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Part V. Thirty Years of Research in American Diplomatic History in China

1978 was a critical year in Chinese history. At the end of that year, the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee meeting of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was held and the policies of reform and opening-up became guiding principles for China. By comparison with other fields of research, the development of research in American diplomatic history in China was closely linked to the reform and opening-up campaign. Objectively speaking, the reform and opening-up policies created great opportunities for research in American diplomatic history. Academic research, however, is never free from the constraints of certain conditions, including the team of researchers, resources, and funding. Therefore, over the thirty years of reform and opening up, research in China in American diplomatic history has been "making steady progress". Today, China's research in American diplomatic history has developed on rather substantially in terms of both the research team and its academic achievements. Vertically, the progress of this research over the last thirty years has not been paralleled in any previous period, in terms of both its depth and scope and an unprecedented number of publications. Horizontal comparisons nonetheless reveal that much additional room still exists for more in-depth research.

I. A Survey of Past Developments

Chinese researchers in American diplomatic history have mostly been trained in China, with foreign-trained researchers still only a minority. Since the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee, the training of high-level researchers in China has been brought into line with international practice, with the system of master's and Ph.D. degrees the primary means of training talent. American diplomatic history has always, since the very beginning of this period, been a popular subject among postgraduate students. American diplomatic history was chosen as a thesis topic for the first master's degree in American history awarded after the beginning of reform and opening-up.[1] In 1988, the first group of four Chinese Ph.D. students in American history graduated, and three of them chose American diplomatic history as the subject of their Ph.D. dissertations.[2] Detailed statistics can give a general picture of the training of researchers in American diplomatic history through the academic degree system. From 1979 to 1988, Chinese universities and research institutes focused upon training master's students, with 120 graduating after completing a master's thesis on American diplomatic history and only three undertaking Ph.D. dissertations. Every year, increasing numbers of postgraduate students were recruited. In 1981, only four master's students in American diplomatic history were admitted, whereas in 1988 the number was twenty-three. During the same period, ninety students graduated with master's degrees in other fields of American history, and one student earned a Ph.D.[3] In the

[1] Wang Wei, *American-British Competition on the American Continents and the Monroe Doctrine* (《美英在美洲的争夺和门罗宣言》), Nankai Unversity, 1981.

[2] Ren Donglai, *Unequal Alliance: American Aid and Sino-US Relations Studies* (《不平等的同盟——美援与中美外交研究（1937-1946）》), Nankai University, 1988; Shi Yinhong, *Truman's Policies toward the PRC: A Review of the History from Hostility to War* (《杜鲁门政府对新中国的政策：从敌视到战争的历史回顾》), Nanjing University, 1988; Niu Jun, *From Hurley to Marshall: The Contradictions of American Mediation between the Chinese Nationalist Party and the Chinese Communist Party* (《从赫尔利到马歇尔——美国调处国共矛盾始末》), Renmin University, 1988.

[3] For statistics on the period from 1978 to 1989, see Yang Yusheng *et al.*, eds., *Comprehensive Catalogue of Chinese Articles on*

1990s, with continuing increases in the recruitment of master's and Ph.D. students, Chinese universities and research institutes began to place more importance on training Ph.D.s in American diplomatic history. According to statistical calculations of the number of master's and Ph.D. students in American history graduating between 1989 and 2000 from ten leading Chinese universities, including Peking University, Nankai University, Wuhan University, Nanjing University, Northeast Normal University, Shandong Normal University, and Sun Yat-sen University, during this period 221 master's theses in American history were completed, fifty-nine of which were on American diplomatic history (not including Sino-US relations), accounting for 27% of the total; of the forty-one Ph.D. dissertations, six were on American diplomatic history (not including Sino-US relations), accounting for 15%. If theses and dissertations on Sino-US relations were taken into account, the percentage would be much higher. This calculation is far from comprehensive, because more than ten universities admitted master's students in American diplomatic history during the 1990s. According to non-exclusive statistics, between 2001 and 2008, more than 200 Ph.D.s graduated from twenty universities and research institutes in China, under the supervision of fifty professors, with a degree in American diplomatic history (not including Sino-US relations). Although the statistics for Ph.D. candidates who have not yet completed their theses are not available, on a conservative estimate at least 100 Ph.D. candidates in American diplomatic history are currently enrolled in Chinese universities.

The most pronounced change in the situation in the twenty-first century is that it has become very difficult for a postgraduate with only a master's degree to obtain a teaching position in a university or research institute. More and more research universities have made a Ph.D. degree the minimum requirement for applicants for teaching positions. Objectively speaking, since 1979, a substantial number of master's and Ph.D. students in American diplomatic history have been trained in China. After graduating, however, most of these individuals changed their professions or sought further education overseas, so that only a few joined the teaching and research team staffing universities in China. At present, the majority of active Chinese researchers in American diplomatic history were trained after 1979, and of those aged less than fifty, only a very limited number do not have a Ph.D. degree, while most of them have also shared the experience of conducting related research in American universities. Although only a limited number of scholars have specialized in American diplomatic history, these have been responsible for publishing most of the high-quality scholarly works that have filled the existing gaps in this field in China. Thanks to the efforts of generations of researchers, China's research team in American diplomatic history has experienced continuous expansion. In the next few years, a group of talented, capable, and energetic Ph.D. candidates who have specialized in American diplomatic history will receive their doctoral degrees. It is expected that the majority of these young scholars will join the research teams of various universities and institutes, which will not only greatly enlarge and strengthen China's research team in American diplomatic history but will also mean that research in American diplomatic history can expect a brighter future. Undoubtedly, high quality academics are a prerequisite if Chinese research in American diplomatic history is to reach a higher level.

