nationalism has become more central to policy formation with the declining credibility of dogma. Yet while promotion of Chinese nationhood and appeals to the past grandeur of the Middle Kingdom is useful to rally the masses, the more virulent strain of nationalism, especially that associated with territorial sovereignty, retains the potential to interfere with a continued and incremental movement toward greater pragmatism in foreign relations.

b. Great Power vs. Developing Nation

Among other ideological developments, Chapter II traced the evolution and influence of the Chinese national identity on foreign and security policy. This development has continued as the PRC, like many other international actors since the end of the Cold War, has struggled to redefine its role and status in the international system. This challenge has been especially difficult for China. The after effects of the Tiananmen massacre in 1989, the collapse of the USSR and international communism, its own international behavior, and the changing economic and security environment of the post-Cold War world have prevented the PRC from attaining the full measure of acceptance and participation in global affairs commensurate with its self-perceived status. Accordingly, this dialectic manifests itself as the struggle between China's perception of its rightful role and position in the new world order, heavily influenced by the unwritten precepts of informal ideology, and the reality of its developing status and international behavior as influenced by the pragmatic pursuit of modernization and political influence. More broadly, it also incorporates the contradiction between China's traditional desire for self-reliance versus the international trend toward interdependence, balancing military modernization versus international cooperation, and even influences the pursuit of bilateral versus multilateral relations.

While it is difficult to quantify a state's power and international rank, Samuel Kim posits that a great power is:

...a state that easily ranks among the top five in the primary global structures – economic, military, knowledge, and normative...and that enjoys relative economic self-sufficiency. A great power is a strong state with the ability to mobilize the country's human and material resources in the service of its worldview and policy objectives. There is also the normative/behavioral requirement of great power status: a great power is and becomes what a great power does.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁹ Samuel S. Kim, "China as a Great Power," *Current History* (September 1997): 246.

While questionable whether China meets any aspect of this definition, its position as one of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council plus the duration of its society and culture, its geographic expanse, population, the size and recent performance of its economy, and sheer potential pull PRC into the circle of great, or at least potentially great, nations. Yet it has often refused to accept or minimized this role even while rhetoric embraces it. For example, when describing the PRC intended role in international affairs during an address to the 15th Party Congress in 1997, Jiang Zemin stated that:

We should take an active part in multilateral diplomatic activities and give full play to China's role in the United Nations and other international organizations.¹⁹⁰

If China currently lacks the material power necessary for great power status, consider issues which normally fall under the category of normative characteristics or requirements:

- In 1978, the PRC reversed its financial relationship with the United Nations as part of ideological transition away from total self-reliance by requesting aid from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the largest multilateral technical aid organization. A year later, China requested a reduction in its assessment rate, or portion of the U.N. budget, which was subsequently reduced from 5.5 percent to 0.79 percent, then further to its present rate of 0.72 percent. Consequently, the United Kingdom, with the second-lowest assessment rate among the five permanent members, contributes nearly seven times as much as China. Chinese contributions are also surpassed by a number of other developing nations such as Brazil, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, and Mexico.¹⁹¹
- China has hesitated in actively supporting the United Nations global security role commensurate with a permanent member of the Security Council, as its frequent abstentions from voting decisions attest, such as on S.C. Resolution 678 authorizing use of force to against Iraq during the Persian Gulf crisis. Moreover, it has rejected any

¹⁹⁰ "Report at the 15th National Congress of the Communist Party," *Beijing Review* 40, no. 40 (6 October 1997): 6.

¹⁹¹ Kim, 249-50.

multilateral approach to security in Asia. Yet it has availed itself of any available economic assistance through global and regional economic regimes. In addition to its re-designation by the UNDP from aid donor to aid recipient, China is currently the largest recipient of World Bank multilateral aid, about \$3 billion per year, even though the World Bank ranks it as the world's second-largest economy. It also receives assistance from the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development, a division of the World Bank, the International Development Association, and International Monetary Fund, and strongly desires accession to the World Trade Organization. At the regional level, the PRC participates in the Asian Development Bank.¹⁹²

- One author highlights Chinese "duplicity" in international affairs throughout the Reform era. Offending activities have included: contributing to nuclear and other weapons proliferation through sales to Algeria, Pakistan, and several Middle East states and unwillingness to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty until put under heavy international pressure; a trade policy which has impeded imports, overly restrictive business regulations of foreign companies, and promoted the mislabeling of textile goods to circumvent other countries' import regulations and purloining of intellectual property and industrial secrets; and widespread human rights violations from arbitrary arrests and incarcerations to repression in Tibet and Xinjiang.¹⁹³

These contradictions between the Chinese self-image and potential and the substance of its outward behavior goes beyond issues of principle and practice to questions of regional and global security and stability. While the "Middle Kingdom" declares itself a "developing socialist country" in need of significant external assistance and forswears hegemonic behavior and expansionist desires, it continues to stress bilateral relations and military modernization that "seems poised to mobilize significant quantities of resources for the exercise of power outside its borders."¹⁹⁴ Further, its membership in the exclusive "nuclear club," its large and improving military, and the centrality of military component even within the concept of "comprehensive national strength"

¹⁹² Faust and Kornberg, 220-24.

