

Sino- American Relations

A New Cold War

Edited by Xiaobing Li and Qiang Fang



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In Memory of James Z. Gao



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Note on Transliteration

The *Hanyu pinyin* romanization system is applied to Chinese names of persons, places, and terms. A person's name is written in the Chinese way, surname first, such as Mao Zedong. Some popular names have traditional Wade-Giles spellings appearing in parentheses after the first use of the *Hanyu pinyin* in the entry, such as Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-tung), as do popular names of places like the Yangzi (Yangtze) River, Huang (Yellow) River, and Guangzhou (Canton). Exceptions are made for a few figures whose names are widely known in reverse order, like Sun Yat-sen (Sun Zhongshan, or Sun Yixian), and a few places and institutional names, such as Tibet (Xizang) and Peking (Beijing) University.





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Abbreviations

ADIZ	Air Defense Identification Zone
AEW	early warning
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BRI	Belt-Road Initiative
CCBA	Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CASS	China Academy of Social Sciences
CCYL	Chinese Communist Youth League
CECC	Congressional Executive Commission on China (US)
CMC	Central Military Commission (CCP)
CNOOC	China National Offshore Oil Corporation
CPG	Central People's Government
CPPCC	Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference
CPVA	Chinese People's Volunteer Army
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency (US)
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea)
ECRC	East China Regional Command (PLA)
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
GDP	gross domestic production
GMD	Guomindang (Chinese Nationalist Party, or Kuomintang, KMT)
GNP	gross national product
MFN	most favourable nation
MPS	Ministry of Public Security
MSR	Maritime Silk Road
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	nongovernmental organization
NIRA	National Industrial Recovery Act (US)
NKPA	North Korean People's Army
NNSC	Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission
NPC	National People's Congress
PAP	People's Armed Police
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PLAAF	PLA Air Force
PLAN	PLA Navy
POW	prisoners of war
PRC	People's Republic of China



RMB	<i>Renminbi</i> (Chinese currency)
ROC	Republic of China
ROK	Republic of Korea (South Korea)
SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
SEZ	Special Economic Zone
SLOCs	sea lines of communication
TAR	Tibet Autonomous Region
UN	United Nations
UNC	UN Command
UNCLOS	UN International Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNGA	UN General Assembly
UNHRC	UN Human Rights Commission
UNSC	UN Security Council
USIA	US Information Agency
USN	US Navy
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WASP	Women Air Force Service Pilots (US)
WTO	World Trade Organization
WWI	World War I
WWII	World War II
XPCC	Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps
XUAR	Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region



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Xiaobing Li (University of Central Oklahoma)

Qiang Fang (University of Minnesota Duluth)

Introduction: US-China Relations at a Historic Crossroad

Xiaobing Li and Qiang Fang

From Richard Nixon's visit to China in 1972 to Barack Obama's presidency in 2008–2016, relations between China and the United States were largely cordial, despite a few aberrations, like NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization)'s bombardment of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade in 1999, and the US-China Hainan plane collision incident in 2001. However, since 2018, US-China relations have deteriorated, and tensions have escalated due to trade, technology, and currency wars. In 2019, President Donald Trump signed bills supporting the Hong Kong protests and Taiwan, further exacerbating bilateral relations. As if tensions were not high enough, the sudden eruption of the Covid-19 pandemic in China and its spread to the US deepened the fissure between the two powers. In March 2019, China and the US fought tit-for-tat over journalists (Smith, 2020). In July, after China promulgated the Hong Kong Security Law, Trump ended Hong Kong's special status. Diplomatic enmity reached a new high when both countries closed one of their consulates. On July 23, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, after repeated attacks and lambasting by Chinese state media as the 'Common Human Enemy' announced that the engagement policy started by Nixon had failed. In another speech, Pompeo called China the biggest threat to the US (Shesgreen 2020). Like Pompeo, Trump floated the idea of 'decoupling' the Chinese and American economies, a far cry from his stance just a few years earlier.

