

China, Cambodia, and the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence:
Principles and Foreign Policy

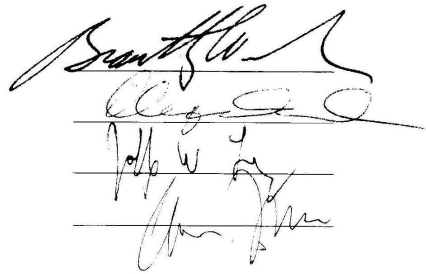
Sophie Diamant Richardson
Old Chatham, New York

Bachelor of Arts, Oberlin College, 1992
Master of Arts, University of Virginia, 2001

A Dissertation presented to the Graduate Faculty
of the University of Virginia in Candidacy for the Degree of
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Department of Politics

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Three handwritten signatures are present, each written over a horizontal line. The top signature is the most prominent and appears to be 'Sophie Richardson'. Below it are two smaller, less legible signatures.

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ABSTRACT

Most international relations scholarship concentrates exclusively on cooperation or aggression and dismisses non-conforming behavior as anomalous. Consequently, Chinese foreign policy towards small states is deemed either irrelevant or deviant. Yet an inquiry into the full range of choices available to policymakers shows that a particular set of beliefs – the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence – determined options, thus demonstrating the validity of an alternative rationality that standard approaches cannot apprehend. In theoretical terms, a belief-based explanation suggests that international relations and individual states' foreign policies are not necessarily determined by a uniformly offensive or defensive posture, and that states can pursue more peaceful security strategies than an “anarchic” system has previously allowed. “Security” is not the one-dimensional, militarized state of being most international relations theory implies. Rather, it is a highly subjective, experience-based construct, such that those with different experiences will pursue different means of trying to create their own security. By examining one detailed longitudinal case, which draws on extensive archival research in China, and three shorter cases, it is shown that Chinese foreign policy makers rarely pursued options outside the Five Principles.

Four chapters on Chinese foreign policy towards Cambodia show that policies that neorealism and others would consider logical were considered in Beijing and consistently rejected. In the 1950s and 1960s, the communist giant made diplomatic and financial efforts on behalf of the tiny monarchy and did not cultivate a relationship with Cambodia's communists. China's support for an exiled Sihanoukist government and the

subsequent Democratic Kampuchea regime in the 1970s illustrated its commitment to sovereignty, a belief also reflected in China's assistance to the Cambodian resistance coalition of the 1980s. Although Cambodia regained its independence in the 1990s, China continued to perceive it as vulnerable to foreign economic and political encroachment, such that it opted to pursue a close relationship with a regime dominated by its former enemies. Similarly principled choices are seen in abbreviated cases on India, Albania, and Afghanistan. Understanding the Five Principles and their application render Chinese foreign policy not only comprehensible but also predictable.

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-----------|--|
| APL | Albanian Labor Party |
| ASEAN | Association of Southeast Asian Nations |
| CCFA | Chinese-Cambodian Friendship Association |
| CGDK | Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea |
| CIA | Central Intelligence Agency |
| CCP | Chinese Communist Party |
| CMC | Central Military Commission |
| COMECON | Council for Mutual Economic Cooperation |
| CPP | Cambodian People's Party |
| CPPCC | Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference |
| CPK | Communist Party of Kampuchea |
| CPSU | Communist Party of the Soviet Union |
| DK | Democratic Kampuchea |
| DRV | Democratic Republic of Vietnam |
| FUNCINPEC | National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia |
| FUNK | National United Front of Kampuchea |
| GMD | Guomindang |
| GPCR | Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution |
| GRUNK | Royal National Union Government of Kampuchea |
| IFI | International financial institution |
| KPNLF | Khmer People's National Liberation Front |
| KPRP | Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party |
| KOC | Kingdom of Cambodia |
| KR | Khmer Rouge |
| MFA | Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| NAM | Non-Aligned Movement |
| NATO | North American Treaty Organization |
| NEFA | North Eastern Frontier Agency |
| NPC | National People's Congress |
| PLA | People's Liberation Army |
| PPA | Paris Peace Accords |
| PRC | People's Republic of China |
| PRG | Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam |
| PRK | People's Republic of Kampuchea |
| RCAF | Royal Cambodian Armed Forces |
| RVN | Republic of Vietnam |
| SEATO | Southeast Asian Treaty Organization |
| SNC | Supreme National Council |
| SOC | State of Cambodia |
| SRV | Socialist Republic of Vietnam |
| UNTAC | United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia |

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INTRODUCTION

I. Introduction

Why would a large, poor state strategically devote resources – billions of dollars of aid, diplomatic support, military equipment and training – to a far smaller state? Particularly when the smaller state could never provide a comparable “return,” and when those choices actually compromised the larger state’s security? For more than half a century, China’s relationship with Cambodia has at various points contributed to dramatically worsened ties with the United States, the former Soviet Union, Vietnam, and most of the rest of Southeast Asia, has cost approximately US\$2 billion¹, and has earned China international notoriety for its support to the genocidal Khmer Rouge. Beijing² had every compelling reason to relinquish its relationship to Phnom Penh, yet it never did so. Why?

In the simplest sense, China chose what it did because it believed that these choices were not only right, but also that this kind of relationship was, in and of itself, a means of ensuring security for all states. China has described its foreign policy towards all countries as shaped by the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. Developed by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) throughout the 1940s and articulated by Mao prior to the October 1949 establishment of the People’s Republic³, the principles include mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, nonaggression, noninterference in each other’s internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.

These principles were neither empty rhetoric nor a diluted version of Maoism. Rather, they were – and are – a guide to action that explains why China forges and maintains relationships with all manner of states, why the world’s largest per capita recipient of foreign aid continues to give money away, and the circumstances under which it will respond aggressively. According to these principles, state size, regime type, level of development or other criteria did not matter to Beijing in forging relationships. If all states could abide by this code – which entailed constant diplomatic interaction, a commitment to resisting all forms of imperialism, and refraining from involvement in states’ domestic affairs (with the essential corollary of respecting China’s claims to Taiwan and Tibet) – the threats that appeared most likely to cause war would be ameliorated.

Many would explain China’s behavior as predictable for a former empire seeking to reestablish dominance in the region. But if control was what China wanted, this was a remarkably inefficient way of doing so, and, as Brantly Womack has suggested, relations between states of considerably different capabilities are not necessarily ones of dominance.⁴ China did not require Cambodia to cut ties with certain actors, adopt particular policies, or support China, and, on occasion, the Cambodians made decisions that were in tension with what Beijing would prefer. Beijing’s choices consistently created a variety of options for Phnom Penh, not for itself. Despite the fact that the current Cambodian regime is comprised of China’s former enemies, Beijing continues to be as supportive as it has been towards most other Cambodian governments. Because Cambodian leaders conducted their relations with China on a

principled basis, China seized every opportunity to defend Cambodia's sovereignty, even when doing so entailed China jeopardizing its own security.

II. Relevance

Without understanding what China wants out of its international relationships, we will continue to make inaccurate predictions about its behavior. Too often external analyses focus only on cooperative or aggressive behavior, dismiss non-conforming behavior as anomalous, and conclude that Chinese foreign policy is inchoate. But do we not want a better explanatory framework than, "China, the superior; China, the backward; China, the proud; China, the despairing; China, the uncertain; China, the principled; China, the pragmatic..."?⁵ Better analysis from experts who insist that, "The Chinese...conduct diplomacy by...unfathomable secrecy, suspicion, studied indifference...[t]hey incline to mistake frankness, a quality to which they attach little value, for discourtesy or guile..."?⁶ There are considerable practical and theoretical implications if it can be shown that a particular set of beliefs explain why China has chosen the policies it has. It is imperative, particularly given behaviors the dominant schools of international relations theory cannot explain, to inquire into the fullest possible range of what states want and their perceptions of how best to achieve those goals.

At a practical level, the Principles articulate China's expectations for international relationships and the obligations it will fulfill. At the less cooperative end of the spectrum of foreign policy, the Principles make clear that Beijing will not relinquish its claim to territories it considers part of China, such as Taiwan, and that it will likely

militarily defend its right to those territories. But at the same time, the Principles also indicate that the *other* circumstances in which China would resort to military action are extraordinarily limited. They also place considerable emphasis on diplomatic interactions, on developmental aid and technical cooperation, and on refraining from engaging in the other state's domestic politics. In this last respect, the distinction from American foreign policy, which sees it appropriate to forcibly alter another state's regime type, could not be more stark.

Beijing's ongoing use of rhetoric about emancipation, imperialism, and threats to sovereignty is not an indication that it is trapped in its language of the 1950s and 1960s. Rather it is that Chinese foreign policy makers see similar problems, albeit in different forms. For example, China is no longer concerned about a massive American military presence in Southeast Asia, but it remains highly concerned about the constraints and dependencies for those countries of American economic dominance. If these kinds of concerns can be understood, it is possible that western and Southeast Asian policymakers may find China less threatening and may be able to identify points of cooperation.

In theoretical terms, these beliefs suggest that international relations and individual states' foreign policies are not necessarily determined by a uniformly offensive or defensive posture and do not result in dichotomous outcomes of cooperation or aggression. States can pursue more peaceful security strategies than an "anarchic" system has previously allowed.⁷ "Security" is not the one-dimensional, militarized state of being most international relations theory implies – it is a highly subjective, experience-based construct, and those with different experiences have

different means of trying to create their own security.⁸ If the contents of the “black box” – the domestic process of determining the goals of external interactions – suggest clear and consistent imperatives, it is well worth opening.

If China has spent half a century trying to engage in essentially peaceful external relations, but that behavior is continually interpreted among western policymakers and western international relations theory as threatening, does China really deserve to be labeled “revisionist” – a term that conjures up images of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) marching into neighboring states, rather than an image of international forums and economic systems in which all states have equal rights? Historian Michael Hunt cautions that, “History is...not optional and incidental to an understanding of Chinese foreign policy...we neglect it...at our own peril.”⁹ International relations theory must be revised to accommodate the Chinese experience and the principle-based policies that flow from it.

III. State of the field

Much of what has been written about Chinese foreign policy provides little insight into the origins of choices like those towards Cambodia. David Shambaugh and Kenneth Lieberthal’s work is primarily descriptive and focuses on what they perceive as subsets of uncooperative Chinese behavior, such as policy regarding Taiwan, the United States, or the Soviet Union.¹⁰ While providing important historical perspective on China’s relations with other major states, their inquiries are not framed around testable propositions, such that it is difficult to accept the validity of their

predictions. Moreover, because they do not include an analysis of cooperative behavior, their work cannot explain disconfirming behavior.

Even fewer attempts are made to reconcile such behavior by revising their inquiries in more theoretical terms. They do not examine different outcomes and inquire as to whether their initial assumptions might be incorrect, and they do not consider why the expected behavior did not materialize in instances where, according to their assumptions, it should have. For example, if, as John Mearshimer has suggested, China is “an aggressive state determined to achieve regional hegemony”¹¹, why has China spent fifty years ensuring Cambodia’s neutrality and independence? Gone to war on its behalf but not tried to take it over? Jeopardized its relations with the entire region for Cambodia? How has a country far larger than all nations of the region combined failed to achieve such dominance? Mearshimer simply dismisses, rather than explains, more cooperative behavior in the region as a diversionary tactic. Nor does he consider that, contrary to his prediction, China has not become more aggressive as a result of its growing economic power.

Many of these scholars of Chinese foreign policy dismiss principles as empty or messianic rhetoric. This is an ironic mistake, given that their judgments of Chinese foreign policy remain based on theories that stem from a deep conviction that the American experience and what has been good for the United States should be the modal experience for all states. In 1961, A.M. Halpern wrote that Chinese foreign policy was unnerving because, “...its spokesmen think of themselves as servants of destiny.”¹² Perhaps Halpern was unaware of John F. Kennedy’s recent inaugural speech, which implied that US foreign policy was derived from the divine, or of the

American doctrine of manifest destiny. It would be an oversimplification of the literature to suggest that these scholars believe that China should simply be more like the United States, but at the same time, it cannot be an accident that the same scholars who wring their hands over “revisionist” China’s aspirations claim that that threat will be ameliorated if China becomes a democracy – in other words, if it becomes like the authors’ state.¹³ Many of these scholars share an implicit or explicit view that China’s approach to the world is deviant and threatening.

Others make more explicit arguments about the goals of foreign policy towards states like Cambodia, and they typically see conventional variables such as security, ideology, domestic politics, and economic gain as the driving imperatives. Most of the security-oriented explanations focus on China’s involvement in Southeast Asia. Perhaps best exemplified by Robert Ross and Michael Yahuda, this approach typically argues that China’s behavior is a function of dominating the periphery, rendering it inhospitable to American or Soviet involvement, and blocking efforts at intra-regional domination.

Ross’ first major work, which sought to understand why China invaded Vietnam in 1979, argued that Beijing acted to keep the Soviet Union out of Indochina, a territory China considered to be part of its sphere of influence. That the thorniness of Sino-Vietnamese relations pre- and post-dated Soviet involvement considerably weakens the explanatory variable, such that it is difficult to accept the core claim that that “China’s ultimate objective” was “domination of Indochina.”¹⁴ Yahuda similarly insisted that China sought to control Southeast Asia and erase any ties to the United States, yet he provides little persuasive evidence of Chinese pressure.¹⁵ Neither

author discussed the merits or costs to Beijing of such regional dominance, nor did they address whether and how Beijing's choices should have been different when the security challenges posed by the US and USSR were absent from Southeast Asia. Most important, the domination Ross and Yahuda insisted would come to pass simply has not. Poorly matched evidence and theory prompts us to question their hypotheses, and more rigorous evaluation of data will likely vindicate alternative approaches.

Iain Johnston's efforts to reveal the beliefs behind Chinese foreign policy represent the first serious attempt among realists to question the relationship between words and deeds and suggest the possibility of a different logic or rationality.¹⁶ Noting that many analysts concur that, "the Chinese have persistently exhibited what are essentially nonrealist predispositions"¹⁷, Johnston suggests that Chinese foreign policy choices are a function of an offensive strategic culture derived from its past need to defend against foreign invasions combined with relative capabilities. According to this view, preparing for war is a means of increasing the likelihood of peace.

Although Johnston's work makes a concerted effort to understand Chinese perceptions of their international relationships than most other scholarship, his treatment of the Mao era makes China appear disproportionately aggressive. The data set used to justify this claim is not particularly reliable. Its authors admit their information on China is weak, and their methodology for evaluating conflicts not only systematically overestimated the data for China, it underestimated the data for the US and USSR, thus making China appear still more aggressive than it actually

is.¹⁸ Johnston's interpretations of Mao's writings on the necessity of human conflict are slightly but crucially distorted to imply that the Chairman wanted widespread conflict across the world in order to achieve communism, which is not entirely accurate. He did not consider the prospect that the PRC's stormy history led to a concerted effort to find other ways to ensure security. As is the case with many of the realist analyses, more cooperative Chinese foreign policy behavior is given minimal attention.

Could China's relationship with Cambodia be a function of its Marxist ideology? Scholars have certainly documented the inspiration the Khmer Rouge found in Maoism, and the affinity that developed particularly between the KR leadership and the Gang of Four.¹⁹ Others, such as Barbara Bernouian and Michael Schoenhals, point to the radicalization of China's foreign policy during the Cultural Revolution, but acknowledge that the imperatives did not outlast that period. But it is difficult to find evidence that China tried to export communism or "people's war" to Cambodia as explicit policy during any period other than the Cultural Revolution, and easy to find evidence that it specifically sought not to do that. Melvin Gurtov's and Peter Van Ness's explorations of China's support to revolutionary movements show how highly circumscribed that practice really was.²⁰ They also illustrate how erratic and counterproductive those policies were, even at the height of the Cultural Revolution.