Research achievements constitute one of the basic indices by which one can measure the development of a discipline or research field. From 1978 onward, teachers and researchers on American diplomatic history gradually broke away from the constraints of leftist thinking, and began to study the evolution of American diplomatic relations from perspectives that differed

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*American Studies (1979-198*9) (《中国美国学论文综目（1979-1989）》), Liaoning University Press, 1990.

from those of the past. While the reform and opening-up policies were an integral part of China's effort to realign itself with the world, much time and effort was needed before China could acquire a clear understanding of reform and opening-up and put these into practice. Although researchers in American diplomatic history understood the importance of "seeking truth from facts" in their research, they likewise faced many obstacles in applying this principle to actual research work. This was particularly true in terms of Chinese understanding of the United States, which directly influenced how researchers interpreted major events in American diplomatic history and the objectives of American diplomacy. In retrospect, over these thirty years, the development of China's research on American diplomatic history was closely linked to Chinese scholars' deepening understanding of America, as reflected in their output of research publications. First of all, in quantitative terms, the number of articles published increased steadily year by year. Ten articles, for example, were published in 1979, forty-five in 1989, fifty-three in 2000, and eighty-two in 2007. According to statistics, in the eleven years from 1979 to 1989, Chinese scholars published 326 articles on American diplomatic history, an average of thirty a year;[4] in the eleven years from 1990 to 2000, they produced 494 articles, an average of forty-five a year, representing an increase in output of 51.5%; over the seven years from 2001 to 2007 a further 440 articles were published, representing sixty-three articles annually. If articles focusing specifically on Sino-US relations had been included in these figures, the numbers would have been double those given here.[5]

Qualitatively speaking, the standard of articles on American diplomatic history has also improved year by year. *Historical Research*, the most authoritative historical journal in China, broadly speaking publishes articles that represent the highest quality in their respective fields. Between 1989 and 2000, this periodical published 172 articles on world history (not including articles on China's foreign relations with other countries), thirty of which focused upon diplomatic history. Altogether *Historical Research* accepted sixteen articles on American diplomatic history (not including those focusing on Sino-US relations), representing 9.3% of the total number of articles it published on world history and 53.3% of those on diplomatic history. This number was slightly higher than the fourteen articles on Sino-US relations *Historical Research* published during the same period, but considerably less than the twenty-five articles on American history it published. It was also more than double the number of articles on American diplomatic history the journal had published in the previous eleven-year period, from 1979 to 1989, when *Historical Research* published twelve articles on diplomatic history, seven of which focused upon American diplomatic history (including one on Sino-US relations) and five on the diplomacy of other countries. Statistics reveal that articles on American diplomatic history accounted for a growing percentage of the articles published in *Historical Research* and the *American Studies Quarterly* between 1989 and 2000.[6] From 2001 to 2007, *Historical Research* published seventy articles on the foreign relations of different countries, thirty-five of them on

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[4] Please refer to the parts on American history, American military and American diplomacy in Yang Yusheng and others, eds., *Comprehensive Catalogue of Chinese Articles on American Studies* (1979-1989) (《中国美国学论文综目（1979-1989）》).

[5] Yang Yusheng, "A Wonder in China's American Studies: The Study of the History of Sino-US Relations in the 1980s" (《中国美国学的一支奇葩：80 年代的中美关系史研究》), *American Studies References*, No. 3, 1991; Tao Wenzhao, "The Study of the History of Sino-US Relations in China in Recent Years" (《近年来我国的中美关系史研究》), in Hu Guocheng, eds., *Look into the United States: American Studies in China in Recent Years* (《透视美国：近年来中国的美国研究》), Chinese Social Sciences Press, 2002, pp. 47-86.

[6] Wang Xiaode, "American Diplomatic History Research in China since 1989" (《1989 年以来中国的美国外交史研究》), in Hu Guocheng, ed., *Look into the United States: American Studies in China in Recent Years* (《透视美国：近年来中国的美国研究》), pp. 94-95.

American diplomatic history, accounting for 50% of the total. Meanwhile, 180 articles were published in the *American Studies Quarterly*, thirty-three of them on American diplomatic history, amounting to more than 18%, about the same as the number of articles focusing on current American foreign policy. These statistics reveal that since the 1990s great progress has characterized research on American diplomatic history in China, with a marked improvement in quality, a trend that has gained momentum in recent years.