In 2020, Beijing launched a new, aggressive diplomatic campaign against the US, described by Western media as 'wolf warrior' diplomacy. On March 21, 2021, top Chinese diplomats cited the US's own human rights problems when they denounced the United States, at high-level China-US talks in Alaska, as 'not qualified' to lecture China on human rights. Washington also saw a sharp increase in 2021 of hostile responses to the Taiwan question from Beijing. The increased hostility in those statements included warnings that

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'China will "take all necessary measures" to safeguard its sovereignty and security' (Dai and Luqiu 2021). This harsh language has been coupled with clear actions. Since 2020, the People's Liberation Army (PLA, China's armed forces) and Air Force (PLAAF) have launched 'gray-zone' warfare in the Taiwan Strait by sending its warplanes to fly over the strait median line. In early 2021, Beijing blamed President Joe Biden for making no effort to ease tensions between the two countries after he took over the White House. Biden warned Congress and the American public, that 'China is eating our lunch' at several meetings since the Chinese invested hundreds of billions of dollars in research and infrastructure (Restuccia 2021).

If this round of military actions and diplomatic 'free fall' continues, some scholars have cautioned that the US would sever its diplomatic ties with China and recognize Taiwan (Wang, 2020). In that case, the prospect of a new cold war between the two powers looms, and, like the Cold War between the US and the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) in 1946–1991, might force many states to take sides, plunging the world once again into fear of nuclear extinction.

How and why have US-China relations deteriorated so quickly? Why do both countries no longer want to compromise? Is a new cold war inevitable between the US and China? Is there any way to prevent it? In this book, the authors address the above questions in their essays.

The authors focus on the 'human factors' which determined many major events in a century of US-China relations from the Chinese-American perspective through cooperative interdisciplinary research efforts. It should be noted that one of the major consequences of too much fetishism is the belief in fatalism, which assumes that all changes in US-China relations are determined by objective, economic, strategic, realistic, and/or institutional factors. As a result, there is little room and possibility for subjective human efforts, as if impersonal aspects determine success or failure for all historical events. In fact, in the course of changing US-China relations, Communist leaders, American diplomats, Chinese generals, Western journalists, ethnic minorities, immigrants, ordinary people, and public opinion often play important roles, just as significant as objective reality, economic development, geo-political strategy, and institutional culture.

The scholarship in this volume presents new contributions to the subject through multi-faceted components. It explores the theory and practice of policymaking, national security, military strategy, diplomacy, society, and personality. According to the authors, the historical turning points of deterioration in US-China relations over the past century have been determined by human influences. Since 2012, human efforts have operated



from the positive to the negative, constantly moving toward decoupling and the Cold War, creating a negative feedback effect and a trend of so-called accelerated confrontations. At present, the Chinese nationalist power and the American decoupling forces are ostensibly working in opposite directions and at odds with each other, but the actual effect is to move in the same direction, because the left in China and the right in the US are all pursuing a similar course of self-reliance, independence, internal circulation, and seclusion. The contributors' unique insights provide a better understanding of the Sino-US relationship, pointing to a predictable outcome for the two countries' current issues.

Who Lost China? The Cold War Revisited

The primary objective of this book is to explore responsibility for the US-China confrontations and illuminate problems, while discussing possible solutions. Few areas of research in international relations pose more difficulties than the study of these individual roles, especially that of the Chinese leaders, in US-China relations because of the latter's unique political position in relation to the legitimacy of the nation's Communist authority. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is the state's dominant political party and controls the country and media. *A New Cold War* clarifies key CCP conceptual frameworks to expose roots that have been neglected or ignored, offering case studies and policy analyses complicated by potential misunderstanding, crisis, or even war between the two countries. Today, whether China and the United States will go to war is a perennial question in foreign policy circles in Washington. A recent issue of *The Economist* featured a cover story on Taiwan titled 'The Most Dangerous Place on Earth' (Metz2021). US armed forces prepared a possible military conflict against the PLA in the Taiwan Strait. In May 2021, the American Naval War College held a conference on 'Large-scale Amphibious Warfare in Chinese Military Strategy'. About 20–30 presenters and hundreds of strategists, analysts, and military planners from the Defense Department, the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, CIA, DIA (Defense Intelligence Agency), and the State Department discussed a possible PLA invasion of Taiwan to protect Xi Jinping's so-called 'core interests', namely a Taiwan Strait amphibious campaign, and how the US should respond to such a landing.