¹⁹³ Robinson, "Chinese Foreign Policy from the 1940s to the 1990s," in *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, eds. Robinson and Shambaugh, 598-99.

¹⁹⁴ Kim, 247.

(zonghe guoli) have heightened regional tensions and raised serious questions over PRC ultimate motives. Accelerated attempts at expanding military activities or increasing spheres of influence in neighboring regions is likely to trigger a regional arms race and destabilize China relations with its neighbors and the international community.

Over the short term, the synthesis of this dialectic will likely be the continuation of Deng's Policy of "avoiding leadership," focusing on domestic economic growth, and maximizing advantage while minimizing risk. Over the long term, however, if China is to realize its potential, it will have to reconcile the responsibilities of rising great power status and requirement for international credibility with its "assertive unilateral realpolitik."¹⁹⁵ The ultimate resolution will determine whether China remains an "incomplete" or true great power as well as be a significant factor in global and regional stability. While many variables enter the equation, it would seem that on balance, ideological evolution will favor the gradual embrace of philosophies conducive to behavior associated with a responsible participant in global affairs.

c. *Leninism vs. Pluralism*

A consideration of China's prospects would be incomplete without an affirmation of the importance of the domestic factor in the PRC's international behavior. Issues of regime legitimacy and survival, which have both an internal and external component, have been inextricably linked to the preceding dialectics and will continue to influence China's security perceptions and relations with the world. There appears to be widespread recognition that the Party can survive only if it restores its credibility among the people. As this study has shown, however, efforts to achieve this goal have focused upon improving the material well being of the nation and cultivating greater pride in the national identity. The consensus among both reformers and hard-liners is that economic

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 251.

reform, not political structures, is the key to human progress,¹⁹⁶ and that the Communist Party must remain firmly in control of political and social discourse. Another obvious method for the Party to retain political control is through the maintenance of a strong and well-disciplined (i.e., politically indoctrinated) armed forces. Drawing again from Jiang's address to the 15th Party Congress in 1997:

Only the Communist Party of China can lead the Chinese people in achieving victories of national independence, the people's liberation and socialism, pioneering the road of building socialism with Chinese characteristics, rejuvenating the nation, making the country prosperous and strong and improving the people's well-being.¹⁹⁷

Still the tide of change does not favor this approach. Thomas Robinson observes that the events of 1989-1991 in East Europe and USSR displayed that "revolution is no longer equated with Marxism-Leninism, totalitarianism, and central planning, but with anti-communism and marketization."¹⁹⁸ Further, most western scholars and politicians concur that economic growth inevitably means "marketization" and that the consequent economic modernization will eventuate in democratization, most commonly based upon ideas of representative government and individual freedom. Beijing, however, observing events just to its north, and its own experience in Tianamen in 1989, realized that the transition to this form of domestic order could be highly unstable, a characteristic that is almost universally despised in China. Further influenced by cultural traditions which encouraged the belief that democracy must be tempered by respect for authority and willingness to subjugate individual rights to the common interests, the Party leadership has determined to remain in firm control of the dialectic reasoning process. Still, the PRC will probably continue to evolve incrementally toward some form of "soft" authoritarian system

¹⁹⁶ Faust and Kornberg, 254.

¹⁹⁷ "Report at the 15th National Congress of the Communist Party" *Beijing Review* : 8.

¹⁹⁸ Robinson, 590.

over the intermediate time frame, with the long-term synthesis likely to produce a pluralistic system.

These forces obviously carry direct implications for Chinese foreign policy in the new era. As Robinson posits, the challenge for Beijing has been and will remain to formulate a "centrist foreign policy founded on the principles of avoiding conflict with the market democracies" and "playing for time until China is strong enough to have a say in determining the shape of the follow-on international system." Moreover, if the "market democracy has become a near universal norm, then Beijing must learn how to get along with such countries permanently."¹⁹⁹

3. Summary

Forces for the evolution of official ideology in China remain strong and will continue to seek equilibrium within the conceptual framework of Chinese Communist thought. Over the short term, and as a consequence of political commitments made by the Party and continued cultivation of nationalism as a basis for legitimacy and external relations, it will be difficult for Beijing to exercise flexibility on many important foreign policy issues. The CCP cannot afford to appear to compromise on issues of sovereignty or national prerogative, such as relations with Taiwan or the status of China's territorial claims in the South China Sea. This imperative, however, does not necessarily apply in other, "non-core areas" such as human rights or nuclear proliferation.²⁰⁰ External pressure for change in these areas are likely to be met with nationalistic statements about intrusions into China's internal affairs, but the obvious benefits to China's long-term development plans will encourage the PRC leadership to find some ground for compromise in these areas to achieve a sense of moderation and "centrism."