Thomas Christensen, who cautions against a tendency to attribute seemingly "wasteful" Chinese foreign policies to "distorted thinking or ulterior motives," articulates a well-known explanation of foreign policy choices based on domestic political imperatives.²¹ He links aggressive stances toward the US with Mao's need

in the 1950s to generate popular support that could be channeled into massive domestic development schemes like the Great Leap Forward. But there are important issues on which his argument can be challenged. First, it requires demonstrating that popular support for foreign policy at the time was in fact low. Yet bolstered by the successes of liberation, the outcome of the Korean Conflict, the Geneva Conference, and the Bandung Summit, it seems more likely that perceptions were positive, which suggests that the posited relationship between the variables does not hold. His analysis also suffers from selection bias, in that he does not assess similar and contemporaneous efforts to inspire support for more peaceful initiatives, such as the “belt-tightening” campaign launched to assist the Vietnamese resistance, which literally required people in Guangxi and Yunnan provinces to give up food. In addition, the cases chosen, particularly Taiwan, represent extremes of foreign policy crises. Finally, to the extent that China’s most valuable external resource was the prospect of 600 million people on the march, it is not surprising that perceived crises were accompanied by mobilization – in what other circumstances was mobilization “threatened” but not carried out? These issues make Christensen’s explanations difficult to accept.

The issue of economic development has been central to Chinese domestic and foreign policy since the establishment of the PRC. Thomas Moore and Yang Dixia would explain China’s foreign policy choices toward Cambodia as part of a need for a peaceful and profitable relationship with Southeast Asia and continued access to resources and shipping lanes.²² Yet if policies were chosen to promote China’s economic development, why were so many resources devoted to countries like

Cambodia, North Korea, and Egypt – countries that could never repay the loans or transform themselves into powerful trading partners? Would the resources not have been better spent on more potentially lucrative relationships? And why was the funding forthcoming at times when China could desperately have used the resources at home, such as after the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution?

It is clear that China saw security threats to itself and to Cambodia as a result of the American and Soviet presences there, but the nature of that threat was not perceived exclusively in terms of military alliances or presences – if it had been, Beijing’s interest should have dropped away by the late 1980s, never to return. In addition, Beijing’s approach was not to try to cocoon Cambodia in an alliance. Its repeated efforts to explain its actions had a distinctively Marxian, but not Marxist, flavor in its rhetoric about anti-imperialism and sovereignty. And clearly foreign policy related to China’s domestic politics and developmental imperatives, but not in the ways suggested by the scholars discussed above. If it had, China should have been conserving resources and looking for more immediate ways of minimizing conflict.

Too many of these approaches focus on particular outcomes – “saber-rattling” towards Taiwan, inconsistent positions with respect to international organizations, an ever-changing relationship with the United States – and work backwards to identify their causes. But these are constrained not only by their insistence on what they deem to be the only valid explanatory variables – security in a traditional territorial sense, ideology in terms of communism or authoritarianism, and the quest for greater wealth – but also by their inherent skepticism and hostility. Bates Gill dismisses Beijing’s

emphasis on principles as Sisyphean: “the more Chinese foreign policy promotes a worldview packaged largely in ideals, the more outsiders will suspect that Chinese leaders are trying to hide their actual intentions.”²³ Yet many of these suspicions are not born out, such that the methodology, empirics, and ontology still merit rigorous debate.

A full appreciation of the Five Principles and its beliefs in autonomous, self-reliant, respectful international relationships can explain these choices and those that other approaches cannot – a sizable aid program, a restrained and cooperative style of diplomacy, extensive negotiations in border disputes, a lack of support to communist movements, longstanding relationships with different regime types, participation in international organizations, a willingness to risk security for small states. Rather than trying to wedge Chinese foreign policy into the analytical categories offered up by international relations theory models, is it not perhaps time to take seriously Beijing’s descriptions of its own aspirations and explore those aspirations’ relations to policies?

Other more historically grounded discussions of Chinese foreign policy reveal the importance of ideas and the PRC’s experiences with liberation and development in foreign policy, the relationship between those experiences and their ideas about how best to ensure security, and how abstract ideas actually became tangible policy. Taken together, one can see glimpses of a different logic of state-state relations that other approaches cannot imagine, let alone accord any explanatory power. Many of these scholars echo Hunt’s caution that Chinese foreign policy can, “seem puzzling and even irrational from the perspective of an outsider attuned to power politics but not to the power of the past.”²⁴

The CCP's desire to remake itself and international relations, informed by its own revolutionary success, is a central theme in Hunt's and Chen Jian's work on the origins of Chinese foreign policy. Hunt emphasized the importance of rendering the new China immune to the problems that plagued Qing and Republican China – a combination of weak regimes and strong interventionist powers, which had resulted in the total collapse of the state. Chen identifies revolutionary nationalism, a sense of obligation to enable a revolutionary experience in other countries trying to overcome a colonial legacy, and a determination to continue the revolution at home.²⁵

At the same time, the new leadership tried to reconcile conflicting imperatives, such as how to make China strong without becoming threatening, and how to establish developmental but not dependent relations. Lowell Dittmer concurs with the desire for Chinese leaders to reassert their country's position in the world, but to do so without replicating the errors of other large powers. "While determined to transcend their 'victim' identity as soon as possible, the CCP leadership has balanced that ambition with recurrent assurances of its determination to continue to identify with those in [the Third World] even after their material interests diverge and 'never [to] become a superpower' – by which it seems to mean, never a *victimizer*."²⁶ These works document the importance to the leadership of unimpeded, indigenous decision-making power that was wholly free of externally imposed constraints or inducements. The belief in non-interference was not driven by simple concerns about diplomatic niceties or by a desire to hide abusive domestic policies from international view, it was a strong statement about the survival of the country. By extension, it was a strong statement about how to create peace between countries. CCP leaders saw

external involvement in any country as at least an impediment, if not an active threat, to that country's security.

These works also suggest that early PRC leaders were keenly attuned to the fact that they were entering into an already-formed international system of institutions and norms, one that was neither designed nor inclined to accommodate China's interests. American dominance of the United Nations, the awesome power embodied in the Marshall Plan, and the strength to dictate international norms were unnerving to Beijing. As Chen suggested, Mao and the CCP leadership believed that "security would be guaranteed only when the outside world was no longer dominated by hostile capitalist-imperialist forces."²⁷ But that was not simply a matter of defending a neighboring state and a border, it was also about creating equality in international relations. To Mao, that "not only meant a total negation of America's roles in China in modern times, it also posed a crucial challenge to the existing principles of international relations followed by the United States and other powers."²⁸

That the United States had stolen the march on China with respect to international norms of conduct was particularly galling. To the Chinese – and many others – the Monroe Doctrine and American exceptionalism were thin justifications for imperialism of the same variety that had recently brought down the Chinese state. Other major powers, most notably those who had benefited from it, had essentially accepted these norms, but this was not a battle China intended to sit out. Even today, many of those who study China remain remarkably deaf when it comes to "hearing" how threatening these ideas were to Beijing. For example, Christensen wrote that, "it is difficult to be critical of the American intervention to protect Taiwan...the only

norm violated was that of nonintervention in another country's sovereign affairs."²⁹

That Christensen fails to acknowledge the importance of what has been the most important *Chinese* norm of international relations is astonishing, particularly with respect to Taiwan. Despite its concerns about international institutions and norms, Beijing had few resources other than an alternative framework for international relations with which to leverage a role for itself. Given their own experiences, it was no surprise that they harbored "hopes that the collective effort of the weak could reform an international system originally defined and now dominated by the strong."³⁰

Chen catalogs what China was willing to sacrifice in its quest to construct and inspire support for a different world order. China's sacrifices in the Korean War, which began less than a year after the founding of the PRC, were remarkable. Beijing gave generously of its soldiers and resources, tolerated slower economic recovery, increased its dependence on the Soviet Union, lost a chance to regain control of Taiwan, and was marginalized at the United Nations – for what was essentially a vindication of its principles.³¹ Dittmer also writes of the bitter consequences China knew it would face in rejecting Soviet aid, a consequence that followed Beijing's decision that Moscow was disrespectful and interventionist, and of the extraordinary provision of aid to the Third World at a time when China could ill afford such efforts.

These authors also provide insight into how these abstract ideas about international relations became actual policy. Wang Jisi surveys Chinese international relations theory and its relevance to Chinese foreign policy, "theory is not much different from a doctrine, an ideology or a set of propositions serving as a guiding

principle for action.”³² Melvin Gurtov and Byong-moo Hwang carefully document the persistent concerns amongst the leadership about China’s security, but note that these were “...not exclusively a matter of losing territory or strategic advantage. By themselves, these might not have been considered disastrous losses. What made each threat a critical matter was the potential domestic cost of...passivity in the face of external threats.”³³ Across diverse cases – ranging from the Taiwan Straits crisis of 1958 to the invasion of Vietnam in 1979 – Gurtov and Hwang show that when China employed military force it did not do so for expansionist purposes but rather to defuse crises or discourage attempts to test perceived weaknesses.

Wang Jisi illuminates the close connections Chinese scholars and policy-makers see between realism and American foreign policy. Wang quotes Deng Xiaoping’s top foreign policy specialist in the late 1980s: “Starting from the so-called ‘realism’...the bourgeois theories of international relations preach power politics, balance of power, national interest, and so on, and even advocate that ‘only by maximizing the expansion of its power can a state safeguard its interest.’ Generally speaking, they are to serve the interests of imperialist foreign policies.”³⁴ This suggests that as long as Chinese foreign policy makers believed that realist impulses dictated American foreign policy, threats were still extant and the need for a new model of international relations had not diminished. It also suggests that Chinese scholars seek alternative explanatory frameworks.

The bulk of David Lampton’s work concentrates on Sino-American relations, and while it makes some of the same errors as Christensen and others, his recent exploration of diplomatic interactions suggests that different sets of ideas may

influence the two states' behavior. Lampton argues that American negotiators typically want to focus on highly specific issues, while Chinese diplomats feel that "it is necessary to first establish a framework of interests, principles, and intention against which they can assess particular issues."³⁵ Lampton acknowledges that American representatives often have difficulty understanding the relevance of this "mutual understanding," but that it is essential for the Chinese participants.

Taken together, these scholars suggest that Chinese foreign policy has been an expression of solidarity with and support for fellow travelers in the campaign against imperialism and for sovereignty. There is a pervasive sense of obligation to other poor states, an overwhelming urge to rewrite the rules of international relations, and of a chronic concern about achieving sovereignty to ensure security. None suggests that the beliefs entailed in making foreign policy required the export of revolution or militarization as primary responses in international relations. In other words, they illustrate the profound importance of principles in foreign policy choices.

IV. The argument

This project argues that Chinese foreign policy is largely shaped by principles, and particularly by the Five Principles. It demonstrates across one detailed longitudinal case and three shorter cases that Chinese foreign policy makers consistently rejected more expedient policies that would have brought it greater wealth, territory, or security in the short term. Rather than simply deeming the behavior irrational or irrelevant, as the dominant schools of international relations theory would, this argument essentially tries to take seriously – and test – Chinese

policy makers' own explanations of their behavior across time and space. Under what circumstances do Principle-based explanations hold up? What are the limits of the Principles? When do they dictate more aggressive action? Are there instances in which China has subordinated the principles to security, wealth or ideology?

How ideas matter

Ideas are a notoriously difficult variable in social science scholarship, and they are usually considered at best one element of a multicausal explanation and at worst epiphenomenal. Rational choice theorists help break down decision-making and the ranking of preferences, but that approach tells us more about the cognitive processes at work, not about the substance of the decisions. John Ruggie characterizes early attempts at arguing that ideas matter as limited to “what happens before the neo-utilitarian model kicks in.”³⁶ Harry Eckstein similarly describes ideas as the “orientational foundation of action,” suggesting that actors will not pursue strategies that are in tension with their beliefs³⁷, while Jeffrey Legro argues that ideas serve a purpose by narrowing a theoretically infinite set of choices to those that are viable, weeding out those that are not.³⁸

Other scholars more explicitly describe ideas as causal. Ted Hopf, for example, argues that they spur “choices, preference, and action.”³⁹ Ruggie writes, “the efficacy of...ideational factors is easily underestimated...the *aspiration* for a united Europe has not *caused* European integration...but it is the *reason* the causal factors have had their specified effect...[why the outcome] is historically *so* and not *otherwise*.”⁴⁰ Yet much work has now shown that ideas and beliefs are as important as military capabilities or levels of economic development in understanding not just how but

why, given a range of options, foreign policy makers choose what they do. For example, beliefs about the appropriateness of use of state force, choice of weapons, bilateral relations with repressive regimes have demonstrably served as guides to action for states.⁴¹

If ideas set the parameters for a state's choices as it engages the rest of the world, we need to know what those beliefs are, how they emerged, how they are transmitted, and how they function. For those scholars who accept the importance of ideas, the key is to understand whether and when those ideas have greater influence than other explanatory variables.

But how can ideas or principles be defined independent of their outcome? What constitutes evidence of a principled motivation, rather than some other kind of motivation, for a particular foreign policy? The only way to ascertain whether motivations were driven by principles or other more commonly accepted variables entails an examination, across time and space, of the full range of choices available to foreign policy makers and their institutions, followed by a careful assessment of why the chosen policy was selected and others were rejected. If in this case it can be shown across a variety of security environments, leadership eras, and levels of economic development and capabilities that China has repeatedly pursued options that are not aggressive, lucrative, or expansionist, but that appear restrained, consistent, and cooperative, there will be evidence that principles have driven policies. Unprincipled policies would include sudden, aggressive behavior that is not linked to territorial concerns, the abrupt cessation of relations with another state, or the pursuit of relations for purely economic reasons.

One of the most important propositions this project seeks to test is the relative importance to Chinese policymakers of upholding a principle, particularly when their own security or reputation was at stake. What sacrifices would they make and what costs would they bear in order to maintain principled relationships? For example, China's choice to back the Cambodian resistance and invade Vietnam, rather than avoid costly international entanglements and minimize hostilities with the Soviet Union and Vietnam, suggested that to Beijing defending the principle of sovereignty was more important and valuable than establishing normal relations with those two states. The choice to provide crucial support to the Khmer Rouge, a regime busy brutally and methodically exterminating its population, suggests that either Chinese foreign policy makers were utterly inhumane or that they believed their intervention would actually worsen situation. This choice continues to tarnish China's reputations in most contemporary discussions of Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge, or human rights in general, and it had profoundly negative consequences for China's quest to improve relations with other Southeast Asian states.

This project does not argue that there is a perfect, formulaic output of policy based on these beliefs. Rather, the Five Principles serve both a constitutive function, in that they provide the bases and questions on which international interactions are perceived and analyzed, and a delineative function, in that they determine what options are and are not considered. They set particular and, most important for theoretical relevance, *predictable* limits about the choices available to Chinese foreign policy makers. It will be shown that certain options, particularly ones such as

those predicted by realists, were regularly considered and rejected on the basis of these principles.

Which ideas matter

Which ideas have been most important to Chinese foreign policy? Many would suggest that either communism or aspirations of returning to “great power” status must dominate policymakers’ thinking. Ironically, a wide variety of scholars who agree on almost nothing else concur that while the goal of achieving socialist revolution within China influenced foreign policy, Beijing rarely sought to proselytize internationally. Those who insist Chinese foreign policymakers are obsessed with joining the community of “great powers,” such as Randall Schweller and Robert Ross, have not been able to empirically sustain their conclusions. More persuasive arguments by scholars such as Qin Yaqing and Samuel Kim draw attention to the importance in foreign policy of concepts such as the “three worlds theory,” national identity, and the need for reference groups – none of which is in tension with the Five Principles.

As noted above, the Five Principles predate the establishment of the PRC, and they reflected the development of the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) experiences in and thinking on international relations. By the time the CCP came to power, it was already keenly aware that it had almost no power with respect to the United States, the United Nations, the structure of the international economy, or, most importantly, the dominant structure and conduct of international relations. But it saw its own victory in 1949 as vindication not just of its military superiority but also of its ability to generate support for and consolidate power around a set of ideas about equality,

empowerment, development, and nationalism. If such an agenda could generate sufficient domestic support to ensure a CCP victory, could it not serve the same purpose internationally?

Much has been written about the CCP's struggle to reconcile China's past greatness, the trauma of the early 20th century, the exploitative role of external powers, and its own victory into the basis of a practicable foreign policy. Repeated incursions into Chinese territory and the questionable status of territories Beijing considered to be part of the PRC (Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Tibet) led Mao and others to place a high premium on China's physical integrity, and an already paternalistic relationship with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) contributed to a sense early on that self-sufficiency was a desirable long-term goal. As the CCP came to power, its twin challenges lay in ameliorating western imperialism and overcoming rampant poverty, goals that required peace and broad bilateral relationships. But how was China to achieve this, given its poverty, regional hostility to communism, and a growing American presence in Asia?