Moreover, American China specialists, historians, and researchers, including some formerly pro-Chinese experts, for the first time echoed the Biden administration's accusations and criticism, blaming Xi Jinping



for lost opportunities to work with the United States and improve the US-China relationship from 2012 through 2021. As such, current research in the West engages in the debate on 'Who Lost America', a new question for the twenty-first century. Dominating academic attention and dividing schools, it means Beijing's loss of positive American assessment and perception of mainland China's status, as well as the 'loss' of basic trust in China's development that the US has held for more than four decades.

Zhiguo Yang revisits the 'Who Lost China' question and argues in his chapter that the great aberration between the United States and China stemmed from the end of World War II, when the US made mediation of the GMD-CCP conflicts a major component of its China policy and a part of its grand plan for postwar Asia (Yang, Chapter 4). This policy led the US to fall into the 'mud pit' of the Chinese Civil War (1946–1949), from which it could not extricate itself. After the CCP founded the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, some Republican senators and representatives blamed the Truman administration for 'losing China', since the president did not provide full support to the Guomindang (GMD, or Kuomintang, KMT; Chinese Nationalist) government in the Chinese Civil War. The State Department issued a 1,000-page *China White Paper* in 1950 and tried to 'whitewash' the problems of US policy towards post-WWII China by explaining that the Chinese Civil War was out of America's control (Li, Sun, Gadkar-Wilcox 2020: 134–35). Thereafter, the US government disconnected from the PRC, the first US 'decoupling' policy, as associated with anti-communism and the rise of McCarthyism at home.

Both questions make similar points: Who should bear the responsibility for the 'loss' of a good relationship? What are some major reasons behind the strategic decoupling policy? Some American historians challenge the old-century question. They argue that American influence in China was limited before 1949, and that 'who lost China' is a false question because in order to lose, one must first own. In fact, the US never owned or colonized China, so how can people talk about losing it? (Chomsky 2012).

Who should be responsible for the 'lost relationship'? Which country should be blamed more for the collision? Conventional approaches, epitomized by Warren I. Cohen, John K. Fairbank, and Maurice Meisner, view American policymakers as ignorant and unfamiliar with China's tradition and situation. Their lack of knowledge led to misunderstanding, crisis, even war with China. In his book entitled *America's Response to China*, Cohen argues that a series of American presidents in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries failed to help China during crises and mistreated Chinese immigrants in the US (Cohen 2019: 28–35). As a result, their China policy



became one-sided, or American-centric, with an imperialistic and aggressive nature. To improve the relationship, the US should have learned more about China and changed its China policy accordingly. In Harry Harding's words, 'US leaders should recognize that they share both common and competitive interests with China' and therefore need to seek a 'more realistic and mature relationship with China than has existed in much of the recent past' (Harding 1992: 22).

Gordon Chang, Oliver Schell, and Bruce Elleman represent a conservative approach whose works criticize China's US policy as irresponsible and selfish. Gordon Chang's book entitled *The Coming Collapse of China* points out that China is not as robust as it appears: 'The Middle Kingdom', Chang states, 'as it once called itself, is a paper dragon'. The CCP has a 'destiny', which is to lead the Chinese people for eternity. While Chang does not render a specific time for China's collapse, it cannot 'defy the laws of gravity forever'. After China's acceptance into the WTO in the early twenty-first century, it promised open markets, and Chang, like many politicians and scholars at the time, believed that China's accession would shake the CCP to its foundations (Chang 2001: chapters 1–2).