Figures on the publication of books likewise reveal how Chinese research on American diplomatic history has improved in depth with the passing of time. According to statistics in *The Chinese Catalogue of Books on American Studies in the Last Century* (《百年来美国问题中文书目》), edited by Prof. Huang Annian, only three books on American diplomatic history were published in the 1980s, while in the 1990s, twenty-four books were published, covering a wider variety of topics, including two on the general history of American diplomacy, one (in two volumes) on American diplomatic history after the Second World War, two on the history of American relations with Asia (including relations with specific countries), two focusing on the history of American relations with Latin America, one on the history of American relations with Africa, one on the history of American relations with the Middle East, one on the history of American-Canadian relations, one on the history of American-Russian relations, and thirteen on specific topics. In the seven years from 2001 to 2007, an additional twenty-five books on American diplomatic history were published, with their scope further enlarged and focusing more closely on the study of specific topics. Many of these volumes were based on high quality Ph.D. dissertations. These statistics omitted books on the history of Sino-US relations. Most of their authors were researchers specializing in American diplomatic history, and some of these studies were the outcome of years of research. These statistics, therefore, reflected not only the growing quantity of research work in this field in the last thirty years but also, more importantly, represented the achievements of research in China in American diplomatic history in upgrading the quality of this field and attaining the highest level of research.

Research on American diplomatic history is considered part of history and the social sciences in China. During the 1980s, the reform and opening-up policy provided a better environment for academic research in China. Inspired by the campaign to “liberate thinking”, Chinese researchers began to reconsider the evolution of American foreign policies. A number of purely academic articles were published on major issues in American diplomatic history, including the Monroe Doctrine, the Open Door Policy, the Spanish-American War, the Good Neighbor Policy and the Marshall Plan. During this decade, however, governmental funding for such research was very limited when it existed at all. In the 1990s, the National Planning Office for Philosophy and the Social Sciences was established, responsible for financing research in the humanities and social sciences through fiscal appropriations by subsidizing research teams working on specific research topics. According to the statistics on research teams funded by this Office, between 1993 and 1998 it financed sixty-one research topics in the field of “world history”, six of them in American history, with three of these being in American diplomatic history. In the decade from 1999 to 2008, it funded 169 research topics on “world history”, twenty-eight of them in American history, accounting for 17% of the total, and half of these twenty-eight topics dealt with American diplomatic history. The financing quota of the National Foundation for Social Sciences has increased annually, from about ￥10,000 in first few years to almost ￥100,000 at present. Securing financial support combined with the years of effort researchers had invested in their subjects has made possible the production of high quality research outputs. The two most

influential monographs on American diplomatic history published in 2007 both received financial support from the National Foundation for Social Sciences. In addition to the National Foundation for Social Sciences, researchers can also apply for funding from the Annual Humanities and Social Sciences Program of the Ministry of Education, whose budget has also increased every year. Although exact figures are not available, it seems advisable to assume that this Program must have funded at least as many projects as has the Foundation. In recent years the Ministry of Education is known to have financed at least five projects related to American diplomatic history in the humanities and social sciences, supporting ventures designed to improve the research base, major and crucial projects involving broad philosophy and innovative work in the social sciences. Taking into account the counterpart funds provided by the universities themselves under these schemes, these research projects have received total funding of approximately ￥800,000, a sum that would only be marginal in the natural sciences, but that represents an astronomical figure in the social sciences. Governmental financial support is by no means the only precondition needed to generate first-class research, but financial support has made it possible to fill research gaps in China.

In the last thirty years, several generations of researchers have made determined efforts to improve their work in American diplomatic history, while the government has attached increasing importance to studies in the humanities and social sciences. Thanks to these favorable conditions, American diplomatic history in China has experienced fundamental changes, and now boasts higher quality researchers, improved research facilities, diversified channels of finance, highly accessible research materials, the innovative selection of research topics, and more financial support for the publication of research work.

II. The Course of Development

The last thirty years can be divided into three phases. Providing an introduction to basic developments in research on American diplomatic history, together with a description of the main characteristics of each phase, will help to give an overview of the development of research in American diplomatic history research in China during these three decades. Admittedly, it is less than scientific to divide the past thirty years of research in American diplomatic history into three distinct periods, because there are no definite dividing lines separating these three decades. This periodization is only used as a means of avoiding confusion, to help readers to clarify the course of developments in research in American diplomatic history during these thirty years.

The first phase lasted from 1979 to 1988. Publications during these years shared several characteristics. Firstly, research in American diplomatic history gradually broke away from political constraints, which treated the United States as nothing but a target for criticism, and moved onto the path of standard academic research. Between 1949 and 1978, research on American diplomatic history in China was rather fragmented. Few academic articles appeared. According to non-comprehensive statistics, over these thirty years well under one hundred articles in all were published, the majority of them political or occasional productions criticizing American foreign policies, which was reflected in the topics of most such articles.[7] Some masterpieces based on genuine academic research did still appear, for example, Prof. Luo Rongqu's article "The Origin and Essence of the Monroe Doctrine—The Development of

[7] The American Studies Team, Department of History, Sichuan University, eds., *Indices of Materials for Articles on American History* (《美国史论文资料索引》), published by the Chinese Association for American History Research, 1983, pp. 177-277.

Expansionist Thinking in Early America" published in *Historical Research*, No. 6, 1963. Such articles, however, were few and far between. Between 1979 and 1988, although most articles still showed the influence of the old practice of taking an uncompromisingly critical attitude toward American diplomacy in terms of both writing style and content, most articles had become much more academic in style, a change that became far more pronounced during the late 1980s.