The Chinese are often credited with taking a much longer-term view of the world than most countries. Over the long-term, the forces for change are likely to move the PRC in the direction of greater pluralism and economic

¹⁹⁹ Robinson, 592.

interdependence as long as the transition complies with certain central principles such as that of promoting social and political stability and maximizing equality. Still, the synthesis of major dialectics will in all likelihood result in systems and philosophies that are different from Western concepts. Accordingly, Chinese international conduct will be less predictable in many areas. It is likely to become more cooperative and assertive on a wide range of issues as it gains credibility and legitimacy and, like other international actors, seeks to shape to its own advantage the terms and conditions of its engagement with the world.

C. U.S.-SINO RELATIONS

1. Security Interests and Policies

Successive American administrations since Nixon's have determined that friendly relations with the PRC are in the national interests of the United States.²⁰¹ In fact, it seems almost tautological to suggest that a moderately strong and growing, stable China pursuing a policy of broad contact and friendly relations with the West is in the United States national interests. As Richard Nixon pointed out in 1989, "with Japan already an economic superpower and with the capability of becoming a military and political superpower, a strong, stable China...is essential to the balance of power of Japan" in East Asia.²⁰² Thus, from the U.S. perspective, China's strategic importance in the Asia-Pacific region, and therefore its foreign policy, will remain a vital concern.

That stated, this study has examined only one of the multitude of variables which has influenced the PRC relationship with the United States and world. And while there continues to be much debate surrounding the proper direction of U.S. policy toward China, Davis Shambaugh provides a succinct and accurate appraisal of U.S.-Sino relations. He argues that the United States and the PRC

²⁰⁰ 1997 *Strategic Review*.

²⁰¹ See David Shambaugh, "Patterns of Interaction in Sino-American Relations," in *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, eds. Robinson and Shambaugh, 219-20.

²⁰² Cited in Zhao, 243.

will "cooperate in some spheres and clash in others,"²⁰³ a relationship not fundamentally different than many others. He goes on to add that "a relationship has emerged where each know it must cooperate where possible but has real difficulties in doing so."

For Beijing, to conduct relations with the United States is to confront a paradox. Development imperatives dictate broad and close interaction, while perceived longer-term strategic imperatives produce suspicion and competition. However, Beijing's pronouncements and present policies clearly indicate that its official ideology has evolved toward a pragmatism necessary to achieve greater economic development while operating within the constraints of nationalistic commitments in several areas. And despite frictions over a number of concrete issues such as trade imbalances, intellectual property, weapons proliferation, and human rights, Beijing shows no evidence of any willingness to allow its ties with Washington to collapse or evolve towards military conflict.²⁰⁴ With the major exception of U.S. support for Taiwan independence, the PRC is unlikely to find a reason to do so over the short to intermediate term.

Still, a more fundamental impediment to establishing a more cooperative relationship over the long term,²⁰⁵ and more directly related to the central theme of this study, lies not in the specific issues of the moment, but in deeper historical and social forces. China's entire modern history has been shaped by the requirement to first throw off, then continue to resist, foreign control and interference. As we have seen, the PRC has continued that effort by declaring a security policy which seeks to counter what it describes as "hegemony" and "superpower mentality."

The U.S., on the other hand, prides itself a global power pursuing a foreign policy which seeks to impart the universal principles it holds dear upon

²⁰³ David Shambaugh, "The United States and China: Cooperation or Confrontation," *Current History* (September 1997): 241.

²⁰⁴ *1997 Strategic Review*.