Moreover, recent conservative work by Michael Pillsbury and Richard McGregor sees some fundamental differences between the two countries in the past, long before 1949. These different values and interests lead to inevitable conflicts in US-China relations. To limit or delay a crisis or even a war, the US should take initiative and fight proactively against China in all areas all the time. Pillsbury, a former Department of Defense official and one of the leading China specialists, remarks that in the past thirty years, China has 'not evolved in the ways' the West had hoped and predicted for its engagement; Chinese hawks, the source of Chinese geostrategic thought, have advised Chinese leaders to avenge a century of humiliation and aspired to replace the United States as the economic, military, and political leader of the world by the year 2049. This policy began in the Mao era, and, since Xi Jinping took power, he has demonstrated his own dream, which is to reclaim China's rightful place atop the global hierarchy. It is perhaps more intimidating that China has long planned to use the Americans as they used the Soviet Union—as tools for their own advancement. Pillsbury warns that once China wins the 'economic marathon' and develops an economy twice as large as that of the United States, its new status may, as America itself did between 1860 and 1940, have to be protected through military force. The world's largest economy will need a force more powerful than any other that would eventually render American military might obsolete (Pillsbury 2015).



Who Lost America? Voices from Both Sides

In 2018, David Shambaugh raised the ‘new century question’ by blaming China for losing America, the key reason for distorted US-China relations (Lu 2019). He and others, like Elizabeth Economy, belonged to the Revisionist school of the 1980s–2000s, which believed China would internally change through increased free-market exchanges followed by a gradual introduction of democracy and civil liberties to the Chinese people. They valued Chinese tradition, political culture, and West-East interaction. However, Shambaugh changed his pro-China view by the late 2010s. He argues in his recent book, *China and the World*, that Xi Jinping has deserted Deng Xiaoping’s strategy of ‘Bide time and hide brightness (*taoguang yanghui*)’ and replaced it with more activist dictums such as ‘striving for achievement’, ‘China’s great rejuvenation’, ‘the Chinese dream’, and a ‘community of a shared future for mankind’. Xi’s ‘new and more forthright stance’ has nonetheless made other countries nervous despite his reassurance that a stronger China ‘will never seek hegemony or engage in expansion’.

Shambaugh correctly notes that a more assertive and powerful China will inevitably ‘encounter difficulties in its foreign relations going forward’ that are ‘already occurring’ (Shambaugh 2020: 17–20). In a previous book, Shambaugh sees China’s ‘Achilles heel’ in its bid to rule the world, as it ‘remains a lonely power’ (Shambaugh, 2013: 6). This statement is in line with the thinking of Miles M. Yu, a China expert and former advisor to Pompeo (*Lianhe zaobao* 2020). Shambaugh predicts two divergent pathways for China’s future: Neo-Totalitarianism or Hard Authoritarianism, and Soft Authoritarianism or Semi-Democracy. By selecting one of the latter two paths, Chinese leaders ‘will have a greater chance of a win-win outcome—improving [China’s] chance of successful reforms at home and more cooperative relations abroad’ (Shambaugh 2013: 377). Scholars from the aforementioned schools are all Americans: accordingly, almost all of them make their arguments from an American perspective in hopes of providing American policymakers with advice. However, some of them failed to perceive Sino-US relations from a less biased stance.

In fact, the individual factor of the general American public cannot be ignored as the driving force behind every positive step of the US-China relationship over the past forty years. As always, public opinion has come first, followed by foreign policy in the US (Hong and Sun, 2010: 429–48). Although US history proves that American public opinion is fluid and unpredictable, scholars need to observe and analyze its direction and development, especially evaluating the data released by the Gallup and Pew



polls. The strength of Gallup polls is to ask the same question continuously for decades, building a more reliable trend, while the Pew polls focus on the classification and refinement of issues with more depth. For example, the Pew poll conducted on March 29, 2020, has four major figures worth analyzing, which sheds light on the darkest days of US-China relations.