Secondly, in the decade beginning in 1978, research topics became much more diversified, reaching a level of variety unparalleled in the preceding thirty years. From 1949 to 1978, Chinese scholars of American diplomatic history had focused upon traditional topics, such as the Monroe Doctrine, the Good Neighbor Policy, and the evolution of American policies toward Latin America, with the objective of demonstrating the reactionary nature of American foreign policy. From 1979 to 1988, changes took place. Traditional topics remained important foci of attention, but the scope of research expanded enormously, covering almost all major diplomatic issues throughout the various stages of American history and the evolution of American foreign relations with different regions of the world; among their subjects were isolationism, the Spanish-American War, the Open Door Policy, the policy of appeasement, the Truman Doctrine, the Nixon Doctrine, American diplomatic historiography, and American diplomatic thought. Scholars published several academically influential articles on these topics, among them Yu Xintun and Wang Dunshu's "America's Japan Policy and the Outbreak of the Pacific War" (《美国对日政策与太平洋战争的爆发》) (1979); Wang Side and Li Julian's "America's Far Eastern Policy and Its Evolution Before the Pacific War" (《论太平洋战前美国远东战略及其演变》) (1982); Ding Zeqing and Ding Kexun's "Japanese-American Secret Peacemaking Talks and the Formulation of the *Japanese-American Understanding*" (《美日的私人议和活动与<日美谅解案>的形成》) (1986); Yang Shengmao *et alia*, "A Few Questions about the Compilation of *American Diplomatic History*" (《关于撰写<美国外交史>的几个问题》) (1988); and Yang Shengmao's "Tentative Study of William Appleman Williams' American Diplomatic Historiography" (《试论威廉·阿普曼·威廉斯的美国外交史学》) (1980). Some articles were based on the master's theses of scholars of guaranteed academic quality, including Wang Wei's "American-British Competition in Latin America and the Birth of the Monroe Doctrine" (《美英在拉美的争夺与门罗宣言的产生》) (1983); Chen Jian's "American Policies toward Germany, 1937-1941" (《1937-1941 年美国的对德政策》) (1983); and Lin Yongjun's "American Policies toward Germany and the Division of Germany" (《美国的对德政策和德国的分裂》) (1983). Shi Yinhong's *The Nixon Doctrine* (《尼克松主义》) (1984) was also based on his master's thesis. Thirdly, the writing of articles became further standardized.

Last but not least, the use of research materials in foreign languages began to become the basic criterion to measure the academic quality of any article. Before this period, few articles used English materials and even the use of translated materials was regarded as being quite an achievement. After 1979, however, most scholars depended on English materials when pursuing research on American diplomatic history. Yang Shengmao's "Tentative Study of William Appleman Williams' American Diplomatic Historiography" (《试论威廉·阿普曼·威廉斯的美国外交史学》), for example, cited over sixty English-language publications. It became increasingly difficult, moreover, for articles that made no reference to English materials to win publication in key academic journals within China. Although most of these English materials were citations of published secondary works by American scholars, by comparison with past practices this still represented marked progress. Some scholars also began to use primary source

materials in their research. Significant examples included Shi Yinhong's *The Nixon Doctrine* and Zi Zhongyun's *The Origin and Evolution of US Policy toward China, 1945-1950* (《美国对华政策的缘起和发展（1945-1950）》) (1987). The former was a small book based on twenty collections of official American government documents and memoirs, while the later was a 400,000 word monograph based on twenty-five separate primary sources, including the US State Department's *Foreign Relations of the United States* series, and relevant archival collections in the National Archives of the United States. Although the use of primary source materials had not yet become the dominant practice in research on American diplomatic history, it represented an important future trend of development in this field.

In the second period, which lasted from 1989 to 1998, Chinese research on American diplomatic history was, as might be expected, influenced by the general environment in China, so that the field began to reveal some distinctive new characteristics by comparison with the previous decade. Firstly, with professional researchers continuously joining universities and research institutes, fresh blood was pumped into China's personnel studying American diplomatic history, and a vigorous research team began to take shape. Although the Chinese academic environment had improved by the 1990s, research in world history encountered unexpected setbacks, since within the broader discipline of history its importance was belittled. From the mid-1990s onward, the Office of Academic Degrees in the State Council revised the standing of the various disciplines within history. The three academic institutions awarding degrees in world history were amalgamated and world history became one of eight second-level disciplines clustered under historiography, an adjustment that was directly responsible for the shrinkage of research on world history. The shortage of new talent became a problem for research on the history of specific countries and in regional history and research in American history, which was a branch of world history, seemed bound to be affected. In practice, however, the impact was limited and the converse occurred. The research team in American diplomatic history even expanded, and by the end of the 1990s, researchers in their forties were affiliated with numerous universities and research institutes across China. If researchers on Sino-US relations were included, the team seemed even bigger. Secondly, the academic capabilities of researchers were generally enhanced, as a new group of recent Ph.D. graduates joined this team. Nankai University, for example, served as a base in terms of training American diplomatic history professionals. During the 1990s all its Ph.D. graduates remained at Nankai University after completing their degrees, to conduct further research.

Thirdly, the scope of research expanded further, and such topics as the origins of the Cold War, American Cold War strategies, American diplomatic thinking, expansionism, human rights diplomacy, and foreign policy decision making became very popular with researchers, who published numerous academically meritorious articles on these subjects, publications representative of Chinese scholars' fundamental attitudes toward these major issues in American diplomatic history.[8] During this period, Chinese scholars published their first few works on general American diplomatic history, including Yang Shengmao's *A History of American Foreign Policies, 1775-1989* (《美国外交政策史（1775-1989）》) (1991), and Zi Zhongyun's edited volume *American Diplomatic History since World War II* (《战后美国外交史》) (1994). After their publication these two works had a profound and lasting impact, because readers who

[8] Wang Xiaode "American Diplomatic History Research in China since 1989" (《1989 年以来中国的美国外交史研究》), in Hu Guocheng, ed., *Look into the United States: American Studies in China in Recent Years* (《透视美国：近年来中国的美国研究》), pp. 97-118.

wished to acquire a systematic understanding of American diplomacy found them extremely helpful, and they became essential readings on the book lists for history majors and vital reference books used by graduate students in the relevant disciplines in many universities.