Preferring to channel their energies into domestic development after decades of warfare – a goal widely misunderstood as a result of China's involvement in the Korean War – Chinese leaders tried to articulate a clear preference for respectful, regular diplomatic relations through means such as the Five Principles in part to minimize the likelihood of costly conflict, and to assuage fears, particularly within the region, of communist China. Ideas about sovereignty and territorial integrity were perhaps most important to the new leadership as they sought to remove what they saw as any foreign control over Chinese affairs. Mao's and other leaders' careful

separation of other states' domestic affairs from their international relations was a clear indication that they expected similar treatment. In this same spirit, the regime type of other states – democratic or dictatorial, communist or capitalist – did not matter to the Chinese in determining with which to develop relations.

How these ideas have continued to matter

These ideas about peaceful coexistence and mutual non-aggression sound quaint and antiquated; why should we believe that they have been replicated and continue to inform Chinese foreign policy? Arthur Stinchcombe cautioned that the means by which an idea or institution is created does not necessarily mean that it will endure⁴², but Norbert Elias and J.L. Scotson demonstrate that particular ideas can outlive the reality on which they were originally based⁴³, and Mancur Olson has written extensively on institutional resistance to change. Subsequent scholarship has drawn attention to the importance of particularly important historical episodes, such as victory in war, to the longevity of beliefs, and offered compelling accounts on the role institutions can play in producing consistency.⁴⁴ Equally important is Jeffrey Legro's work examining the circumstances under which foreign policy elites revise their beliefs – circumstances that have not eventuated for China over the past fifty years.⁴⁵ Undoubtedly the CCP's practice of democratic centralism has also contributed to consistency over time.

The Chinese foreign policy community has been, until quite recently, remarkably small. Since the establishment of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs shortly after liberation, foreign policy remained the exclusive domain of the most senior leaders, several of whom had been instrumental in developing the Five Principles. Many of

those who served as diplomats and worked at the policy level of the Ministry came from military backgrounds. They were well steeped in the CCP's approach of turning an abstract idea into a reality through careful, disciplined action. Zhou is perhaps best remembered among retired diplomats for his frequent reminder that MFA officials "were like soldiers without uniforms."

In addition to the continuity of personnel, Premier Zhou Enlai's influence in shaping the Ministry of Foreign Affairs can still be seen. Not only did he stress the importance of proper conduct in external relations to remaking international relations, he developed administrative measures, some of which are still used, to ensure that those who worked in the foreign policy realm never went for more than two to three years without participating in courses on the nature and goals of Chinese foreign policy. For about twenty years, the MFA functioned according to Zhou's "3-3-3" program, which had one-third of the ministry staff serving overseas, one-third working in Beijing, and one-third studying at any given time. Over the past two decades, the MFA has grown considerably and the "3-3-3" system is no longer in use, yet its diplomats and staff members are regularly retrained in topics including the Five Principles at institutions such as the Foreign Affairs College and the international relations departments of major universities.⁴⁶ These measures suggest that continuity in a set of beliefs across different leadership eras, levels of economic development, and Ministry size are plausible.

As important, the consistency of what China saw as threats, coupled with successful efforts at thwarting those based on its own beliefs, contributed to those beliefs' entrenchment. For example, its unexpected success in helping hold the

United States back in Korea and its wave of normalizations in the 1950s reassured China that its approach to international relations was correct. Breaking with the USSR convinced Chinese leaders that self-reliance was paramount, and the experiment with radicalism reminded them that it was neither appropriate nor efficacious to try to alter other states' regimes. Throughout the 1970s, China made progress with respect to Taiwan, and the process of opening and reform the following decade rewarded its careful approach to external involvement – a point underscored by the international reaction to the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre. Its economic successes in the 1990s were capped off by the return of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty. Not only has China managed to defuse many of the threats posed to it, it has managed to vindicate itself on numerous occasions. For all of the crises China has managed since 1949, none has caused major international instability, nor have they generated the starkly unpleasant circumstances Legro requires for ideational change.

It is important to clarify that this is not a cultural argument. All Chinese people do not share an innate commitment to these principles, and PRC foreign policy makers are not born with them. Too many explanations of Chinese political behavior try to identify origins in Confucianism, the “mandate of heaven,” or other supposedly uniquely Chinese characteristics. As Max Weber warned, legitimate domination is typically justified through ideas and beliefs under the gentler appellation of “culture.”⁴⁷ This argument quite explicitly acknowledges that the Principles were constructed and constructed for a purpose. It attributes the origins of these particular Principles to a specific set of political actors within the Chinese Communist Party in

response to a specific set of experiences, and notes the deliberate involvement of those actors – foreign policy elites – in ensuring those beliefs’ survival.

Ideas and security

Security in international relations is typically understood as the physical protection of the state against threats or uncertainty through the use of military force. Relatively little attention is paid to other conceptions of security, threats such as economic dependence, or alternative means of producing security.⁴⁸

The Five Principles were not simply rhetorical devices, they were telling statements about how the CCP perceived its own security. Regaining control over lost territories remained at the top of the CCP’s agenda; a failure to achieve that goal meant the country was divided and therefore weak.⁴⁹ To the CCP, external involvement in domestic issues was not just a gesture of ignorance or arrogance, it was a common practice that could threaten the existence of the state. Economic dependency followed closely behind as threat, as did the inability to participate equitably in the major international relations forums. And what China sought for itself in its dealings with other states, it also sought for other states with similar aspirations. With few other options available to it but bolstered by its own success, the CCP set out to revolutionize not just Chinese foreign policy but the very nature and institutions of international relations on the basis of the Five Principles.

Some argue that it is difficult to reconcile the relationship between ideas or principles and traditional understandings of security. Most international relations theory conceptualizes security in terms of strength, typically military or economic capabilities, or in terms of alliances. Again, this derives from the conviction of an

unpredictable, offensive environment. Yet the Five Principles suggest a rather different approach – that security is not to be found in exclusive, detailed compacts between a handful of states, and that only powerful states are able to ensure their survival. They suggest that security for all is possible for all states if particular guidelines are followed⁵⁰, an approach Brantly Womack suggests is common among larger states.⁵¹

Chinese leaders did not believe that the most serious threats to their security were to be ameliorated simply by becoming wealthy or developing a more powerful army. In China's case, principles and security are not two distinct realms. More important, what China sees as a threat is determined to be so by viewing states' actions in the context of the Five Principles. As noted above, the more pervasive threats lay in the hostility of a polarized world, the unrepresentative nature of international institutions, and the lack of real sovereignty for dozens of countries. The principles were China's way of trying to offer an alternative to a world of bipolarity, military alliances, and dependent development. The same ideas that contributed to American exceptionalism and most international relations theory were profoundly threatening to Beijing.⁵²

V. The outline of the project

This project argues that the Five Principles have set the parameters for Chinese foreign policy. It seeks to test the relationship between two variables, principles and foreign policy, systematically over time. If it is successful, it will demonstrate why China's behavior cannot be classified as egoistic self-interest, how it has not

responded to the supposedly consistent imperatives of global anarchy, and how economic imperatives have not dictated obvious responses. If there are discrepancies between the principles and the behavior, it will be clear that the Principles are little more than rhetorical decoration. This behavior could include efforts by Beijing to expand beyond its borders through conditioned policies or aid, if its attention to Cambodia wanes after periods in which it can be useful to conflicts of more immediate, such as the Vietnam War, or if relations vary across different Cambodian regimes.

Why Cambodia? Because it is not intuitively obvious why Beijing should have bothered with Cambodia at all. In addition, the costs of China's involvement indicate that Cambodia has somehow been particularly interesting to China. More important, it suggests that there are compelling reasons why the foreign policy choices should have been *different*. This case captures many of the features highlighted in other analyses of Chinese foreign policy, such as the presence of great and small powers, varying regimes in Phnom Penh, considerable shifts in the international environment, an assumption of affinity between communist or authoritarian regimes – yet China's behavior has been reasonably consistent. By looking at one case over time, the project hopes to apprehend the full range of choices available to policy makers and the circumstances in which they were being considered. If an explanation can be developed that accommodates these variations, it will indeed make a contribution.

The chapters devoted to exploring the relationship between China and Cambodia employ process tracing. By looking in as careful detail as possible at instances of Chinese foreign policy decision making with similar actors in a variety of situations

across time, it will be easier to determine what motivating factors – wealth, security, ideology, or principles – were the primary motivation for China’s policy choices. As important, this should show what options were considered and rejected – a key element missing in most other analyses of foreign policy behavior. Equally important, they will reveal how multiple competing imperatives shaped policy decisions – in other words, we will be able to see why and how and when principles may have mattered more than other concerns. Finally, these chapters will show when Chinese foreign policy makers relinquished the Principles entirely and chose their policies from a broader menu of options. The periodization is designed to demonstrate the continuity of principles across different Chinese leadership eras, different security environments, and different levels of political, economic, and military capabilities, and to highlight decisions that appeared to be in tension with principles.

Apprehending those choices and grasping the underlying principles requires a well-grounded history of China’s relationship with Cambodia. It is the only way to accurately reconstruct the vivid choices and their consequences faced by policymakers at the time. A thinner version of the empirical evidence substantiating the theoretical claim would weaken the project in two important ways. First, a simpler discussion of the events could easily be quite misleading. Second, it would rob the reader of the context necessary for forming an independent judgment. Only by providing as much evidence as possible can we properly adjudicate between the different possible explanations for China’s motivations with respect to Cambodia.

The initial period of China's relationship with Cambodia reveals choices by Beijing that required a considerable investment of resources, brought no obvious gain, and in some respects compromised its security. Beijing did not insist that Phnom Penh cut its ties to Washington or Moscow, and it did not seek out a relationship with the fledgling Cambodian communist movement. Its defense of Cambodia's neutral status was widely misread across Southeast Asia. Rather than keep resources at home, where they were desperately needed, or make more efficient strategic use of Cambodia by insisting it cut ties to the US and assist the revolution in Vietnam, China chose to leave these matters to be decided by the Cambodians. China did engage in interventionist behavior during the early years of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, when the basis of foreign policy was explicitly reoriented to promote worldwide revolution and those who continued to articulate foreign policy on the basis of the Five Principles were imprisoned.

Several of China's choices throughout the 1970s were truly extraordinary. To the Chinese, the US had no right to topple Sihanouk and anoint a new Cambodian leader – only Cambodians could do that. Consequently, China opted not to simply back a faction but to enable the formation of an exile government based in Beijing. When that group succeeded in fighting its way back to power in Cambodia in 1975, Beijing did not hesitate to provide a lifeline of support to the Khmer Rouge. Even though Chinese leaders and foreign policy makers were aware of the regime's awesome brutality they did not opt to intervene or cut ties, a decision continues to hound Chinese foreign policy officials. But its restraint effectively backfired as the Khmer Rouge escalated its quarrels with Vietnam and set the stage for a real security crisis.

Beijing refused to commit troops to Cambodia's defense, fearing that this instance of defending another state's sovereignty might compromise its own. This period is particularly important in revealing what China would tolerate in the name of the Five Principles – most notably millions of dead Cambodians – but also the limits on what it was willing to give of itself.

If ever there was a time when Beijing should have shed any complex and unrewarding relationships, particularly ones that posed challenges to its ambitious economic development programs, that time was the 1980s. Yet throughout this decade, China delayed re-normalizing relations with the USSR and launched a punitive attack on Vietnam to punish it for violating the Five Principles in Cambodia. These choices not only compromised economic development but also territorial security. Beijing's efforts to reestablish a tripartite resistance and reform the Khmer Rouge seems at best futile and at worst grotesque, but China was unapologetic. Quicker and more effective ways of settling the Cambodia conflict were presented; China rejected them all. Although Beijing remained deeply frustrated with Hanoi, it did not prevent Sihanouk from negotiating with representatives of the Hanoi-backed regime in Phnom Penh. Had China chosen to accept a Vietnamese occupation or regime in Cambodia, little more than principles would have been sacrificed, and the tangible gains would have been considerable. Yet China again continued on its principled route.

As the transition back to Cambodian rule began and faltered repeatedly throughout the 1990s, Beijing continued to see Phnom Penh as highly vulnerable to foreign economic and political encroachment as a result of its poverty and its chronic

partisan disputes. Having emerged from its own period of domestic turmoil and rejuvenation, Beijing was convinced that the formula for Cambodia's recovery lay in a closing of political ranks to promote economic development and genuine national reconciliation. Other states ostensibly agreed with these goals, though their respective methods of achieving them differed considerably – and consequentially – to Beijing. Rather than back away from the endless squabbles and donor politics, Beijing not only complied with its Paris Peace Accords obligations, including ones that were inimical to its strategic interests, it established a solid foundation for a new relationship with its former enemy, and tried to find ways of ameliorating the challenges to Cambodia's independence posed by highly conditioned international aid.

Some may argue that China's choices with respect to Cambodia were idiosyncratic and a result of Cambodia's profile as a small, deferential state. Generalizing a claim about principles and foreign policy requires examining other cases for evidence of that relationship's consistency or divergence. A chapter of brief inquiries into China's bilateral relationships with three countries with different outcomes may reveal the whether a full spectrum of policy choices was considered or if foreign policy choices remained within the framework of the Five Principles. The Sino-Indian border war of 1962, the demise of Sino-Albanian ties throughout the 1970s, and the muted Chinese response to the Afghan resistance in the 1980s will be examined to determine Beijing's choices to launch a military assault on a nominal ally, break ties to an old friend, and fail to assist a resistance movement. These cases were chosen for a point in common with Cambodia, as all four states initially had

positive relations with China, but also for their varied timing, state size, strategic value, and regime type. The cases demonstrate the relatively uniform unimportance of wealth and Marxist ideology in Beijing's foreign policy choices.

More important, they illuminate the relationship between principles and security. The instance in which China's choices remained entirely within the parameters of the Five Principles (Albania) was also the instance in which there was no compelling security threat to either state. Conversely, the episode in which a security threat triggered a militarized response (India) was preceded and followed by efforts to pursue highly principled policies. The only case in which wealth appeared to be a determining factor (Afghanistan) was the one in which there were no particularly strong relations between Beijing and Afghan leaders. By testing the hypothesized relationship across time and space, we may see consistent patterns. If particular options appear to regularly remain outside the choice set of Chinese foreign policy makers, the schools of thought that insist state choices are based on uncertainty, insecurity, and aggression will have been dealt a serious blow.

This project aspires to provide an explanatory framework for Chinese foreign policy choices that can accommodate what has been written in the past and more – in essence, to generate Lakatosian “excess content.” Instead of imputing all cooperative Chinese behavior to the successful navigation of a “learning curve” and all aggressive behavior to resurgent imperial aspirations, we need to understand what China wants out of its international relations.

VI. Sources

The bulk of the research is based on archival sources and interviews with Chinese foreign policymakers. Although early versions of the project were based on western accounts of the Sino-Cambodian relationship, an implicit purpose of the project was to evaluate the substance and availability of Chinese discussions on the same subject. There are fewer differences between the western and Chinese literature on Cambodia than might be expected – most concur on important dates, individuals, and events.

The most consistent differences between the two are in their blame for one another with respect to Cambodia's problems. For example, Chinese sources imply that Sihanouk's March 1970 ouster was purely the result of American involvement and do not generally acknowledge that Sihanouk had become unpopular with some sectors of the population. Conversely, many American sources hold China almost equally responsible as the Khmer Rouge for that regime's excesses. It is true that most Chinese analysts were unable to publish much on the Khmer Rouge until the mid-1980s, reflecting ongoing official sensitivity on the subject.⁵³ But in many other respects, there are not significant differences, and the references to Chinese sources where good English ones exist serve to illustrate that point.

Other than the obvious language barrier, these materials were generally available to foreign researchers. The bulk of the written sources were found in the open stacks at the Beijing University and Qinghua University Libraries, while others came from the Chinese National Archives (Beijing Library) and the Chinese and Guangxi Academies of Social Sciences. Only the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' archive

remained closed, though it also typically quite difficult for Chinese foreign policy or area studies scholars to gain access to it.