Like their American counterparts, most Chinese scholars, if not all, also strive to advise Chinese leaders. Among the hawkish and overbearing views voiced by leading scholars are those from Hu Angang, Jin Canrong, and the editor-in-chief of the nationalist tabloid *Global Times*, Hu Xijin. In 2020, they became extremely aggressive and suggested that China needed more nuclear weapons to deter the United States (Hu, 2020). Although Wang Jisi and other scholars have taken a more moderate and sober stance toward the United States, they still stand on the side of China, and it is difficult for them to adopt a nonjudgmental stance. Wang makes a plea to both Chinese and American leaders to prevent Sino-US relations from spiraling downward by sticking to three basic pillars. But he intentionally avoids criticizing the Chinese government and attributes the fission to the American government. Likewise, Wu Xinbo, a professor and dean of the School of International Relations at Fudan University, believes that China and the US are intensely engaged in economic, political, and geopolitical competition. Wu clarifies that the competition between the two countries is for neither hegemony nor security, but for society and economy. In Wu's view, leaders in both countries should seek 'competitive coexistence (*jingzhengxing gongchu*)', as China and the US have common interests in the economy, security, and social humanity. Wu, like Wang Jisi, praises the Chinese government for building up a Sino-US big-nation relationship with new, progressive ideologies, and transitional relations and a "community of common destiny for all mankind (*renlei mingyun gongtongti*)."¹ Yet, in the meantime, Wu blames American policymakers for their infatuation with hegemony. Wu does not or dares not mention any of China's aggressive policies in the South China Sea and Hong Kong (Wu2020).

Conversely, most Sino-US relations studies or diplomatic histories are either one-sided or tendentious, and few, if any, are neutral and balanced with a delicate consideration for the nuance of those relations. One of this book's great advantages is that all authors have been teaching, living, and researching in both the US and China for decades and are familiar with both countries. Many of them frequently visit China to remain updated on the latest developments. Moreover, the co-editors organized a recent scholarly trip to Taiwan so the co-authors could broaden their views through intellectual exchange with Taiwanese researchers and leaders, including



President Ma Ying-jeou (President of the Republic of China in 2008–2016). They are now better positioned academically to provide a balanced answer to the new century's question: 'Who Lost America?'

A 'Lost History' and New Cold War

This book has another advantage, as most chapters are based on primary sources and examine Sino-US relations through a wide range of historical perspectives. The authors provide factual evidence, archival findings, and progressive interpretations. The essay collection begins with the foundation of the CCP and spans the early arrival of Chinese immigrants in the US to the boycott of American goods in China. It then examines the shift of President Woodrow Wilson's image in China from saviour to villain, alliance during World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Nixon's visit to China, Deng Xiaoping's trip to the US, the combination of conflicts and collaborations during the Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao's presidencies, and the recent clashes between Beijing and Washington. It does not intend to cover all major events in the US-China relationship, and instead aims to look into what historians might have overlooked or missed in their research. This multi-authored book focuses on the 'lost history' of US-China relations from the 1890s to the 2020s.

In Part One, 'Background and Lost Voices', there are three chapters examining the lost history of the human factors in US-China relations prior to the Cold War. In the first chapter, titled 'From Admirer to Critic: Li Dazhao's Changing Attitude toward the United States', Patrick Fuliang Shan investigates one of the CCP's founders, Li Dazhao, and his views on the United States in the 1910s–1920s. Shan's study shows the May Fourth Movement of 1919 as the demarcation line between Li's strikingly incongruent early pro-American stance and his pro-Russian posture. In his nationalistic zeal for seeking an exemplar for China's resurgence and modernization, Li intended to transform his country by pursuing the Western, particularly the American, way of life before 1919. The Paris Peace Conference, however, dashed his hopes, and thereafter he decried America as an imperialist power. When he relinquished his long-held positive view of the United States, he became a pro-Russian activist and championed the communist cause.