Lastly, increasing numbers of scholars used primary archival materials published by the American government in their research. Archival sources gradually became the most important research materials used by scholars working on specific topics, who published many articles on such subjects, among them Xu Lan's "From Project 'Orange' to Project 'Rainbow': The Evolution of American Strategy before the Pacific War" (《从"橙色"计划到"彩虹"计划——太平洋战争前美国的战略演变》) (1996); Dai Chaowu's "The American Strategy to End the Pacific War and the Use of the Atom Bomb" (《美国结束太平洋战争的战略与原子弹的使用》) (1995); Cui Pi's "The Evolution of American Policy on Japanese War Compensation" (《美国关于日本战争赔偿政策的演变》) (1995) and "A Study of the Formulation of NSC81/1" (《美国国家安全委员会第 81/1 号文件形成问题研究》) (1996); Yu Qun's "Formulation of NSC152" (《美国国家安全委员会 152 号文件的形成》) (1996); Shen Zhihua's "Crossing the Thirty-Eighth Parallel: The American Strategic Decision to Escalate the Korean War" (《越过三八线：美国扩大朝鲜战争的战略决策》) (1996) and "How Did America Become Involved in the Vietnam War?" (《美国是怎样卷入越南战争的？》) (1995); Cai Jiahe's "Replacing France: The Key Step That Led America to Sink into the Quagmire of Vietnam" (《替代法国——美国滑入越南泥潭的关键一步》) (1993); and Shi Yinhong's articles on American policies toward the Soviet Union and East European countries and American involvement in the Vietnam War. Typical examples of research monographs were Hua Qingzhao's *From Yalta to P'anmunjom: America, China, the Soviet Union and Britain, 1945-1953* (《从雅尔塔到板门店——美国与中、苏、英（1945-1953）》) (1992); Shi Yinhong's *American Intervention and the War in Vietnam, 1954-1968* (《美国在越南的干涉和战争（1954-1968）》) (1993); and Yu Qun's *A Study of American Policy toward Japan, 1945-1972* (《美国对日政策研究（1945-1972）》) (1996). The works of Hua Qingzhao and Shi Yinhong won particularly favorable reviews from the international academic community and were highly regarded by scholars within and beyond China.

The third period lasted from 1999 to 2008. On the threshold of the new century, the reform and opening-up campaign had overcome difficult hurdles, and China's economic construction entered a period of rapid development. As its power burgeoned, China's world ranking became increasingly prominent. Enhanced national strength enabled the government to invest more heavily in research in basic disciplines, which created a favorable environment for the rapid development of basic disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, as the figures below demonstrate. Between 1991 and 1998, annual fiscal appropriations for the National Foundation for Social Sciences increased from ￥13 million to ￥26.5 million, which represented an average annual increase of a mere ￥1.69 million. From 1999 to 2008, however, appropriations to the Foundation rose from ￥38 million to ￥234 million, representing an average annual increase of ￥19.6 million.[9] During the same period, the Ministry of Education also boosted its investment in research in the humanities and social sciences. Even though these allocations were still far from adequate, they nevertheless demonstrated a new national emphasis on the humanities and social sciences. In practice, national financial support for the humanities and social sciences was

[9] Statistics published on the website of the National Planning Office of Philosophy and Social Science.

not limited to support for research projects, and Chinese research in American diplomatic history benefited tremendously, as did other disciplines. This situation, when combined with twenty years of accumulated progress, set the development of research in American diplomatic history on the fast track.

It displayed the following characteristics. Firstly, younger scholars holding Ph.D. degrees who were trained in China during the late 1980s and the 1990s have distinguished themselves academically and become leading figures in research on American diplomatic history. Together with older established scholars, most of whom are now in the summer or autumn of their lives and hold teaching or research positions in universities in Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Nanjing, Changchun, Guangzhou, Jinan, and Xi'an, they have become the backbone of China's research team. They are currently supervising many Ph.D.s in American diplomatic history, and have also published many works that represent the highest quality in this field. Secondly, research topics are no longer limited to major issues in American diplomatic history. The emphasis of research has shifted to those cultural and ideological factors that affect the American foreign policy decision making process. Many pathbreaking articles and top caliber books have been published, among them Wang Xiaode's *American Culture and Diplomacy* (《美国文化与外交》) (first edition 2000, revised edition 2008); Liu Jianfei's *America and Anti-communism: American Ideological Diplomacy toward Socialist Countries* (《美国与反共主义：论美国对社会主义国家的意识形态外交》) (2001); Liu Guozhu's *New Frontier of American Culture: A Study of the Peace Corps in the Cold War* (《美国文化的新边疆——冷战时期的和平对研究》) (2005); Zhou Qi's *Ideology and American Diplomacy* (《意识形态与美国外交》) (2006); and Wang Lixin's *Ideology and American Foreign Policy: A Case Study of America's China Policy in the Twentieth Century* (《意识形态与美国外交政策：以 20 世纪美国对华政策为个案的研究》) (2007). The study of American diplomatic thought has been very popular among researchers since the 1990s, as many scholars realized the crucial importance of this topic as the means to attain a more profound understanding of the essence of American diplomacy. No general survey of American diplomatic thinking had appeared in China until the publication of Wang Wei and Dai Chaowu's *A History of American Diplomatic Thinking, 1775-2005* (《美国外交思想史》) (2005). Those studies listed above represent Chinese scholars' in-depth and theoretical deliberations on the means and purposes of American diplomacy, drawing on their previous research efforts, and served as symbols of the deepening of Chinese research in American diplomatic history.