More than thirty interviews were conducted with current or retired Chinese foreign policy officials, ranging from a translator to a former Foreign Minister. Only two people declined to be interviewed. Most of these interviews were conducted in Beijing between October 2002 and April 2003, though sessions with other Chinese and non-Chinese experts on Cambodia and foreign policy have also been conducted in Melbourne, Phnom Penh, and Washington since 1996. Policy makers were asked specific questions about policy choices towards Cambodia, particularly on issues not well covered by written materials, and also more abstract or hypothetical questions about decision-making and the basis of foreign policy in general. Although only a few interviewees (not all of whom were Chinese) specifically requested anonymity, none are identified for purposes of continuity.

VII. Caveats

Two caveats about this project are in order. First, those who expect to find a detailed account of China's relationship with the Khmer Rouge will be disappointed. It is indeed frustrating that critical information about this relationship remains off-limits not only to western scholars but also to most of our Chinese colleagues. But it is not the goal of this project to inventory every aid shipment or technical cooperation project – the “what” of the relationship. The goal is to understand *why* Beijing sustained the Democratic Kampuchea regime.

Finally, descriptions of this project to others over the four years of its making were frequently misconstrued as an attempt to apologize for China's foreign policies, or to demonstrate sympathy for them. This work is not an apology, an affirmation, or a rejection; it is an effort at intellectual understanding. It simply makes a concerted attempt at fulfilling a need identified by Melvin Gurtov more than two decades ago that remains outstanding – a need for “...studies of Chinese foreign policy that look at the world as the Chinese leaders do – with a sensitivity to their philosophy of history, their methodology, and their experiences as revolutionary nationalist fighters, liberators, and bureaucrats.”⁵⁴

CHAPTER ONE: 1954-MARCH 1970

I. Introduction

The first two decades of Chinese foreign policy are often characterized as revolutionary. Yet this label is somewhat misleading in its implication of an aggressive, worldwide campaign to promote Marxism; such activities were only carried out during the Cultural Revolution. But the years before and after that sought to promote a radically different concept of state-to-state relations that was certainly no less revolutionary. Amidst rhetoric about “leaning to one side” and fulfilling “bounden internationalist duty,” the Chinese foreign policy leadership sought to establish a new world order, one in which there would be no military alliances, no great power domination of international forums, no lingering traces of imperialism, and no obstacles to economic development.

In their formulation, only by eliminating these characteristics of international relations could full and genuine emancipation – and therefore security – be achieved. Informed by its own recent revolutionary success, the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) perception of security and how to achieve it differed profoundly that of the west. Even if Beijing has to create such a world order one bilateral tie at a time, it would do so by establishing ties to a diversity of states, demonstrating its peaceful aspirations through diplomatic means, expending precious resources to promote other countries’ economic independence, and refraining from involvement in others’ domestic politics. But could ideas such as the Five Principles influence foreign policy more than the pressures stemming from threats to territorial security, a need for economic development, or spreading Marxism?

Decades of warfare, a labor-intensive agricultural economy, and disastrous experiments like the Great Leap Forward should have made economic development a priority. The CCP's civil war victory and its ability to hold the US back on the Korean peninsula vindicated its belief in socialism, such that ideology should also have influenced China's external choices. Perhaps most important, China's physical, territorial security was increasingly under threat as the US presence in Southeast Asia grew and relations with the Soviet Union began to deteriorate. The conventional logic suggests that China should have either avoided unnecessary external entanglements, backed only like-minded states or movements, or forged relations with other states that agreed to eschew ties to the US or USSR. Yet China's foreign policy choices did none of these – they neither sought to alleviate Soviet or American pressure by demanding smaller states establish ties only to Beijing, nor did it try to ameliorate its own domestic economic hardships by concentrating resources at home.

This chapter explores China's policies towards Cambodia from 1954 to early 1970 and tries to understand why, given China's poverty, its already-established relationship to the Vietnamese communists, and its larger priorities elsewhere, it should have sought a close relationship with a conservative monarchy. Scrutinizing China's choices regarding normalization, Cambodia's neutrality, the provision of considerable economic and military aid, and developing relationships with Cambodian communists will demonstrate that principles shaped and often took priority in formulating policy over immediate territorial security, prospects for economic development, and even Marxist ideology. The variations of this period – Zhou Enlai's request to transport weapons through Cambodia and the radical Maoist foreign policy of the early Cultural Revolution – illustrate the

circumstances under which principles could be subordinated to security and ideology.

But to a considerable extent, choices in policy towards Cambodia through the end of the 1960s were dictated by principles rather than concerns over security, wealth, or ideology.

II. Friendly overtures, 1954-1959

Given China's concerns about growing US involvement in Southeast Asia and the consequent threat to Chinese security, several of its foreign policy choices were curious. At the Geneva Conference, China did put keeping the United States at bay ahead of immediately satisfying Vietnamese and Cambodian communists. It also began to cultivate a relationship with the Cambodian monarchy, a regime unlikely to be of much assistance. Chinese officials articulated their commitment to a non-ideological, flexible foreign policy at the Bandung Conference, and began to demonstrate such policy concretely in their early efforts to normalize relations with Cambodia. That country could prove an important ally in China's efforts to support Vietnam's communists, yet it was China's support for Cambodia's neutrality, in spite of its ongoing flirtations with the United States, that formed the basis of a close relationship.

The Geneva Conference. "China," wrote Qiang Zhai, "attached great importance to the Geneva Conference."⁵⁵ Held in 17 sessions throughout 1954, these discussions sought to prevent the escalation or further internationalization of the war in Indochina. The Vietnamese resistance posed a very real military threat to French rule, while Cambodia and Laos sought assurances of their neutrality from all participants, most notably the United States and Vietnam. The Conference offered China two equally important opportunities. Although China had been surprisingly successful at holding the

US back in the Korean War, Premier and Foreign Minister Zhou Enlai wished to foreclose the possibility of the United States replacing France as the dominant western power in Vietnam in particular and in Southeast Asia in general. Second, it sought to demonstrate to as many other countries as possible its genuine interest in and capacity for peaceful diplomatic resolution. By doing so, China may have sought to moot the United States' reasons for establishing a security organization in Southeast Asia.⁵⁶ Both strategies were employed with a view towards securing a regional peace that would be more conducive to China's domestic economic development.⁵⁷

Qiang Zhai described the emphasis Zhou placed on highly coordinated diplomacy at the Conference. Apparently dissatisfied and embarrassed by the CCP's past negotiations with the US and Guomindang General Chiang Kai-shek, Zhou insisted that the delegation "produce 'a civilized play,' 'a formal play'" now that they were on an "international stage."⁵⁸ This was the first international forum in which Zhou used the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence⁵⁹ as a diplomatic tool, in the hope that the gospel of autonomy, sovereignty, and independence would ease some of the smaller countries' fears of China. Some of the major power delegations, particularly that of the United States, were surprised to hear Zhou speaking with such moderation.

Cambodia was one of the small countries in attendance. For this newly independent state, the Geneva Conference was another skirmish in an ongoing battle to ensure its neutrality. King Sihanouk⁶⁰ was convinced that the only way to protect Cambodia was to make it, as he often said, "the Switzerland of Asia." In order to keep the civil war in Vietnam from coming across its borders, Sihanouk declared Cambodia to be a neutral country and demanded that others recognize this position. He sought to ensure that

Cambodia had full control over decisions to enter into military alliances, to allow military personnel and arms inside the country, and to drive the North Vietnamese radicals, the Viet Minh, out of Cambodia. Rabidly anti-communist at the time, Sihanouk saw the Viet Minh as the greatest threat to Cambodia's neutrality. Such an attitude had not only driven hundreds of leftist Cambodian intellectuals and radicals to flee to Hanoi⁶¹, and by the time the Geneva Conference convened, Sihanouk had himself threatened to bomb Viet Minh bases in eastern Cambodia regardless of the effects on his own people.⁶² He assumed that the Chinese were indirectly responsible for the Viet Minh presence, so the first encounter between the Cambodian and Chinese delegations in Geneva was decidedly frosty.

The Cambodians' hostility and suspicion came as a surprise to the Chinese. Like the Vietnamese Communist Party, Chinese foreign policy makers had looked at the three countries not as distinct states but as Indochina. Having previously assumed that Vietnam dominated Indochina, and that the radicals of Cambodia and Laos must have the same anti-imperialistic legitimacy of the Viet Minh, Chinese deputy premier Huang Hua had suggested that the Cambodian and Lao radicals to attend the Conference and share their positions.⁶³ This gesture only reinforced the Sihanouk government's wariness of Beijing's intentions.

Brantly Womack writes of Zhou and his delegation "discovering" Laos and Cambodia at the Geneva Conference.⁶⁴ Tep Phan, who headed the Cambodian delegation, spoke of Zhou's obvious embarrassment at his misreading of the situation.⁶⁵ In a private conversation, Zhou told Tep that he was ashamed to have unthinkingly "accepted France's view of the three countries."⁶⁶ After realizing his error, Zhou organized a series

of luncheons with each delegation, and came to understand that these were independent states in which the ruling monarchies continued to enjoy a high degree of popularity.

As a result, Zhou effectively supported the Cambodian government's position – that the representatives of the Pathet Lao and the Cambodian radicals could not be accorded the same right to speak as their Vietnamese counterparts. He stated that, "...the people of Cambodia...have sufficient strength to accomplish their independence, national unity, and free democracy, to achieve a peaceful life on their own soil."⁶⁷ Zhou told Tep Phan that, provided Cambodia would establish true neutrality and refrain from entering any military alliances, China would establish bilateral relations with them.⁶⁸ In September 1954, after returning from Geneva, Zhou reported to the National People's Congress that Cambodia had pledged not to enter into alliances, and that if relations could be normalized, it would help contribute to "collective peace and security" in Asia.⁶⁹

China's support to the outcome of the Geneva Convention, in which Vietnam would be partitioned, was a surprise to most participants, including the Viet Minh. Zhou believed the Viet Minh were still quite weak and wanted to stave off the possibility of American intervention, which would prolong the war. Rather than reflexively support an ally, the Chinese actually chose to constrain it, with Zhou arguing, ultimately persuasively, to Dong that a temporary partition of Vietnam was a preferable strategy. In addition, Vietnam would have to withdraw its troops from Cambodia and follow Zhou's suggestion to establish relations with Sihanouk's government based on the Five Principles.⁷⁰ This was the first – but certainly not the last – instance in which Beijing chose not to give immediate and total support to a "fraternal" revolutionary party. A

quarter of a century later, Beijing would take a similar position with a Cambodian communist regime.

Why did Beijing, which had just a few years earlier entered into another Asian civil war to face down the Americans, not opt to increase its support to its fraternal allies in Vietnam? First, Zhou was convinced that to escalate the war at that time would only bring a larger American presence into the region, and that the Americans would pose a considerably greater threat to the Vietnamese. Although the Vietnamese had scored an impressive victory at Dien Bien Phu, this was not the same as winning or controlling the entire country. Second, the Chinese delegation, partly as a result of learning of the Cambodians' and Laotians' fears of the Viet Minh, became concerned about Vietnamese imperialism in Indochina. Zhou criticized Pham Van Dong for the Viet Minh's efforts to "export revolution" in countries which were not yet ready for them – a tactic that the Chinese found to be fundamentally inappropriate and ultimately unworkable.

The Cambodians left Geneva far more pleased with the Chinese than the Viet Minh did. To Tep Phan, not only had Zhou been "willing to bargain away the Viet Minh-supported local Communist[s]"⁷¹ in Cambodia, China also appeared willing to support Cambodia's neutrality. This was a gesture of respect and a kind of attention Cambodia had not yet received as an independent state from a major power. "For a small country with a population of a few million people," wrote Zhang Xizhen, "it was a good outcome."⁷² Sihanouk later described the outcome of the Conference as having given the Cambodians "such a beautiful sense of encouragement from China."⁷³

Why should Zhou spend such time and effort with the Cambodians, who had even before full independence begun discussing military aid with the US? Despite the fact that

most Cambodians had not responded to the colonial experience in the same way as many Vietnamese had, Zhou still expressed sympathy for its struggle against western imperialism. Sihanouk's proposed strategy of neutrality fit well with the Five Principles, and good relations with Cambodia could help serve as an example to the rest of Southeast Asia.

One way of understanding Chinese behavior toward Cambodia at the Geneva Conference is to consider what other choices Beijing could have made. As noted above, it could have simply increased its support to the Viet Minh. Zhou did not need to have spent such time and effort on the Cambodian and Lao delegations; China could also have insisted that the radicals from those countries be given the same speaking rights as the Viet Minh. And why back neutrality in Cambodia, rather than a position that would be more openly supportive to Beijing?

From China's perspective, there was a security concern in the US presence. But it is telling that the Chinese did not demand a closer allegiance with Beijing, and compared to the American strategy of refusing to recognize neutrality and pushing for an alliance, the difference is stark. Promoting peaceful and tolerant relations was crucial to Beijing, so much so that it was clearly willing to overlook ideological affiliation in support of existing, legitimate governments. Nor did Beijing think that reflexively backing a communist insurgency was the appropriate strategy. To have encouraged members of the Pathet Lao or proto-Cambodian Communist Party to speak on behalf of their countries would have been an excessively interventionist position, as would supporting any externally-oriented policy other than that which the nations' leaders had themselves

chosen. “Such behavior,” said one Chinese former delegation member, “was inappropriate – just out of the question.”⁷⁴

China walked away from the Geneva Convention with a new foreign policy profile of surprising diplomatic flexibility. Its treatment of the Cambodians and the Laotians indeed signaled to other states that China might be more peaceful than they had thought. But there were costs, too – France, which had considered recognizing the PRC, refused to do so on the grounds of its support to the Vietnamese resistance and thus deprived Beijing for another decade of a useful tie to Europe.⁷⁵ In addition, the members of that resistance, as well as the Cambodian and Laotian radicals, would not soon forget China’s subordination of their interests.

The Bandung Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). This conference, also known as the Afro-Asian People’s Summit, was held in April 1955. China’s reasons for participating were similar to those that took it to Geneva. In the words of one retired Chinese diplomat who was part of the delegation to Bandung, “China was poor and weak at that time...we had to make friends and show them that we were not a threat to them.”⁷⁶ The NAM’s logic and goals meshed well with the Chinese view of external relations at the time: alliances, particularly with great powers and especially with former colonial powers, fundamentally compromised state’s physical and economic security. Autonomy and not alignment was the route to security. Many NAM states felt that a different international order would be fundamentally more secure, yet achieving consensus amongst such a diverse group of states on how to reach that point was clearly going to be a challenge.

Rather than use the Bandung Conference as an opportunity to rail against those with military alliances or to promote the establishment of an alternative bloc against the US, Zhou took advantage of the admittedly vague agenda to promote two concepts. First, it came as no surprise to anyone that Marxists should find economic empowerment a crucial aspect of freedom. But Zhou's articulation of development-as-sovereignty was designed for the capitalists as well as the communists. "To win economic independence and get rid of [colonized countries'] backwardness is a necessary guarantee of their political independence."⁷⁷ This peaceful, developmental message again reflected a kind of non-ideological revolutionary approach few had expected from China.

Even more surprising was Zhou's strategy with respect to military alliances. At least half of the Bandung participants maintained such relationships, primarily with the US or the USSR. Given that this was antithetical not only to the Conference but also to Beijing's view of how to create a more peaceful international system, how could discussions proceed? Zhou spoke to every delegation that would listen about the concept of *qiutong cunyi* – literally, "setting aside differences while seeking common ground."⁷⁸ Zhou felt strongly that if any points of common interest could be found between any pair of countries, those should be pursued regardless of the differences – even if those differences were on issues as pivotal as military alliances. The emphasis on issues common to all participants, such as development and independence, made it possible for the Conference to hold together where it otherwise might have fallen apart. That the ten-point Bandung Communique was structured around the Five Principles illustrates Zhou's success at pitching these ideas to the rest of the NAM world.

Some might argue that an attempt to dilute military alliances with an idea only reflected the irrelevance of the Bandung Conference – this was not, after all, a NATO meeting. And it is true that few states were wooed away from their military alliances as a result of the Bandung Conference, but Beijing’s peaceful language, following on its actions at Geneva, did bolster its reputation as “a respectable, peaceful”⁷⁹ state.