The next chapter, 'Legacy of the Exclusion Act and Chinese Americans' Experience', analyzes the anti-Chinese laws which shadowed the lives of Chinese immigrants in the United States. Jingyi Song argues that, although the Chinese Exclusion Law of 1882 was eventually repealed in 1943, false



accusations against Chinese Americans as ‘disease carriers’ and ‘cheap labourers’ originating in nineteenth-century political rhetoric, still echo in today’s pandemic situation: President Trump used the slur ‘China virus’ to attack China during a public health crisis. The ‘China virus’ runs in the same historical vein, stirring hatred, racial antagonism, and social conflicts. However, the reckless accusations and racially discriminatory legislation against Chinese Americans did not go without opposition and resistance. According to Song’s chapter, Chinese Americans pursued justice through the judiciary process, rallied, and petitioned to voice their demand for racial equality and, more importantly, continued their participation in social, political, and economic activities, claiming their status as Americans even as anti-Chinese legislation was imposed.

The third chapter, ‘Disillusioned Diplomacy: US Policy toward Wang Jingwei’s Reorganized National Government, 1938–1945’, examines an overlooked, complicated US policy toward Japan’s ‘puppet’ government in China during World War II. Travis Chambers’ research indicates the United States, Great Britain, France, and other Allies viewed the Abe-Wang Treaty, signed November 30, 1940, as Wang’s definitive submission of Chinese sovereignty to the Axis powers and a threat to Allied interests in China. Thereafter, US policy towards Wang was one of non-recognition, categorizing his government as ‘traitorous’, and implementing policies similar to those adopted for other ‘puppet’ states, like Manchukuo. Chambers’ analysis and interpretation fill in missing history in US-China relations and provide a more nuanced historical narrative.

Part Two revisits the old-century question: ‘Did America Lose China?’ Three chapters provide new literature and interpretations on US-China relations in the early Cold War from 1946 to 1958. Zhiguo Yang focuses on US China policy during the Chinese Civil War in ‘Lost Opportunity or Mission Impossible: A Historiographical Essay on the Marshall Mission to China, December 1945–January 1947’. His chapter outlines an evolution of the interpretation of the Marshall Mission and its impact on Sino-US relations during the Truman era and beyond. In discussing the most recent Chinese scholarship on the Marshall Mission, from both the PRC and Taiwan, it argues that, although Chinese historians are recently more open to an international historical approach, their theoretical framework and perspectives remain fundamentally China-centred or Taiwan-centred.

The fifth chapter by Pingchao Zhu focuses on the Korean truce talks, ‘Negotiating from Strength: US-China Diplomatic Challenges at the Korean War Armistice Conference, 1951–1953’. She explains why peace negotiations were prolonged as fighting continued for two more years. More than



forty-five percent of all US casualties occurred after truce talks began. Furthermore, Zhu details how the two sides compromised, and truce negotiation progressed, particularly as the UN (United Nations) Command realized that the Chinese-North Korean delegation was less interested in peace than it was in utilizing the truce for propaganda and portraying themselves as the victors.

The next chapter, 'Mao Zedong and the Taiwan Strait Crises', covers two offshore conflicts between China and Taiwan from 1954 to 1955 and in 1958. China and the United States once again verged on direct military confrontation over the Taiwan Strait. Xiaojia Hou indicates in the sixth chapter that the Taipei-Washington mutual defense treaty of 1954 transformed what had been the Chinese Civil War into part of the global Cold War. Moreover, Beijing learned from the Korean War and tried to avoid another total war outside China's border. As a result, limited military attacks mixed with Cold War politics over the Taiwan Strait throughout the 1950s. Chinese leaders resolved to avoid direct conflict over the offshore islands of Jinmen (Kinmen) and Mazu (Matsu) if the Americans committed to their defense.