Thirdly, using primary archival source materials to study major issues in American diplomatic history has become a dominant practice, especially when scrutinizing American Cold War diplomacy. Articles utilizing such materials include Cai Jiahe's "The Kennedy Administration and the Sino-Indian Border Disputes of 1962" (《肯尼迪政府与 1962 年的中印边境冲突》) (2001); Zhao Xuegong's "Nuclear Weapons and American Policy toward the Korean War" (《核武器与美国对朝鲜战争的政策》) (2006); Yu Qun's "Social Science Research and American Psychological Cold War Strategy" (《社会科学研究与美国心理冷战战略》) (2007); Cao Pi's "Some New Insights into the *US-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security*" (《<日美相互合作及安全保障条约>新论》) (2005) and "The Making of the *Agreement between Japan and the United States Concerning the Ryukyu Islands and the Daito Islands*" (《<美日返还冲绳协定>形成史论》) (2008); Dai Chaowu's "The India-Pakistan War in 1965 and American Responses and Policies" (《1965 年印巴战争与美国的反应和政策》) (2008); Bai Jiancai's

"America's 'Covert Action' Strategy during the Cold War Period" (《论冷战期间美国的"隐蔽行动"战略》) (2005); Zhang Yang's "Scientists and American Space Policy in the Cold War" (《冷战时期科学家与美国的空间政策》) (2006); and Liang Zhi's "The Eisenhower Administration's Aid Policy to Korea" (《论艾森豪威尔政府对韩国的援助政策》) (2001). A typical example of book-length publications is Cui Pi's *America's Containment Strategy and COCOM, CHINCOM, 1945-1994* (《美国的冷战战略与巴黎统筹委员会、中国委员会（1945-1950）》) (2000), based on extensive archival materials gathered from different countries and repositories, including the National Archives and Records Administration of the United States, the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, the Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library, the National Archives of Britain in London, and the Diplomatic Archives of Japan, together with twenty-four categories of published historical documents, such as the State Department series *Foreign Relations of the United States*. Appendix III of this book, the Categorized Index of American National Security Council Documents (1947-1961), is a valuable reference guide for the study of American Cold War strategies and American policies toward other countries and regions. Other examples of similar studies are Cai Jiahe's *Dual Containment: The Eisenhower Administration's East Asian Policy* (《双重的遏制——艾森豪威尔政府的东亚政策》) (1999); and Zhao Xuegong's *Huge Change: American East Asian Policy since World War II* (《巨大的转变：战后美国对东亚的政策》) (2002).

Since these books appeared, large caches of diplomatic documents have been made available on the Internet, where they are more accessible to researchers, and searching for relevant materials has also become much more convenient. Many Chinese scholars have begun pursuing research based on web resources, and have achieved discernible successes with such methods. Searching the Internet for sources is a particularly common strategy for those writing Ph.D. dissertations. In addition, greater financial support for research and publications has become available, and Chinese scholars, even Ph.D. candidates, now enjoy more opportunities to tour and study in other countries or to attend international academic conferences, allowing much more frequent exchanges with other scholars. In all these respects, the past decade has seen unparalleled progress.

III. Problems

During the last thirty years an unprecedented number of works on American diplomatic history have been published in China. Some of these are of high quality and have encouraged and promoted the development of this field, but the quality of others is disappointing. When all these published works are surveyed, it becomes easy to discover that many of them are simply repetitious, recycling the same arguments and sources used in earlier studies. Unless such constant repetition can be eliminated, research in American diplomatic history in China will remain essentially inane, despite the apparently optimistic scenario, lacking academic development or innovation and dominated by the pursuit of instant success and quick profits.

In historical research in China, it is rather common for researchers to pay greater attention to the present than to the past, particularly where research on American diplomatic history is concerned. In the three hundred years of American history from the origins of the War of Independence up to the present, "the past" usually refers to early American history while "the present" means history since World War II. In terms of research on American diplomatic history, Chinese scholars have always favored American Cold War diplomacy. Until about the year 2000, some Chinese academics studied American diplomatic issues before World War II and published various