The soothing language and the peaceful image certainly smoothed the way for the first meeting between Zhou and Sihanouk, at which they established a rapport that would facilitate their countries’ relations long after Zhou’s death.⁸⁰ Zhou expressed what was no doubt heartfelt admiration and support for Sihanouk’s efforts at keeping the US at arm’s length; Sihanouk’s fears of communist ideology began to fade in the face of Zhou’s non-ideological, non-dogmatic policies. The two clearly saw an affinity with respect to the Five Principles, but sought to clarify precisely what both sides meant by “neutrality.” Zhou provided Sihanouk with a formal written statement on April 23, 1955, which explained that, “[China] has no intention whatsoever of interceding or intervening in the internal affairs of” Cambodia.”⁸¹ He did express a preference that Cambodia refrain from close ties to the US or the South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO), but he did not make such positions a prerequisite for relations with China. Sihanouk assured Zhou that Cambodia had not asked to be part of that organization⁸², and the two concurred that the French were less likely to threaten Cambodian sovereignty than the US. Having formed a genuine friendship – something that would never eventuate between either of them and an American counterpart – the two left Bandung intent on pursuing a more normal relationship.

Normalization with Cambodia. Logic would suggest that a quick establishment of ties between China and Cambodia would have been desirable for both states. Eradicating colonial legacies and dependencies remained important to Beijing, as did the need to establish friendly relations with neighboring nations. By the time of the Bandung Conference, China had normalized relations with only three Southeast Asian countries, and those relationships were not without their complications.⁸³ Security threats were real as the US presence in the region grew, ties between Moscow and Hanoi developed⁸⁴, and the Viet Minh continued to make use of Cambodia as an alternate base.

These threats were far more serious to Cambodia than to China, and Cambodia had signed a military aid agreement with the US on May 16, 1955, only a month after the Bandung Conference. To Beijing this constituted an “incompatibility” with Cambodia’s stated position of neutrality⁸⁵, and, given that Zhou had no prior warning that this move was likely, put him personally in an embarrassing position for having spoken highly of Sihanouk. Moreover, formal relations were established between Cambodia and the USSR on May 18, 1956, and although economic aid did not begin to flow until 1959⁸⁶, it is unlikely that Beijing would have been pleased to see Soviet influence in Southeast Asia growing. Why, given this action, alongside a reluctance to expel the Taiwanese liaison office and Sihanouk’s unrelenting fears of a “fifth column,” did Beijing persist in the quest for bilateral relations? Did China need a friend that badly? How could such a small, troublesome country be worth it? Evidence suggests that the value for China was to some extent strategic with respect to supplying the Vietnamese communists, but was more an expression of support for another country trying to free itself from the constraints of great-power alliances.

The two countries initiated exchange visits in early 1956⁸⁷, following private correspondence between Zhou and Sihanouk in which the latter explained that military aid from the US did not constitute an alliance – an argument Zhou appears not to have refuted.⁸⁸ In January 1956, the Cambodian National Assembly adopted a definition of neutrality that described conducting foreign relations with states who would “respect its sovereignty, integrity, and its ideals of peace,” an articulation quite similar to the Five Principles. Interestingly, in this same document the Cambodian National Assembly agreed to take no position on the divided nations of Vietnam, Germany, and Korea – but no mention is made of China⁸⁹, signaling early support for a one-China policy.

In February, Sihanouk made his first visit to Beijing, where he was warmly received.⁹⁰ In one of three meetings with Mao during that visit, the Chairman praised Cambodia’s neutrality policy and reassured Sihanouk that although China was a communist state and Cambodia was a monarchy, their relationship was still “like that of a family.”⁹¹ Given that Sihanouk had just completed a visit to the Philippines and been harangued there by Ramon Magsaysay about the China threat and the value of allying with the US, Mao’s perspective could clearly have been preferable.⁹² Arguably more important, however, was a quiet pledge from Zhou to protect Cambodia from the North Vietnamese.⁹³ The two sides signed a joint statement pledging to conduct their relations based on the Five Principles, indicating “the apparent readiness of the Chinese to regard Cambodia as a special example of...seek[ing] peaceful coexistence with their Southeast Asian neighbors.”⁹⁴ After his return to Phnom Penh, the Cambodian National Assembly fully endorsed Sihanouk’s policy to conduct foreign relations “on the basis of peaceful coexistence.”⁹⁵

In April, China and Cambodia signed a trade and payment agreement and in June, China agreed to begin providing Cambodia economic aid, though the establishment of bilateral relations was still two years away.⁹⁶ By July, Sihanouk began suggesting that the PRC should be given legal standing at the United Nations.⁹⁷ Another economic delegation visited in September to assess possible aid projects, and this likely paved the way for the arrival in early 1957 of the first eight Chinese experts sent to Cambodia to work on infrastructure projects.⁹⁸

In November 1956, Zhou made his first visit to Cambodia, where he met with King Suramarit, members of the government, and a delegation of resident overseas Chinese. Sihanouk considered the visit a success, but even after that visit, Chinese diplomats described the Cambodians as still “having misgivings about establishing relations with China.”⁹⁹ According to Wang Youping, China’s first ambassador to Cambodia, it required a few more rounds of reassurances to the Cambodians that China was not going to overstep its bounds. Despite intense opposition from right-wing Cambodian politicians, who saw no meaningful difference between the North Vietnamese and the Chinese, Beijing did not abandon the quest. Rather, it pressed ahead and over the course of the next year, gave Phnom Penh a gift of approximately US\$22 million.¹⁰⁰

By the end of 1956, Cambodia announced that it would de-recognize Taiwan¹⁰¹, a gesture that in most cases Beijing saw as a minimum condition to normalization.¹⁰² But the Cambodians appear to have stalled for time. In 1957, apparently in response to queries from the Chinese Foreign Ministry, the Cambodian Foreign Ministry wrote a letter saying that it had been the French, not the Cambodians, who established the

Taiwanese representative office in Phnom Penh.¹⁰³ It was not until the eve of diplomatic relations in 1958 that the Taiwanese consulate in Phnom Penh closed.¹⁰⁴

Throughout 1957, low-level exchange visits continued. Sihanouk was more preoccupied with domestic matters that year, which included a cabinet reshuffling to sideline some of his critics. A new pattern of behavior between Beijing and Phnom Penh emerged at this time. Every time Cambodian leaders publicized border violations by South Vietnam or the United States, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing took the opportunity to reassure Phnom Penh of China's support for its position.

These public statements, which stressed neutrality, friendship, and anti-imperialism, proved to be quite valuable. In early 1958, pressed by conservatives to defend his support of closer relations with China, Sihanouk argued in a passionate speech to the Assembly that only China was committed to upholding Cambodia's sovereignty and assisting its economic development.¹⁰⁵ The speech was widely covered in the Chinese press. Although some of his closest advisors remained concerned about the possible ideological influences and tried to persuade the Prince he was effectively compromising Cambodia's neutrality by becoming closer to China,¹⁰⁶ Sihanouk's position was strengthened throughout the spring by statements from Mao and Foreign Minister Chen Yi condemning South Vietnamese border encroachments into Cambodia. By lending support on an issue with which virtually no Cambodians would disagree, Beijing made good use of its practice of "setting aside differences."

Following what the Cambodians described as an encroachment into Stung Treng province by South Vietnamese troops, King Suramarit and the National Assembly made an appeal on June 18, 1958 for support from friendly countries. Mao and NPC SC Chair

Liu Shaoqi also took the time to reassure a delegation of Cambodian parliamentarians of Chinese friendship in late June as they were en route to Moscow.¹⁰⁷ On June 30, Chen Yi, who had taken over as Foreign Minister from Zhou in March 1958, met with a visiting Cambodian trade delegation and assured them that, “We fully believe that the Cambodian people are on the correct side...the final victory will be of the Cambodian people.” Not only was the use of this rhetoric indicative of a solidarity; moreover, following this meeting, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement saying that the Chinese government and 600 million Chinese people supported King Suramarit and the Cambodian people, and that the friendship between the two sides was like “family members sitting at the same fireside.”¹⁰⁸ This was a potent statement of support for a country with which China did not yet have formal relations.

Growing security concerns over the US and South Vietnam, escalating domestic challenges from politicians who were pro-US and anti-China, and hopes that Beijing could help control Vietnamese radicals’ use of Cambodian sanctuaries made Sihanouk’s decision for him quite quickly in the following weeks. The suddenness with which Sihanouk finally agreed to Beijing’s overtures caught even Zhou and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by surprise. The Prince telephoned Zhou on July 17 and the two spoke the following day, agreeing that they would announce the establishment of partial bilateral relations on July 19.¹⁰⁹

Chinese newspapers heralded the establishment of official Sino-Cambodian relations. *Renmin Ribao* emphasized Sihanouk’s policies of neutrality and argued that those policies were making Cambodia more important to the promotion of world peace, which supported Mao’s theory that all countries, regardless of size, could make a contribution

toward that goal. *Guangming Ribao* noted the similarities between the countries, writing that, “A friend in need is a friend indeed. The peoples of China and Cambodia share the same experiences and aspirations. They have always shown sympathy and have given support to each other in their fight against colonialism.” These articles are among the best examples of the extent to which security imperatives and common experiences commingled: because China had also had to fight off the yoke of imperialism, it was duty-bound to support other countries engaged in similar struggles, regardless of the type of rule in the country or its size.

Sihanouk returned to Beijing in mid-August, where he again met with Zhou and Mao. The Prince expressed his conviction in his first meeting with Zhou that the relationship would be, “the purest example of the virtues of peaceful co-existence among nations which have different regimes but are inspired by the same desire for peace and progress...[the Chinese government] scrupulously respects the five principles of peaceful co-existence in its relations for us.” In the same speech, Sihanouk also thanked the Chinese people for “their unconditional economic help.”¹¹⁰ According to Sihanouk, one of Mao’s aides informed him that the Prince was second only to Khrushchev in the number of private meetings with the Chairman.¹¹¹

But the two sides had to resolve the outstanding issue that had caused the delay in agreeing to full bilateral relations. Sihanouk confided to Zhou his concerns about whether the Chinese aid mission (soon to be embassy) in Phnom Penh was actively promoting CCP policies amongst ethnic Chinese Cambodians. Zhou promised that this would never be allowed¹¹² and must have shared the Prince’s concern with Mao. On August 15, Sihanouk met with Mao, Zhou, and Wang Youping, and Mao “exhorted

Wang not to give publicity to communism in Cambodia.”¹¹³ A relieved Sihanouk agreed to quickly expedite full diplomatic relations. The joint statement signed on August 24 consisted almost entirely of re-affirmations of both sides’ commitment to conducting relations based on the Five Principles.¹¹⁴ By the end of this visit, relations were described by the press as “intimate and fraternal.”¹¹⁵

Zhou had been concerned about finding a well-qualified diplomat from the MFA’s thin ranks. Wang Youping had already served as China’s first ambassador to Romania and then to Norway.¹¹⁶ Perhaps more important to Zhou, Wang and Deng Yingchao, Zhou’s wife, had been part of the negotiations that led to the formation of the united front between the CCP and GMD against the Japanese, and thus was well-known and trustworthy.¹¹⁷ Wang was one of a handful of early Chinese diplomats who were distinguished by two characteristics: they had not completed even a primary education and, having come into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from distinguished military careers, they never stopped asking to be transferred back to the PLA.¹¹⁸ But these experiences may explain why Wang had a reputation for following instructions scrupulously, which is likely why Zhou chose him. Zhou personally briefed Wang extensively in late July and early August, and by September 25, 1958, Wang was at the Royal Palace in Phnom Penh presenting his credentials and the Chinese national book to King Suramarit in a highly formal ceremony.¹¹⁹ Leng Ngeth, Cambodia’s first ambassador to China, soon replaced Yong Aun, who had headed Cambodia’s economic mission in Beijing.

In mid-November 1958, a delegation from Beijing participated in the opening festivities of the Cambodian Broadcasting Station in Phnom Penh, whose equipment had

been a gift from Zhou to Sihanouk. The Prince thanked the Chinese for technology that would help mitigate Cambodia's past isolation, while Chinese Ambassador Wang Youping noted that China too benefited from Cambodian assistance, stating that, "We shall not forget the important political help...we received from Cambodia."¹²⁰ Wang later noted in his memoirs that the "political help" referred to the support for the one-China position. At a Beijing celebration marking Cambodia's then-National Day in March 1959, Vice Premier Chen Yi noted that China's assistance to Cambodia was at that time small, but that China had done and would do "what she could in spite of her limited resources" for the Cambodians.¹²¹

Throughout 1959, the relationship grew to emphasize hostility towards common enemies, particularly the United States and Thailand. China accused the former of trying to instigate a coup against Sihanouk through the CIA and Sam Sary¹²², charges that ultimately proved to be true.¹²³ When Thailand facilitated the transfer of US radio equipment to the Free Khmer (Khmer Serei), an anti-Sihanouk movement, in 1959, the Cambodian and Chinese foreign ministries issued almost identical statements condemning the action. The rhetoric of Chinese policy-makers and their publications indicated a recognition that the struggle of the recent past and the near future for Cambodia were similar to those China itself had experienced. Sihanouk's own use of that rhetoric indicated a reciprocal sympathy for the Chinese experience, if not the Communist ideology.

In addition to a sought after Southeast Asian friend, did China's normalization with Cambodia bring any other gains? Following normalization, Sihanouk wasted no time in launching a public relations campaign to the world on China's behalf. In September, he

gave a lengthy interview on Cambodia's foreign relations in which he stated that not only were all the islands off China's shore clearly PRC territory¹²⁴, but that the people of China had a right to liberate Taiwan.¹²⁵ The following month, Sihanouk berated then-Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, with whom he had a notoriously thorny relationship, about Washington's untenable position on China. Dulles told Sihanouk that "the regime of Mao Tse-tung" would not last long, to which Sihanouk responded, "Your Excellency, sooner or later, the US is going to have to recognize the PRC, establish diplomatic relations with it, and admit it to the UN."¹²⁶ Since Cambodia's December 1955 admission to the United Nations, Sihanouk had become something of a diplomatic star there and it would not be long before he made use of that stage for China's benefit. There is no evidence to suggest that Beijing requested this assistance.

What had China's efforts to normalize relations cost, in addition to an obvious degree of frustration? In addition to the initial cash gift and the radio station, China had by the end of 1958 also given a dam and funds to subsidize basic food commodities.¹²⁷ By the end of the following year, China lagged behind only the US in terms of aid, which is significant given the disparities in those two countries' economies at the time. According to Chinese sources, the US had provided about \$66 million, while China had given about \$30 million.¹²⁸ If, as Lowell Dittmer suggested, China at the time still considered itself a "have-not power," such a contribution was not insignificant.¹²⁹

It must have been maddening, then, to Beijing, to realize that although Sihanouk had by November 1959 called for a national austerity plan in order to wean Cambodia from American aid, his actualization of "neutrality" would entail repeatedly playing the US and China off one another.¹³⁰ Although he couched his version of this position in terms

of Cambodia's development, the calculations here would not have been happily heard in Beijing: "Our policy of neutrality puts us on an equal position between the communist countries and the US. If we protect this most beneficial status, we will receive economic and technical aid from socialist countries, so we can successfully achieve equal status with America. On the other hand, the influence of socialist countries also helps achieve equality so we also want to protect our friendship with America."¹³¹ Such an opinion must have sorely tested Beijing's commitment to non-interference.

Moreover, if China had hoped that the "demonstration effect" of good relations with Cambodia would have lessened fears in other Southeast Asian countries, those hopes did not materialize during these few years. Between the Bandung Conference and the end of 1959, China only normalized relations with ten countries, most of which were in the Middle East or Africa.

What other strategies could Beijing have employed to achieve its goals? If it were wholly unconstrained by principles, Beijing could have been considerably more aggressive with respect to Phnom Penh's relationship with Washington. Additionally, it could have been considerably more demanding with respect to Cambodia supporting the North Vietnamese. It is possible that these demands were made or implied and the historical record available to western scholars simply does not show this. But a conversation with a former political secretary who served under Wang Youping said, "What did [the Cambodians] have to offer us?"¹³² Beijing could also have focused its attentions on states with similar political systems or views that would, in theory, be easier to cultivate. But Beijing appeared again to have been more interested in highlighting common experiences and threats and helping make it possible for Cambodia to identify

its own solutions. Cambodia appears to have quite willingly signed the joint statement on peaceful coexistence and to have not been pressed into any other kinds of commitments to Beijing.