²⁰⁵ Shambaugh, "The United States and China: Cooperation or Confrontation," *Current History*: 241-42.

others. Specifically, the 1997 *National Security Strategy for a New Century* states:

We must use the America's leadership to harness global forces of integration, reshaping existing security, economic and political structures, and build new ones that help create the conditions necessary for our interest and values to survive...we must be prepared and willing to use all appropriate instruments of national power to influence the actions of other states and non-state actors.²⁰⁶

As part of that overall strategy, U.S. policy remains imbued with a long-standing "missionary complex" designed to modernize, democratize, educate, and covert China into the Western image. This impulse has never been more apparent than today in U.S.-Sino relations, yet the stronger China becomes, the more resistant it is to American pressure and paternalism.²⁰⁷ This attitude is most directly expressed in a recent commentary in the *Beijing Review*:

From China's point of view, it is necessary and possible for the U.S. to realize...that other countries have the right to choose their own paths of development.²⁰⁸

2. Policy Considerations

Against this backdrop and within the framework of an acceptable U.S. policy of engagement with China, there is a need for greater awareness and appreciation of the forces for change within the PRC as well as the principles which preclude compromise. Generally, U.S. policy-makers must recognize that official ideology is not so irrelevant as widely supposed. In fact, an appreciation of the Chinese Communist conceptual process can assist the analyst in projecting the likely direction, or synthesis, of policy processes if the proper dialectic can be identified. And while dogma has evolved and become less

²⁰⁶ *A National Security Strategy for a New Century* (May 1997): i-2.

²⁰⁷ Shambaugh, "The United States and China: Cooperation or Confrontation," *Current History*: 242.

²⁰⁸ Ai Li, "In Search of a Working Sino-U.S. Relationship," *Beijing Review* 40, no. 22 (2 June 1997): 13.

distinct and confrontational, it may serve as a guide for the prevailing the consensus among senior Party leadership.

Over the short to intermediate term, Chinese nationalism will remain a significant variable in foreign and security policy issues, especially those involving territorial and other issues of sovereignty. In other areas, such as weapons and nuclear proliferation, intellectual property rights, and trade issues, Beijing will be more likely to find compromises as the pragmatic approach remains dominant as the primary theme in external relations.

Over the long term, an effective U.S. approach must include realistic expectations for Chinese behavior and organization, as well as appropriate benchmarks for judging Beijing's policies, based on a better understanding of the dialectic thought processes guiding China's political, economic, and social transformation. These processes will likely produce some amalgam of authoritarian political system which values a centralized market economy and emphasizes the collective welfare and stability over individual liberty. While perhaps lacking by U.S. standards, excessive pressures to adopt more western systems and outlooks will only be met by resistance and be counterproductive.

V. CONCLUSION

In one form or another, perception and ideology has played and will continue to play a role in the foreign policy of every state, and China is no exception. What distinguishes the PRC, however, particularly in the early years, was the application of a highly articulated, systematic, formal ideology derived from Marxism-Leninism to the realm of foreign and security policy on the assumption that it could provide China's leaders with an accurate guide to the choices they faced in the international arena. However, the behavior of other states, including China's formal ally, the USSR, often diverged from what predicates of official ideology suggested. Consequently, but within the framework of the cognitive processes they also inherited from Marxism, Party leadership attempted to resolve perceived contradictions, frequently resulting in an international zig-zap pattern between East and West. Still, official ideology clearly informed the general direction of policy in international relations. It portrayed the system as inherently hostile and clearly identified who was friend or foe.

Under Deng, the substance and the role of official ideology changed. While many of the specific tenets either fell to the wayside or were modified, many of the concepts, language, and *thought processes* of the Chinese form of communism continued to inform the thinking of Chinese political leaders, thus, they continued to justify and express their foreign policy choices in ideological terms. The Third generation of Communist leadership has continued this trend. Increasingly, however, ideology has assumed more the role of a "value framework" for development and interaction. It reflects more long-term developmental goals and fundamental social values within which an advanced economy and modern society can be constructed over a period of many decades. Adherence to this official ideology, and obviously the Four Cardinal

Principles, is portrayed as the guarantee of the social and political stability needed for such development.

Other significant forces are influencing the evolution of ideology in China, and consequently its relations with the rest of the world. A "rising China" and proud population, seeking to bury the humiliations of the past, have encouraged a resurgent nationalism. The course these sentiments are encouraged to take, whether affirmative and patriotic or aggressive, will influence the degree of flexibility Beijing is likely to display over issues of sovereignty and territory. Other nations, and specifically the U.S., must determine the degree to which this factor motivates the PRC in specific issues to minimize the chance for unnecessary confrontation.

Finally, even while the content and focus of official ideology has evolved, and Party theoreticians have struggled to integrate the disparate strands of theory and practice, it is worth reminding that formal ideology is not likely to disappear without leaving some imprint on China's political processes, and ultimately its future foreign relations. Rather, an evolving Chinese ideology is likely to incorporate elements of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist world view into a new amalgam that will also contain elements from China's imperial past, a more modern conception of nationalism, and perhaps eventually the Republican era teachings of Sun Yat-sen. Whatever the case, it is almost certain to be distinctly Chinese and significantly influence the course of regional and world events.

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