Part Three, 'Rapprochement and Opportunities', explores how the United States and China, bitter enemies during the Vietnam War, opened up to diplomatic rapprochement in the late 1960s. In Chapter Seven, 'Media and US-China Reconciliation', Guolin Yi addresses these dramatic episodes, like Ping-Pong diplomacy and Henry Kissinger's secret trip to Beijing, through the eyes of the mass media. He concludes that the US media made substantial contributions to the key events of Sino-American rapprochement from 1969 when Richard Nixon took office to his historic China trip in 1972. Besides transmitting signals between the two governments, the media proposed policies ahead of the American government, as well as public opinion, and functioned as a 'cultural diplomat' in the official and unofficial interactions between the two countries.

In Chapter Eight, 'Sino-American Relations in the Wake of Tiananmen, 1989–1991', Yafeng Xia critically analyzes how Deng Xiaoping, China's paramount leader after Mao, handled US relations in the wake of the Tiananmen crackdown. Deng grappled with balancing China's leadership between Conservatives and Reformers. Although Deng wanted to 'keep the US door open', he did not want to show weakness in dealing with Washington. Deng's foreign policy directive, 'avoiding the limelight, and getting some things done', saved Communist rule in China. Had the Bush administration responded strongly to the Tiananmen crackdown, it might have delayed China's economic rise, but it would not have toppled the Chinese Communist regime.



Qiang Fang examines post-Tiananmen US-China relations in Chapter Nine, 'Jiang Zemin and the United States: Hiding Hatred and Biding Time for Revenge'. According to his research, Jiang employed several strategies including greater economic reform, concession on human rights, and reserving strength to deal with the US, whose market, technological, and financial resources were critical to China's modernization. Despite the Taiwan Strait Crisis, embassy bombing, and plane collision, Sino-American relations remained mostly stable and cordial in the Jiang era. While Jiang repeatedly stressed the importance of Sino-American relations, he, like Deng Xiaoping, continued to privately view the US as China's biggest enemy. Unlike Deng, who preferred to conceal strength and bide his time, Jiang, emboldened by China's rising economic and military might, became more assertive and forceful with the United States.

Part Four responds to the new-century question, 'Did China Lose America?' In Chapter Ten, 'China's Belt-Road Strategy: Xinjiang's Role in a System without America', Xiaoxiao Li explains Xi Jinping's Belt-Road Initiative (BRI) as a vast and complex global development strategy, involving infrastructure development and investments in more than 165 countries in Asia, Europe, Africa, and Latin America. He emphasizes that BRI is independent of any US involvement. To contain Xi's new aggressive strategy, the Trump administration criticized China's violations of human rights, especially the detention of more than one million people in Xinjiang. The chapter examines an important shift in Xinjiang's geopolitical position from Mao's strategic rear in the Cold War to Xi's strategic centre within the BRI network.

Xiaobing Li argues in Chapter Eleven, 'The East and South China Seas in Sino-US Relations', that in Xi Jinping's BRI, the East and South China Seas have become the most concerning flash points in Asia, an important source of insecurity in the Western Pacific, and a possible place of engagement between American and Chinese armed forces. The chapter explains why Beijing continues its pro-active defense strategy of deterring perceived foreign invasion both offshore and outside China's border. He concludes that the PLA will overcome its military technology gap with a superior military power like the United States, by avoiding disastrous engagement on the mainland. Therefore, active defense policies, like the Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ), became aggressive in nature and heightened tensions between China, Japan, Taiwan, and the US in the East and South China Seas.

This essay collection concludes that China's security system has faced increasingly unstable and uncertain factors as the US has transferred its strategic attention to the region, implemented its "rebalancing" strategy,



brought historical change, and adjusted the region's political, economic, and strategic structures. While factors of insecurity and instability remain, China is surrounded by an unfavourable security environment, something the PRC knew when it was founded. Due to all the above challenges, Xi Jinping faces an arduous task to safeguard China's national unification, territorial integrity, and developmental interests. The period of 2022–2040 is the most important time for China's rejuvenation, as well as a time when China will face serious, unprecedented challenges.

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