III. The golden era? 1960-1965

It was Kang Daisha, the wife of China's second ambassador to Cambodia, Chen Shuliang, who described the first half of the 1960s in these glowing terms. Yet "gold plated" might be more appropriate, as the situation was once again not quite as it appeared. The two countries' relationship deepened considerably, a gesture that merits attention given that ties had already been established, pressing diplomatic concerns existed elsewhere, and at least part of the logic that drove close ties appeared to be having the reverse effect across Southeast Asia. Given both countries' deepening distrust of the United States during these years, why did China not encourage Cambodia to take a more confrontational position with respect to Washington? Why continue to support neutrality while not simultaneously demanding more assistance to the North Vietnamese? Perhaps most puzzling, why – after working so assiduously on the diplomatic relationship with Sihanouk – did Beijing begin to form a secret relationship to the Khmer Rouge?

This period illustrates what China was willing to do to advance its version of ideal principled relationship. Security concerns did not fade as the US dug in, and China sought Cambodia's help supplying the Vietnamese communists. Those who want to attribute early interactions with the Khmer Rouge to ideological motivations must acknowledge that it was the Cambodians who initiated the relationship, not the Chinese, and that those Chinese radicals who responded were not the makers of official foreign

policy. Beijing had not yet deviated from its principled approach, and its emphasis remained on providing a model of bilateral relations quite different from the United States’.

Diplomatic ritual. During these years, the leaders on both sides of the relationship appear to have sought out every opportunity to meet, exchange telephone calls, or otherwise publicly praise one another. A non-exhaustive search of *Renmin Ribao*’s index suggests calls were exchanged between Sihanouk and either Zhou or Liu Shaoqi roughly every two weeks. In the five previous years, *Renmin Ribao* published approximately 37 articles per year on Cambodia; for 1960-1965 that figure more than doubled to 81 per year. Sihanouk and Zhou had begun the tradition of exchanging congratulations on the countries’ national days in November 1958, and by 1964, Sihanouk began personally attending the Chinese National Day festivities in Beijing. Mao, Zhou, and Liu took the opportunity each year to not only convey National Day wishes but also to wish Sihanouk himself a happy birthday. These conversations were not particularly substantive¹³³, but they were an important line of communication, a “sleeve of normalcy” that could help resolve conflicts or identify commonalities at the highest levels.¹³⁴

Visits took on a particular importance. Rather than canceling a visit to Phnom Penh when informed of the April 1960 death of King Suramarit (Sihanouk’s father) Zhou and Liu Shaoqi instead rearranged their schedules to ensure that they would arrive in time for the memorial ceremony. Not only were Zhou and Liu carefully briefed en route to Phnom Penh about Cambodian funeral etiquette and appropriate attire, they also lengthened their visit to spend time with Queen Kossamak.¹³⁵ And rather than canceling a May 1963 visit to Phnom Penh by Liu Shaoqi in the face of a possible assassination

attempt, Zhou instead drafted former ambassador Wang Youping out of his Party position in Hunan and dispatched him back to Cambodia to assist Chen Shuliang. Wang likened his preparations to getting ready for battle in China's civil war, though fortunately the outcome was different. In Phnom Penh, Wang worked with Senior Advisor Pen Nouth and General Lon Nol to foil the "CIA/Taiwan plot," which involved an assassination attempt on the motorcades leaving Pochentong Airport.¹³⁶ The success of the visit seems to have only further cemented the sense of unity.

Most diplomatic visits to China at that time featured multiple banquets and sightseeing around Beijing. Yet Sihanouk's visits to China became progressively more elaborate. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs consulted extensively with Princes Chakrapong and Naradipo, two of Sihanouk's sons who had been sent to China in 1960 for further schooling.¹³⁷ In February 1963, the Prince and his entourage not only stayed for almost a month, but were also hosted alternately by Liu and Zhou on side trips to Nanjing, Kunming, Shanghai, and Changsha. When Sihanouk arrived for his October 1964 visit, an honor guard of eight Chinese fighter jets escorted his plane, and the delegation was greeted with a 21-gun salute and a cheering crowd of thousands.¹³⁸ The following year, both Liu and Zhou spent four whole days accompanying Sihanouk on a boat trip down the Yangtse River, and that delegation was met in Beijing by "hundreds of thousands" of people.¹³⁹

The individuals chosen to take part in this relationship were also carefully chosen. Chen Shuliang succeeded Wang Youping as ambassador in April 1962.¹⁴⁰ From 1953 to 1955, Chen had served as a political officer at the Chinese embassy in Jakarta, and had been part of the Chinese delegation to the Bandung conference. From 1955-1962, he was

the assistant director of the MFA's Asia division and as a result was particularly close to Zhou.¹⁴¹ Sihanouk trusted missions to China to a handful of other Cambodian officials. In 1962, he began sending Pen Nouth, a close ally and frequent Foreign Minister, as an envoy to Chen Yi and Zhou.¹⁴² In August 1965, Deputy Prime Minister Son Sann spent ten days in China meeting with Li Xiannian, Liu Shaoqi, and Zhou Enlai.¹⁴³ Other regular Cambodian visitors included Princes Sirik Matak and Yuvaneath, and Lon Nol.

Diplomatic gestures are frequently dismissed as showy, empty acts. But comparing the Chinese efforts to the American efforts in Cambodia might highlight some of the differences. As noted above, Dulles and Sihanouk did not get along and neither was shy about sharing that view with the public. Dulles thought Sihanouk was effete and erratic, and it is laughable to think of Kennedy or Johnson exchanging birthday greetings with the Prince. Sihanouk complained bitterly that Dulles did not take him seriously and sought to undermine him. A psychological study of Cambodians undertaken by the Pentagon and issued to all US Embassy staff in Phnom Penh included thoughtful insights. "Jokes about Texas or income taxes" would not be funny to Cambodians; moreover, part of the purpose of high-tech military aid was to frighten rank-and-file soldiers into supporting the US.¹⁴⁴ To many of those representing the US, Cambodia must have appeared shockingly poor, backwards, and unable to surmount its internal problems.

The view of their Chinese counterparts was distinctly different. When a former political officer thought of Phnom Penh was asked what he thought of Phnom Penh in the early 1960s, he replied, "Far more pleasant than my hometown in Guizhou."¹⁴⁵ Several other interviewees had found Phnom Penh "pretty," "clean," and "sophisticated." Although the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was itself struggling with language training for

diplomats in Beijing, one person who served in the Chinese Embassy in Phnom Penh recalled that each day began with an hour-long Khmer lesson for the entire staff, including the Ambassador.¹⁴⁶ William Shawcross describes one of Sihanouk's attempts to irk the ambassadors in Phnom Penh in the early 1960s by insisting they help dig a bed for new railroad tracks.¹⁴⁷ But given that Ambassador Wang had worked in a steel mill as a young teen before joining the PLA, it is unlikely that he was fazed by this experience. Not only were Cambodia's problems not terribly different from those China had faced, the Chinese knew they were perfectly surmountable.

Why should China go to such lengths with the diplomatic niceties? It is possible that these visits were meant to demonstrate a capacity for high-level diplomacy comparable to that of western countries at the time. But to a larger extent, the deepening of relations and the observations of diplomatic rituals reflected the importance Zhou and other foreign policy makers attached to publicizing a peaceful image of China, one that could have good relations with all different kinds of states and would treat them respectfully, unlike the Americans. Despite the expenditure of money, time, and effort on the Cambodians, however, the rest of Southeast Asia would not be moved. China managed to establish relations with Laos in 1961, though only by agreeing to be accredited to the Royal Government and the Pathet Lao. This was the last Southeast Asian friend it would make for the next fourteen years. Moreover, the expenditure had another cost – apparently Moscow was “irritated” at Beijing for “spending on diplomatic activity before a sound industrial base had been created there.”¹⁴⁸

Support for autonomy against a common enemy. Melvin Gurtov presciently noted thirty years ago that China gave Sihanouk that which he most wanted: unquestioning

support for his stated policy of neutrality. Sihanouk's occasional public support for causes unpopular in Beijing, coupled with the open-ended, unconditional nature of aid to Cambodia, reflected that Beijing took Phnom Penh's autonomy seriously. But why should Beijing continue to support Cambodia taking no side at all, as neutrality was not the most advantageous position from China's perspective? As the US presence in Southeast Asia increased and presented a greater threat to Cambodia, would it not have been more logical and effective to either encourage Sihanouk to form a united front with North Vietnam, China's ally, against the US, or to provide the Prince with comparable levels of military support? Ultimately, it appears that it was Beijing's *restraint* that got it the desired results.

The first public gestures from Beijing on behalf of Cambodian neutrality were, relatively speaking, predictable ones. During the May 1960 visit, Zhou made clear his support for the Cambodians in a territorial dispute with the South Vietnamese over a group of small islands. On December 19, 1960, China and Cambodia signed the Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Non-Interference¹⁴⁹ in Beijing. This codified both sides' commitment to the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and was celebrated with unusually emotive and blunt speeches in which both sides agreed that autonomy was the sole route to true liberation.¹⁵⁰

As US involvement in Indochina increased throughout 1961, so did Chinese support for Cambodian neutrality. Beijing focused on its rhetoric on the Thai and South Vietnamese regimes' threats to Cambodia's neutrality, but also suggested that these regimes were weak for their inability to resist the US and make decisions of their own. One Chinese editorial claimed that, "...it is precisely [Cambodia's] policy of neutrality

which has aroused Washington's ire and made Cambodia a constant target of U.S. attacks ever since 1954."¹⁵¹ That spring, Mao, Zhou, and Liu spoke frequently and publicly in support of Sihanouk's efforts to re-convene the 1954 Geneva Conference signatories, though privately they saw no reason to believe why a new agreement would be any more effective, given the American and South Vietnamese propensities to violate it. Had Cambodian neutrality not been at stake, it is unlikely that the Chinese would have bothered to reconvene the signatories and insisted instead on compliance with the existing agreement. The US fiercely opposed such an event, which appears to have only increased Sihanouk and Chen Yi's cooperation to host the May meeting. The conference focused primarily on limiting the scope of American action in Southeast Asia, but also sought, somewhat counter-intuitively given China's support, to curtail the efforts of North Vietnamese communists – China's allies – in Cambodia and Laos.

Despite the success of this discussion, Sihanouk continued to argue that only an international conference would be able to achieve a peaceful solution to the growing conflict in Indochina. In August 1962, Sihanouk wrote to Zhou asking for China's support for an international conference that would guarantee Cambodia's neutrality, which the Kennedy administration refused to do. Zhou replied positively on August 27, praising Sihanouk's earlier efforts at resolving the issue of Laotian neutrality and reassuring him once again that Cambodia was not alone in its resistance to "foreign aggression."¹⁵² The Chinese press subsequently published several lengthy articles detailing the US' "criminal activities" in Indochina, including support to Cambodian rightists, assassination attempts on the Cambodian royal family, encroachments on Cambodian territory, and violations of the Geneva Accords.¹⁵³ By the summer of 1962,

the Chinese government announced that it – unlike the Americans – would fully recognize and protect Cambodia’s neutrality.¹⁵⁴

The debate over American aid to Cambodia in 1963 provides one of the clearest snapshots of China’s approach. Washington had become increasingly concerned that year over Sihanouk’s visits to China and the USSR, and with the new air transport agreement between Phnom Penh and Beijing.¹⁵⁵ Frustrated with Sihanouk, the US increased its support the Free Khmer movement against him, an effort begun in the late 1950s. But the US did not lose sight of its primary mission: in order to obtain Sihanouk’s tacit permission to allow American and Vietnamese “advisors” onto Cambodian territory, levels of US aid had reached record highs of \$27 million of economic and social and \$9 million of military aid in just two years.¹⁵⁶

Sihanouk, caught between domestic criticisms of allowing the US to violate Cambodia’s sovereignty and the desire to continue receiving considerable amounts of aid, began to consider rejecting the latter. On November 21, in what was to become a common pattern in the decades to come, Zhou personally pledged to Sihanouk that if he decided to reject US aid due to its encroachments on Cambodia’s autonomy, China would help make up the difference without requiring any particular return.¹⁵⁷ More broadly, Beijing promised that, “the Chinese Government and people will firmly side with the Kingdom of Cambodia and give it all-out support.”¹⁵⁸ Seven days later, Sihanouk and Chen Shuliang met in Phnom Penh to discuss the details of revising aid,¹⁵⁹ and within weeks, Sihanouk declared that Cambodia would no longer welcome US aid. On December 15, Sihanouk called home Cambodia’s ambassador to Washington. That same day, a team of Chinese economists presented a report to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

detailing the how the Cambodian economy would be influenced by this change. It also included detailed recommendations about how to redirect Chinese aid, primarily into roads and other infrastructure projects, could help soften the blow. The aid from Beijing, as always, was unconditional.¹⁶⁰

Beijing criticized the US' aid strategies, which it perceived as revolving around attracting investment, and argued that its focus on infrastructure and practices such as lowering tariffs were far more effective in raising the basic standard of living.¹⁶¹ The Chinese clearly thought that US assistance to, for example, subsidizing rice production was only distorting the domestic market and furthering Cambodia's dependence on external assistance.¹⁶² Neither could see any generosity in the other's aid.

Cambodia's neutrality was not cheap for China, though it was never as expensive as Vietnam's revolution. In light of the severe economic difficulties at home stemming from the Great Leap Forward, Chinese aid has to be understood as a gesture of deep sacrifice to uphold a principle. Zhou himself remained concerned at this time about Cambodia's economic development, its independence, and the efficacy of Chinese aid. He had spoken at the May 1960 press conference about China's bitter experiences with imperialism – including a gently-worded dig at Soviet aid practices – and stated that China would do what it could to prevent other countries from enduring the same fate. He noted that he hoped Beijing would soon be able to provide Phnom Penh with more aid in order to minimize Cambodia's dependence on other states.¹⁶³ Wang Youping briefed Zhou in February 1961 at length about the “importance of grasping all opportunities to benefit Cambodia's infrastructure.”¹⁶⁴ As had been the case in the Chinese experience, development was a route to freedom from economically and politically constraining aid,

and towards some modicum of self reliance (a concept the Khmer Rouge would pursue to murderous extremes). Zhou had no illusions that Chinese assistance alone would transform the Cambodian economy, but assistance with basic industrial projects could create the local capacity for upward development rather than dependent development.