academically influential works on these subjects. Since around 2000, however, research on American Cold War diplomacy has largely dominated the field of American diplomatic history. By a large margin, works and articles dealing with American Cold War diplomacy overwhelm those focusing on other periods of American diplomatic history. Statistics shows that, from 2001 to 2008, *Historical Research* published ten articles on American diplomatic history, seven of them on American Cold War diplomacy, two on Sino-US relations before World War II, and one on theory. Over the same period, *World History* published twenty-three articles on American diplomatic history, sixteen of them on American Cold War diplomacy, four on Sino-US relations during the Cold War, and only three on American diplomacy prior to the Cold War. Between 2000 and 2007, *American Studies* carried seventeen articles on American diplomatic history, including eleven on American Cold War diplomacy, two on Sino-US relations in the Cold War, and four on other periods. During these years, moreover, most Ph.D.s in American diplomatic history produced doctoral dissertations on American Cold War history. According to incomplete statistics on Ph.D.s graduating from the Schools or Departments of History at Nankai University, Northeast Normal University, East China Normal University, and Nanjing University in the years 2001 to 2008, a total of forty-six students chose American diplomatic history as the subject of their Ph.D. dissertations, and forty-one of them, 89% of the total, specialized in American Cold War Diplomacy. Altering this top-heavy emphasis is a precondition for the more balanced development of research on American diplomatic history, a pointer and indication of the most desirable future direction for Chinese studies in this field.

The pursuit of instant success and quick profits is also common in the training of professionals. Before the mid-1990s, one Ph.D. supervisor usually accepted one Ph.D. student a year. Since 2000, however, expanded enrollments in Chinese universities have also affected the admission of Ph.D. students, whose numbers have increased many scores of times compared with the situation even fifteen or twenty years earlier. In many cases, more Ph.D. candidates than an entire university accepted twenty-five years ago now enter one faculty or department. A Ph.D. supervisor may have to supervise two to three, perhaps even five or six, Ph.D. students a year. Some supervisors complain that many of these Ph.D. students are poorly prepared and academically slow, demanding much greater efforts from their supervisors, making it more difficult to train high caliber professionals, while the general standard of Ph.D. dissertations has deteriorated by comparison with those completed before the mid-1990s. In practice some of the key universities which have taken a leading role in developing research in American diplomatic history in China since the 1980s are losing their traditional advantages, probably because they are now facing a shortfall of newly trained top quality researchers.

Prof. He Zhaowu of Tsinghua University began a public address by stating, “Academic progress is only possible by accepting diversity, rather than making a fetish of a particular model, because the latter prevents intellectual progress and eliminates academic vigor.”[10] Prof. He’s words embody a basic historical approach. It is far from easy, however, to implement this simple principle in academic research. China’s research on American diplomatic history is a typical example. Since the policies of reform and opening up began, the appropriate handling of relations with the United States has always been the primary focus of Chinese diplomacy. Ideological differences have, however, made it very difficult for these two countries to seek

[10] He Zhaowu, “Chinese Studies, Western Studies and Modernization” (《中学、西学与现代化》), in Department of History, Tsinghua University and the Editorial Board of SDX Joint Publishing Company, eds., *The Sequel to History Classes in Tsinghua University* (《清华历史讲堂续编》), SDX Joint Publishing Company, 2008, p. 3.

common ground while shelving their differences or to reach agreement on certain sensitive issues. In addition, the practice of power politics by the American side has frequently meant that the bilateral relationship has been characterized by a tense situation of antagonism, an atmosphere in which research on American diplomatic history has inevitably been expected to perform some pragmatic political functions, so that the scope of acceptable research is, consciously or unconsciously, constrained by this pre-determined framework. Given this situation, therefore, scholars seldom disagree academically on fundamental approaches, and articles intended to initiate and provoke debates on basic principles only rarely appear. Although Chinese scholars have put forward different perspectives and arguments on major issues in American diplomatic history, different schools of thought on the evolution of American diplomatic history have not emerged and Chinese scholars still largely eschew the critical spirit. This dearth of lively and provocative debate precludes in-depth research on crucial issues and the absence of differing schools of thought also demonstrates that in general much room still exists for further progress in research in American diplomatic history, especially in terms of the theoretical framework and varying research approaches. This is one of the main reasons why Chinese research on American diplomatic history has not yet won international prestige.

IV. Thoughts on Future Improvement

Since reform and opening-up began, Chinese research in American diplomatic history has experienced thirty years of development, during which substantial progress has occurred. Although problems and deficiencies still exist, there are great possibilities for further progress in research.

For researchers in history, historical sources are fundamental and the use and appraisal of primary sources is therefore the most essential skill and the precondition for “innovation”. At present, problems relating to shortages of historical materials have basically been solved so far as Chinese research in American diplomatic history is concerned. The online publication of many archival materials has greatly narrowed the gap between Chinese scholars and their foreign counterparts in terms of their ability to consult and utilize historical sources. Apart from materials held in different archival repositories in the United States, primary sources available to foreign scholars have already been made accessible to Chinese scholars through various channels. The Reference Room of Nankai University’s Modern and Contemporary History Research Center, for example, possesses a complete set of the State Department series *Foreign Relations of the United States*; a collection of archival materials in paper format covering the presidencies of Harry S. Truman to Richard Nixon; such major databases as the United States Declassified Documents Reference System, the National Security Archive Online, and Declassified Documents from the Official Website of the Central Intelligence Agency; and numerous microfilmed materials, including Documents of the National Security Council, the State Department’s Classified Core Documents on China and the Far East, the Minutes of the Joint Chief of Staffs, and the Central Intelligence Agency’s Study Reports. Recently, the International Cold War History Research Center of East China Normal University purchased 1,830 reels of microfilm on post-World War II American Cold War diplomacy, at a cost of more than ￥2 million. If these microfilms were printed out in paper format in books of 250 pages each, they would be the equivalent of 6,000 books. In order to make the fullest use of these documents, the Center also spent ￥600,000 on a high-speed microfilm scanner, which can convert one roll of microfilm into PDF format in an average of ten minutes. This is by no means a complete listing of primary source materials on American diplomatic history held in Chinese universities and