At the request of the Cambodians, China committed at the December 1960 talks to more funding to complete work on textile, paper, plywood, and cement factories in Cambodia, as well as to exploring new projects.¹⁶⁵ Beijing also subsidized the Liu Shaoqi Highway, which ran southwest out of the capital. Luo Jinchun, a technician sent to Cambodia's northeast to advise on road construction, died while giving "his young life for Cambodian-Chinese friendship and cooperation," and the Cambodian government constructed a small memorial for him.¹⁶⁶ Some of the projects created the opportunity for romantic rhetoric lauding the two countries' relationship. One engineer sent from Beijing to work on the Queen Kossamak-Liu Shaoqi Cement Plant on Phnom Penh's outskirts noted his Cambodian counterparts' dedication to their work, saying that, "To look at you is to look at China." One of his colleagues noted that, "China's unconditional assistance to help Cambodia is like an apple tree – from today on, there will always be apples to eat."¹⁶⁷ At the ceremony opening the Boulevard Mao Tse Toung on August 30, 1965, Sihanouk himself proclaimed that, "Mao is the beacon of all China and all the world's people."¹⁶⁸ One group of Chinese analysts explained that, "The Chinese people were not just following a humanitarian road, they were giving their great brotherly support to the struggle in Cambodia."¹⁶⁹ The rhetoric may have sounded absurd, but by September 1965, China had given Cambodia US\$50 million.¹⁷⁰

Lest anyone think that Cambodia's neutrality would only be defended through diplomatic or developmental means, Beijing had clearly offered to improve Cambodia's self defense capacity. On his 1960 visit, Zhou stated that military assistance would be considered according to, "...the needs of the Royal Cambodian government, the possibilities at our disposal, and the conditions prevailing at the time."¹⁷¹ By 1964, the military relationship between Beijing and Phnom Penh expanded to include an agreement on provision of equipment and increased air transport, though the details of the equipment were, as always, omitted from any public documents.¹⁷² In March, following Phnom Penh's rejection of US military aid, Vice Premier, Minister of Defense, and Chief of Staff Lieutenant-General Lon Nol led a 12-member delegation to Beijing, where they attended a rally of more than 2,000 PLA soldiers at the Chinese Ministry of Defense.¹⁷³ On Sihanouk's October 1964 visit, the Prince confirmed to Zhou that China had provided 28,000 weapons – "enough to equip Cambodian regular and provincial forces and that all US weapons [had] been replaced" – and only requested anti-aircraft and anti-tank weapons.¹⁷⁴

The growing bond of anti-Americanism can also be seen in similar rhetoric used by Cambodian and Chinese leaders. When in February 1964 Sihanouk claimed that the US was now the greatest threat to Cambodia's neutrality, he borrowed a phrase from China when he declared that Cambodia would "struggle against the United States until the end."¹⁷⁵ When a Chinese airline delegation visited Cambodia in May 1964, the related article in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' popular journal devoted more attention to anti-American sentiment than it did to Cambodia. The article, which was careful to note that the visit took place during the "high tide of the struggle against America," related at

length that an American blocked the delegation's motorcade into Phnom Penh "because he did not want to see the live proof of good Sino-Cambodian relations." The article also described in detail an anti-US demonstration, despite the fact that that event took place two months before the delegation's arrival.¹⁷⁶

As tensions continued to rise throughout the summer and autumn of 1964 as a result of the Gulf of Tonkin incident and subsequent US Congressional action on August 7, one *Renmin Ribao* commentary, "Hands Off Cambodia!" described Cambodia as "a brave country...an awakened nation...The Cambodian people are by no means weak-kneed...The people of China support their just struggle."¹⁷⁷ Another article in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' journal *Shijie zhishi* detailed not only the modern weaponry Cambodia had at its disposal but also its "vigorous preparations to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity," noting that the weapons had been given during a Cambodian National Day visit by Chen Yi.¹⁷⁸ China reiterated its commitment to supporting Cambodian neutrality¹⁷⁹ after publicly denouncing what it called an invasion of Cambodian territory earlier in the month by the US and South Vietnamese forces. In his farewell comments after the October 1964 visit, Sihanouk stated that China was Cambodia's "number one friend,"¹⁸⁰ while the joint communiqué described the relationship as that of "friendly fraternal neighbors."¹⁸¹ The term "fraternal" clearly signaled an extremely close relationship.

A conversation between Mao and Sihanouk in October 1964 may shed light on why China took a relatively restrained position with respect to Cambodia's relationship with the United States. Although Mao told Sihanouk that, "Now, the United States is our adversary," the Chairman went on to explain that the two countries had been negotiating

in Warsaw since 1955.¹⁸² This would have indicated to Sihanouk that it remained acceptable to talk with the Americans, but not to engage in a military alliance. In subsequent discussions with other foreign ministers, Mao repeatedly stated that China would not try to provoke a war with the US, but that if the US brought a war to China, the latter would have no choice but to respond.

Throughout 1965, China agreed to provide Cambodia with more military supplies, particularly as Sihanouk's relations with the US continued to deteriorate. In early April, the *New York Times* published an article suggesting that Queen Kossamak, Sihanouk's mother, profited from prostitution¹⁸³; a few weeks later a US bomb killed four people inside Cambodian territory. In early May, Sihanouk suspended ties with the US.¹⁸⁴ China applauded this choice, having likened US action in Cambodia to "lift[ing] a rock to crush one's own feet."¹⁸⁵ In mid-May, Sihanouk delivered a blistering anti-American speech to the National Assembly and in the afternoon wrote to Zhou and Liu of his frustrations. Zhou called three days later to compliment him and reiterate China's support. On May 22, the National Assembly approved an agreement with China on mutually respecting territorial sovereignty.¹⁸⁶ Within weeks, Sihanouk first publicly acknowledged his agreement to assist the Vietnamese communists in South Vietnam.¹⁸⁷ By November, Lon Nol was meeting in Beijing with PLA General Luo Ruiqing and agreeing to permit the North Vietnamese establish basis in and transship materials through Cambodia.¹⁸⁸

Even in the face of these pressures, Sihanouk's commitment to an anti-American position was less than absolute – a stance that continued to unnerve Beijing. When the Prince returned to Beijing in September 1965 for National Day celebrations, he tried to

persuade Zhou to support a pan-Asian forum, which would include countries with close ties to the US, such as Thailand and the Philippines. Zhou immediately rebuffed this idea¹⁸⁹ and later privately wondered how Sihanouk could continue to entertain thoughts of friendly relations with imperialists.¹⁹⁰ Yet Zhou did not try to talk Sihanouk out of it, nor did he make reversing the position a condition of future aid.

Interviewed in November 1965 by a Chinese journalist, Sihanouk stated bluntly that, “In the face of pressure from the United States that we cannot overcome alone, our friendship with China is crucial.”¹⁹¹ While this statement can be read in different ways, *Peking Review*’s October 1965 editorial cannot. It characterized the relationship between the two countries as “profound, militant...and fraternal.” For Sihanouk, regardless of whatever personal affection he may have felt for the Chinese leadership, the bilateral relationship was for Cambodia a matter of strategic security.

What costs and benefits that accrued to Beijing as a result of its support for Cambodian neutrality during this period? Above and beyond the diplomatic efforts and the aid, how else did Beijing have to pay for its principles?

First, Beijing had to tolerate Sihanouk’s relationship with not only its prime enemy but its secondary one as well. Cambodia established ties to the Soviet Union in 1956, and just as Sino-Soviet ties were grinding to an all-time low, Khrushchev accepted an invitation from Sihanouk to visit Cambodia in 1963.¹⁹² Chinese sources state that the purpose of that visit was to disrupt Phnom Penh’s relations with Beijing. Soviet military aid began in September 1963 and was increased in 1964 with anti-aircraft artillery units, a half-dozen MIG 17s, a hospital, and a technology institute. Zhou was relieved at Moscow’s abrupt cancellation of a planned visit by Sihanouk to Moscow in November

1965. This episode prompted an enraged Sihanouk to again publicly describe China as, "...notre meilleure amie...the only country that respects us."¹⁹³ Beijing's patience on this matter was, for the time being, rewarded.

Second, Sihanouk occasionally publicly opposed China's positions on international issues. On his February 1963 visit to China, Sihanouk encouraged peaceful Sino-Indian border talks, but signaled his sympathy for India's position. Beijing's frustration can be seen in one section of an otherwise typically effusive joint communiqué from the visit. That statement merely thanks Sihanouk for his support for talks.¹⁹⁴ Kang Daisha, a researcher in the Chinese embassy in Phnom Penh at that time, later attributed Sihanouk's position to a failure to "understand the reality of the situation," but even after he "learn[ed] more," as Kang suggested, Sihanouk never endorsed the Chinese view.¹⁹⁵

What – if any – benefits did China gain from this relationship? Sihanouk's anti-Viet Cong rhetoric decreased considerably during this period. It is not clear whether he did so because, given Chinese assurances, he felt less vulnerable or because, given a better understanding of China's intentions, he felt less explicitly threatened. Either way, it was to Beijing's advantage that he speak less frequently and less stridently on this matter.

Sihanouk seized the opportunity to do public relations work on behalf of Beijing whenever he could, making a particular effort to debunk the "China threat theory." Throughout the autumn of 1961, Sihanouk spoke to leaders ranging from DeGaulle to Suharto about China's peaceful initiatives in Asia. At each of the international gatherings he attended, particularly those related to Cambodia's neutrality, he described China's Five Principles as a model for ensuring world peace.¹⁹⁶ In 1963, he wrote of his admiration for China's hard-won freedom and stated that, "I can affirm that neither I nor

our people are scared of China...[but] who talks about a Siamese dragon or a south Vietnamese octopus?"¹⁹⁷ When China successfully tested its first nuclear weapon in 1964, Sihanouk told several international newspapers that he saw this as another contribution by Beijing to world peace, as such weaponry would deter the US in Vietnam.¹⁹⁸

A 1961 article from the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, a periodical notoriously skeptical of any peaceful Chinese initiative, assessed the relationship and grudgingly concluded that, "In her relations with Cambodia, China is making a display of peaceful coexistence which she has widely advertised. At present this is Cambodia's principal usefulness as she cannot confer any material benefit on China."¹⁹⁹ In 1965, Chen Yi made clear what FEER had missed: "Aid has always been mutual...Cambodia has stood for the expulsion of the Chiang Kai-shek clique from the United Nations and the restoration of China's legitimate seat there. She has supported China's recovery of Taiwan and the offshore islands. This constitutes the greatest aid to us."²⁰⁰

Whether Sihanouk himself determined the importance of the Taiwan and UN issues himself or accepted guidance from Beijing on this matter remains unclear. But his early, persistent, and loud support of Beijing's position was to endear him to several generations of Chinese leaders. Without Cambodia's help, China's battle to regain the UN seat would likely have taken far longer than a decade.

In December 1960, Sihanouk publicly "reaffirm[ed] the...legitimate rights of...China in the United Nations and [Cambodia's] full sympathy for the Chinese people's struggle in defense of the territorial integrity of their country."²⁰¹ In October 1962, *Renmin Ribao* devoted an entire front page to a communiqué from Sihanouk to the UN General

Assembly and Security Council. Sihanouk argued that because “China is making an enormous contribution to peace in Asia”²⁰², it should immediately and unquestioningly be reseated at the UN. The following fall, Sihanouk delivered the message in person to the General Assembly and at several other international meetings that the PRC should retake the seat held by Taiwan at the UN.²⁰³ A week later, Sihanouk wrote that, “...the liberty enjoyed by the Chinese people under Chiang Kai-shek was an illusion for the use of foreigners only. It is the same today in south Viet Nam.”²⁰⁴

In September 1965, Cambodia’s Ambassador to the UN, Huot Sambath, made an impassioned speech pointing out that the US was a far greater threat to independence and world peace than China. “Is there,” he asked pointedly, “one single Chinese soldier outside of Chinese territory?”²⁰⁵ For the first time, a majority of states did not vote against seating the PRC delegation. A crucial handful of countries that had in the past supported Taiwan’s right to occupy the seat either chose to support Beijing or to abstain. But to Beijing’s fury, the United States managed to advance a resolution identifying the China issue as an “important problem,” thus requiring a two-thirds, rather than a simple majority, vote.²⁰⁶ The Cambodian delegation continued introducing resolutions at each General Assembly meeting until China regained the seat in 1971.²⁰⁷

Why did China choose to support Cambodia’s neutrality, rather than encourage its alignment with others fighting the same enemy in the same region? First, policymakers in Beijing were still of the view that peace was infinitely preferable to war. Second, the record suggests that Beijing’s policy makers would have considered such encouragement imperialistic, the sort of approach the Americans would take. Aid to Cambodia at this time appears to have been geared towards economic and diplomatic sovereignty as the

constraints of American aid and the growing number of American military “advisors” in the region narrowed Sihanouk’s options.

Cambodia may simply have been the most ideal setting for China to prove its commitment to supporting neutrality and working through diplomatic means. By the early 1960s, Beijing was of the view that US policy towards Cambodia was fundamentally coercive and played on Phnom Penh’s vulnerabilities. But rather than trying to reflexively cocoon Cambodia in an exclusive alliance or find other ways of disrupting its relationship with the US, Beijing opted for a strategy of making it possible for the Cambodians to reject the Americans if that was what the Cambodians chose. The free rein worked against China in that Sihanouk would not fully dismiss the Americans, but the benefits were clearly greater. China got much of what it sought – a peaceful and positive relationship with a Southeast Asian country, an articulate friend speaking on its behalf at the United Nations and to the rest of the world, quiet assistance to the North Vietnamese – by not demanding it. As Sihanouk stated in a 1964 interview, “I want everyone to be clear, as some say we are becoming China’s lackey and cannot disagree with her...we are like family members who are close but do not tell each other what to do.”²⁰⁸

Broadening domestic ties in Cambodia. Sihanouk, however, was not the only Cambodian politician with whom China was deepening its ties in the early 1960s. Given its explicit commitments to not encourage communism amongst Cambodia’s ethnic Chinese, its extensive efforts to court Sihanouk, and its general disdain for communist movements in all other parts of the region except Vietnam, why would Beijing develop contacts with the precisely these entities? The connection was more a result of rising

radicalism within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – one that would soon result in a major foreign policy reversal.

Beijing's relationship with the Chinese-Cambodian Friendship Association (CCFA), established in Beijing in December 1960²⁰⁹, was not initially thought unusual. Similar organizations existed in other countries, and Beijing found them particularly useful in developing commercial relationships. Although the Phnom Penh branch was not established until September 1964²¹⁰, its chairman would meet regularly with representatives of both governments or on some occasions participate in bilateral delegations.

That ethnic Chinese communities were key actors in establishing local communist movements was not lost on Sihanouk, and the Prince was not wrong to be concerned about this organization.²¹¹ This subset of the population was already quite organized and had already established ties to Beijing. The French colonial administration had allowed the formation of five language-based associations, primarily to improve their own surveillance of taxable economic activity. But in September 1948, the French high governor of Indochina accepted a proposal from Beijing that these groups be permitted to rearrange themselves into “assistance associations” with branches across the country.²¹²

Zhou went out of his way on the May 1960 visit to meet, as he had four years earlier, with representatives of the ethnic Chinese community. Zhou emphasized the importance of following local law and reassured the Cambodians that the new Embassy would not be encouraging the creation of a “fifth column.” Like other diaspora communities throughout Southeast Asia, most of the Cambodian Chinese community remained wary of communism and largely focused on furthering its economic successes. But the

statement issued at the CCFA's first national congress ought to have indicated something of a political agenda, as it congratulated Cambodia's neutrality, peace, and independence, and condemned the "imperialist forces" of Thailand and Vietnam.²¹³

The highly secretive Communist Party of Cambodia (CPC), formed in September 1960, sought during this time to reach beyond its long-standing ties to Hanoi and Vientiane in order to ensure its own autonomy. Chinese sources are almost devoid of any reference to the Cambodian left, but a few mentions, alongside western scholarship, provide glimpses into how this relationship began to evolve. Although Beijing had had some contact with representatives of Thai and Burmese communist insurgencies, the common pattern entailed the leaders of the insurgencies traveling to Beijing of their own accord, asking for assistance, and being given relatively little help other than political training at Beijing's Marxist-Leninist Institute or at a cadre training school in Kunming.²¹⁴ During this period, the Cambodian experience was similar.

It is possible that the first interaction between the Chinese and the proto-Khmer Rouge occurred not behind closed doors but in a very public place: at Zhou's May 1960 press conference in Phnom Penh. Khieu Samphan, who would soon join the CPC, was at the time the editor of *L'observateur*, one of Cambodia's left-wing newspapers. Khieu asked about the "objective conditions" that made a united front against the Japanese possible and the Great Leap Forward desirable. Zhou responded that it was a combination of blatant Japanese imperialism and CCP leadership on the battlefield. When it became clear, Zhou went on to say, that the Kuomintang was simply a front for American imperialism, the Chinese people made use of the "lesson" they had learned and "drove out" the "enemy in their midst." Zhou attributed the Great Leap forward to

China's battle against poverty and "backwardness," noting that China hoped to catch up with Britain within roughly a decade.²¹⁵

Although this would not have been Khieu's first exposure to CCP rhetoric on either of these subjects, experiencing them delivered articulately and professionally by one of the world's great diplomats must have made it particularly resonant. Virtually identical language emerged from the Khmer Rouge within a few years. It is also ironic, given the emphasis China would come to place on Cambodian united fronts, and the ludicrous developmental timetable the Khmer Rouge would stake out. It is not impossible that Khieu managed to get more access to some members of the large delegation during its five-day visit, and Khieu would, over the coming years, have many discussions with Zhou.