research institutes, but it does suffice to demonstrate the recent fundamental improvements in Chinese reference facilities, which have greatly facilitated research by Chinese scholars. One can without exaggeration predict that in a few years, a wide array of research works based on archival materials will be published, such as the six-volume *History of American Foreign Relations* (《美国对外关系史》), a Humanities and Social Sciences Research Base Project of the Ministry of Education (MOE) directed by Wang Xiaode, and *A Study of Major American Foreign Policies during the Cold War* (《冷战时期美国重大外交政策研究》), a MOE Philosophy and Social Sciences Research Critical Project directed by Shen Zhihua. The completion and publication of these projects will greatly reinforce research in this field.

Abundant primary source materials are a necessary but not sufficient condition for the development of China's research on American diplomatic history. The undifferentiated use of primary source materials provides nothing more than a simple explanation of the material. The mere accumulation of materials is unlikely in itself to produce academic arguments differing from those advanced by others, let alone research in a theoretical framework established by the individual researcher. For further breakthroughs in research on American diplomatic history from the Chinese perspective, the problem is no longer the absence of materials but how to develop new perspectives and analytical tools once those materials have been digested. Even in research on American Cold War diplomatic history, where major progress has been made, this problem is still pronounced. To lift China's research on American diplomatic history to a higher level, Chinese researchers will need not only to base their research on firsthand materials but also to inaugurate new research topics, adopt a multi-disciplinary approach, and formulate theoretical understandings and interpretations of the evolution of American diplomatic history.

At present, the Chinese academic world frequently proclaims the need to follow international practices, meaning that voices from Chinese schools of thought should be heard in the international academic community. Command of the English language is a basic requirement for research in American diplomatic history. Following international practices, however, means far more than that. Even before World War II, American diplomatic historians realized that the study of American diplomatic history required a solid foundation of American sources, but that it was also obligatory to consult relevant archives in those countries that interacted with the United States. In their research they tried to assess the "mutual influence" between countries. Indeed, when studying American diplomatic history, the limitations of relying exclusively on available American government documents are obvious, since this makes it difficult to cultivate a global research perspective. Only by drawing on archival sources from different countries can researchers broaden their horizons and evaluate issues in a more sophisticated and nuanced fashion. At present, many countries have opened their archives to researchers. A grasp of the languages of other nations that "interact" with the United States can give non-American researchers a greater comparative advantage when studying American relations with those states. Unfortunately, very few Chinese scholars of American diplomatic history have a genuinely proficient grasp of two or more foreign languages. Sometimes, therefore, when Chinese scholars are exposed to archival materials from other countries, which are often written in a totally incomprehensible language, they feel frustrated. Proficiency in another foreign language means an additional "walking stick" in research, making potential breakthroughs on major research topics more feasible, and is an important condition for the further development of Chinese research on American diplomatic history.

Internationally, the United States remains the center of research on American diplomatic history.

Thanks to their advantages in language and materials, a tolerant academic environment, and years of accumulated scholarly experience, American historians represent the highest level of research in American diplomatic history. Research works and Ph.D. dissertations by Chinese scholars on major issues in American diplomatic history normally include a literature review, which usually treats research works by American scholars as setting the standard for breakthroughs. Where research in American diplomatic history is concerned, therefore, keeping in line with international practices largely means that articles and books by Chinese scholars should win appropriate recognition and influence within the American diplomatic history community and be published in respected American professional journals or by well-regarded presses in the United States. Generally speaking, except for some individuals working on topics in Sino-US relations, most Chinese scholars of American foreign relations find it difficult to engage in exchanges or debates with their American counterparts (language surely plays a role here), let alone follow American practices. Most of the articles in *Foreign Affairs* written by authors from outside America are produced by European scholars. By a large margin, the output of European research on American diplomatic history cannot be compared with its American equivalent, but this does not preclude Europeans from producing studies that are highly esteemed by American scholars, because European scholars bring their own respective cultural perspectives to their research, giving them specific insights that American scholars find it difficult if not impossible to acquire. In terms of some major issues in American diplomatic history and the ingrained thinking and cultural perceptions of American decision makers, "spectators" from outside a culture are usually in a better position than "insiders" nurtured in the culture to appreciate and analyze such factors. This situation has enabled European scholars to produce work that has won the respect of their American counterparts. In practice, Chinese scholars should share and enjoy similar advantages to European scholars. Indeed, since Chinese culture is completely distinct from American culture, Chinese scholars may have an even sharper edge. Although research in China on American diplomatic history generally lags behind the international field, one cannot deny that where some specific topics are concerned, China has a leading edge. Chinese scholars observe the making and implementation of American foreign policies from the outside and therefore differ from American scholars in their standpoints, arguments, opinions, and source materials. With greatly enhanced access to primary sources, provided the new generation of Chinese scholars devote themselves to research and make good use of their training, they will acquire the basic qualities needed to exercise influence within the international scholarly community. In a relatively short time, therefore, Chinese academics should be able to follow international practices and win recognition in the global scholarly community.

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