Khieu Samphan also served on the CCFA's press and periodicals subcommittee,²¹⁶ which would at a minimum have given him some exposure to correspondents from the Chinese state press agency, *Xinhua* (New China News Agency). Until the early 1990s, most *Xinhua* offices were actually located in Chinese embassies. Again, there is no particular evidence that the CPC was able to make contact this way, but nor can the possibility be wholly ruled out.

In late 1964, Ambassador Chen Shuliang and his wife, Kang Daisha, were taken on a tour of the Cambodian countryside. This included a few days in the Cardamom Mountains (Doukoushan) in the southwestern part of Cambodia. Kang Daisha wrote about the rugged terrain in her diary²¹⁷, perhaps not realizing that it was precisely that feature would later make it an attractive organizing base for the CPC. The coincidence of visiting this particular location is also astonishing, given that, fifteen years later, China

would establish an “embassy” in this same location to liaise with the retreating Democratic Kampuchea regime.

Corfield suggests that suspending ties with the US in 1965 created an opportunity for members of the Cambodian left, including Khieu Samphan, Hu Nim, and Hou Youn to encourage Sihanouk to strengthen the relationship with Beijing.²¹⁸ Peking Review provides evidence of an October 1965 CCFA delegation led by Hu Nim. Liu and Zhou received that group, and Hu’s banquet speech makes it still harder to believe that the CCFA served non-political purposes. Hu declared that, “US imperialism and its stooges are not at all happy to see so close a friendship between Cambodia and China. But this is a good thing. Future developments will further prove the correctness of Chairman Mao Tse-tung’s thesis that the East wind is prevailing over the West wind. The anti-imperialist forces of the East are bound to defeat the imperialist forces of the West.”²¹⁹ Yet there is no evidence to suggest that official recognition would shift away from Sihanouk or in official support of armed action in Cambodia.

Most noteworthy, of course, was Pol Pot’s first visit to China. Because Pol Pot was an opponent of Sihanouk, it is not surprising that this visit was not publicized at that time in the Chinese press or mentioned in the diplomatic yearbooks.²²⁰ Consequently, the precise timing and length of the visit are of some debate. Zhang Xizhen suggests that Pol Pot arrived in the autumn of 1965 from Hanoi and spent three months in Beijing, while Chandler states that, between 1965 and 1966, Pol Pot spent eleven months in China and Vietnam.²²¹ Goscha and Heder place Pol Pot in Beijing in early 1966. It is possible Keo Meas, who would later serve as an assistant to Ieng Sary in Beijing, accompanied Pol Pot on this visit.

All agree, however, that the Vietnamese leadership, and Le Duan in particular, had tried to prevent Pol Pot from traveling to Beijing, primarily by stalling when asked to relay a request for permission to the Chinese.²²² Neither Beijing nor Hanoi thought the timing was right for a revolution in Cambodia, one that might jeopardize the cause in Vietnam. Heder suggests that Pol Pot may have gained a greater degree of sympathy for his ideological stance in Beijing than in Hanoi, but he garnered no encouragement for an armed struggle.²²³ To the contrary, Chinese leaders discouraged Pol Pot's impulses. David Chandler provides one of the only summaries of the visit, and although it is somewhat speculative, it is worth quoting at length:

...Saloth Sar [Pol Pot's real name] visited China not as an independent revolutionary but as a Vietnamese ally paying his respects. Ironically, those who welcomed him probably included the soon-to-be discredited 'capitalist roaders' Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, who were in charge of interparty relations at the time. Liu had recently visited Cambodia to reemphasize China's alliance with Sihanouk. Even more recently, Sihanouk himself had been warmly received on a state visit to China. In this setting, it is unlikely that Saloth Sar was in a position to plead a special case, to argue for armed struggle against the Prince or to ask for Chinese aid. As far as the Chinese were concerned, Sar was less important than their alliances with Sihanouk and North Vietnam. Perhaps they believed in a minor way Sar could help the Communists defeat U.S. imperialism in Asia...In the meantime, however, nothing could be gained by encouraging him to take an independent line...Liu, Deng, and their subordinates probably gave him the same kind of avuncular treatment he had received and resented in Hanoi...At the same time, it seems likely that the more radical among them admired his nerve.²²⁴

During this visit, Pol Pot is thought to have established a friendship with Kang Sheng, one of the more radical CCP officials of the time. Intriguingly, an article published in

1979 noted that Beijing began to “provide some assistance” to the Khmer Rouge at about this time but provides no detail.²²⁵ Goscha suggests that Pol Pot would have left with the impression that as long as his party took a pro-China and anti-Soviet stance, the Chinese radicals “would at least not say no to Cambodian Party leaders.”²²⁶

But the question remains: why would Beijing, after having worked so hard to cultivate a relationship with Sihanouk, and after Sihanouk had cut ties to the US, begin to flirt with Sihanouk’s enemies? Had Beijing recognized the growing discontent in Cambodia with Sihanouk’s rule and begun to either seek out an alternative or signal to Sihanouk he should be more tolerant of the Cambodian left? Was it taking the opportunity to taunt Hanoi by giving Pol Pot a welcome than the Vietnamese had not wanted him to have? Did it actively seek to promote a communist movement and, if so, why at this point in time? Was Beijing simply politely entertaining another in a series of self-professed Maoist acolytes? Were different strategies being considered in Beijing?

Ben Kiernan’s statement that, “Beijing’s sponsorship provided Pol Pot’s faction with the maneuverability that it would not otherwise have enjoyed,”²²⁷ is unhelpful, given that it tells us nothing about China’s motivations, nor did any of the suggested flexibility eventuate. Melvin Gurtov’s extensive research suggests that Beijing was more often the recipient rather than the initiator of overtures from these kinds of movements. As he illustrates in the Thai and Burmese cases from the same time period, only when the national governments of those countries appeared to be softening their stances toward the US would Beijing offer some supportive gesture to the Thai Communist Party or the White Flags.²²⁸ Sihanouk’s regular anti-American, pro-Chinese stance probably meant that the Khmer Rouge got only nominal attention from Beijing at the time.

Peter Van Ness' analysis of Chinese support to revolutionary movements, based on Chinese press articles from 1965, is also helpful. With the rise of anti-revisionism in Beijing, foreign policy support would now go to movements that were willing to pursue a similar party line, as well as commit to a struggle against imperialism, and to not allying with the United States.²²⁹ With respect to these criteria, the Khmer Rouge's only absolute edge over Sihanouk would have been the anti-revisionist position. Van Ness goes on to suggest that the minimum criteria for labeling a country a "true revolutionary" required diplomatic relations, support at the UN, and a trade relationship²³⁰ – all of which China already got from Sihanouk. In Van Ness' formula for determining the depth of China's relationship to a movement, the Khmer Rouge met only the criteria of having visited Beijing in 1965, but not of having established a liaison office there or of getting attention in the Chinese press.²³¹

As long as Beijing was not treating the Khmer Rouge as an alternative to Sihanouk, or encouraging them to undertake armed struggle, it is likely Chinese policymakers considered these interactions within the bounds of non-interference. Obviously their common ideology was a point of discussion, but it was not yet a reason for a major policy shift. Yet the early aid and connection to Kang Sheng suggests that an ideological or revolutionary impulse was beginning to influence foreign policy.

To accept visits from the Cambodian communists and to allow the formation of a fifth column – these actions were in no way strategic. The Khmer Rouge was in no position at that point to offer China much assistance it could not already get from the Prince. Even if Beijing had become as frustrated with the notoriously corrupt Cambodian army, the Khmer Rouge could not yet have presented itself as a viable military alternative.

Amplifying these ties would only undercut Beijing's relationship with Sihanouk and jeopardize the success of Vietnam's revolution.

For the most part, however, Chinese foreign policy choices followed the dictates of the Five Principles, particularly with respect to Cambodia's neutrality and despite Sihanouk's vacillations. The requests from China to Cambodia for assistance demonstrate the importance to China's physical security of ensuring a Vietnamese communist victory. It is difficult to ascertain whether this constituted a breach of non-interference, given that Sihanouk had certainly made accommodations of his own to the Vietnamese communists.

Yet some of these issues were mooted when the early indications of a rising ideological tide became official. On January 5, 1965, *Renmin Ribao* published an article confirming the ascent of rightists in Beijing, and Zhou would spend the next five years trying to stave off this – and worse – diplomatic catastrophes.

IV. Relations during the early Cultural Revolution, 1966-1970

Given the closeness of the relationship between China and Cambodia, and given the persistence of threats from the same enemies, how did the two countries' relationship deteriorate almost to the breaking point within a few years? To date, China's behavior was driven by a commitment to support neutrality in the face of increasing US threats and through close diplomatic ties. In the early years of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR, or Cultural Revolution), however, there would be no *qitong*-inspired diplomacy and no support for neutrality. The perception in Beijing about the best ways to ensure world peace changed to an aggressive, zero-sum approach in which

socialists were pitted against capitalists and revolutionaries against reactionaries – in other words, to the approach western countries had long thought China employed.

From 1966 to 1968, Marxist ideology wholly supplanted the Five Principles as the basis of foreign policy. This was not simply a matter of changing rhetoric, but of dramatically different foreign policy tactics, such as overt support for local communist parties in other countries, eliciting support for Mao from visiting delegations, and explicitly encouraging revolution. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was in chaos as Red Guards literally occupied it for weeks at a time, issuing policy statements and sending directives overseas while senior officials were forced to write self-criticisms. At the lowest points, Chinese foreign policy ground to a halt, and it was unclear at times who was actually serving as Foreign Minister.²³² But as moderates regained control and assessed the deep damage done to dozens of bilateral relationships, the Five Principles were re-embraced well before the Cultural Revolution ended.

Radicalism and Chinese foreign policy. Relations between Phnom Penh and Beijing appeared robust at the beginning of 1966, but subtle differences indicated a change in Chinese tactics. Visits, telephone calls, and many of the other diplomatic gestures in which both sides had regularly engaged waned. The Chinese press lavishly praised Sihanouk that spring for expelling CIA spies.²³³ But in fact those kicked out by the Prince were representatives of an American philanthropic foundation, and while they may have been minor irritants to Sihanouk by encouraging political reform, he had not construed them in the manner Beijing did.

In April, Li Xiannian visited Phnom Penh, but aside from signing an agreement on cultural and economic cooperation, and stating that Sino-Cambodian relations were “a

model for the rest of Asia,²³⁴ minimal information was released about his meetings or activities. It is likely that on this visit Li pressed Sihanouk for sympathy on China's Vietnam policy. This would have made Sihanouk uncomfortable, though not nearly as uncomfortable as Zhou's personal request to him, following the US blockade Vietnamese ports, to ship goods to the Viet Cong through Cambodia.²³⁵ The latter would be allowed to keep about a third of all the materials, and Beijing promised more military technicians, a hospital, a tea plant, and equipment for the national university's laboratories.²³⁶ But the explicit quid-pro-quo, especially coming from Zhou, marked a noticeable change in Chinese policy.

The GPCR was officially launched in June 1966, and while the Cambodians were aware that Beijing had begun a domestic political campaign, Sihanouk was probably more concerned with cementing his newly elected and noticeably more conservative government. The Prince was reportedly astonished and unnerved²³⁷ when in August a Chinese embassy delegation declined an invitation to the world premiere of his feature film *Apsara* because such activities did not comport with the austerity of the GPCR.²³⁸ Over the coming months Sihanouk attempted to maintain the pattern of regular phone calls to Beijing – thanking China for its unity and support, congratulating its nuclear successes, and discussing American imperialism.

Occasionally Sihanouk tried to provoke a reaction from Beijing by complaining to the international press that some countries used Cambodia only for its anti-imperialist platform.²³⁹ The Cambodians went so far as to actually express support for the GPCR in an attempt to keep Beijing's rapidly diminishing attention. On November 9, Cambodia marked the thirteenth anniversary of its independence, and at a reception given by the

Cambodian Embassy in Beijing, Ambassador Truong Cang, "...with particular warmth...wished China's cultural revolution complete success."²⁴⁰ *Renmin Ribao* reported that Truong "celebrated" Foreign Minister Chen Yi's statement that "the friendship between China and Cambodia must unceasingly develop its struggle to resist the US."²⁴¹

But during those same months of 1966, Chen Yi and Zhou, Sihanouk's friends of a decade, were becoming the focus of Red Guard hostility in Beijing. Although both continued in their positions as Foreign Minister and vice Premier, and Premier, respectively, their attention was focused not on foreign policy but on preventing radical infiltration of the Ministry. Chen fared particularly badly, charged at one point with conducting Chinese foreign policy on the basis of the Five Principles, rather than a revolutionary, anti-reactionary platform.²⁴² Zhou attempted to protect Chen, but without Mao's support there was little he could do. The abrupt criminalization of a foreign policy approach Beijing had painstakingly maintained was only one of the many political reversals of these years. By the end of 1967, all but one of China's ambassadors would be called home.

Sihanouk proclaimed to the Chinese press in February 1967 that China was Cambodia's "best friend, even in stormy times,"²⁴³ but the coming months would severely test the veracity of that statement. In April, heavy-handed tax collection measures, presided over by Prime Minister Lon Nol, triggered a peasant uprising Cambodia's northwest. Sihanouk, increasingly concerned in the wake of this event about plots to unseat him, "became distressed by news that the Little Red Book was popular... Worried about the possibility of Chinese-sponsored violence against him, Sihanouk had suspected

radicals rounded up. Allegedly pro-Chinese students and other activists were killed by the police.”²⁴⁴ Sihanouk remained convinced that the rebellion was orchestrated by Cambodian leftists under the tutelage of the Chinese and publicly identified Khieu Samphan, Hou Youn and Hu Nim as the guilty parties.²⁴⁵

Not only was there no hostile response from Beijing with respect to these allegations, the planned opening of a Chinese-subsidized factory in the same province as the rebellion went ahead in early April. Sihanouk presided and made some minimally complementary comments on the Cultural Revolution.²⁴⁶ In a meeting with Pham Van Dong at the end of April, Zhou stated that, “The possibility of winning Sihanouk’s sympathy is quite good.”²⁴⁷ Was Beijing unaware of Sihanouk’s accusations? How could Zhou be so sure of Sihanouk’s sympathy? The breakdown in communication was largely a result of a GPCR phenomenon, in which Chinese embassies often did not await instructions from the MFA in Beijing nor report back on all local activities. In the coming month, the MFA was literally occupied by Red Guards.

On June 1, it was Moscow that responded first to Sihanouk’s latest call for international recognition of Cambodia’s borders, followed quickly by Hanoi and the South Vietnamese National Liberation Front. These assurances led Sihanouk to normalize relations with the DRV²⁴⁸ in the hopes that all parties would help limit North Vietnamese incursions into Cambodia. Beijing did respond to the request until June 13, after Sihanouk publicly wondered why he had had no response from China.²⁴⁹ The MFA had likely been distracted by demands the previous week from Kang Sheng, Chen Boda, and Jiang Qing, supporters and a leader of the radical Gang of Four, that foreign policy take a new and more aggressive line worldwide.²⁵⁰ Following an escalation of Chinese

Embassy-sanctioned pro-Mao rhetoric in Phnom Penh, Chen Shuliang was recalled to Beijing on June 8.²⁵¹ A new Chinese ambassador would not arrive in Phnom Penh until June 1969. The Embassy was left in the care of charge d'affaires Cheng Zixiang, of whom Xinhua, *Renmin Ribao*, and *Shijie zhishi* make not a single mention.

Sihanouk, concerned about the dramatic disruptions to the relationship, sent Prince Phurissara, his Foreign Minister, to Beijing from August 15-18. But the visit was alarming not only because none of the standard protocol was observed, but also because Zhou bluntly asked that ethnic Chinese Cambodians be allowed to openly show their support for Mao, the GPCR, and communism in general.²⁵² Shortly after Phurissara's departure, Red Guards had quite literally occupied the MFA and bilateral relations across the world were in turmoil.²⁵³ Senior officials, including Chen Yi, hid in closets for several days to avoid beatings. Red Guards attacked the Burmese, Indian, and Indonesian embassies in Beijing, burned the British chancery, and beat dozens of members of the chancery staff.²⁵⁴ It was not until August 27 that Mao "ordered the arrest of the ultra-leftist representatives in the Foreign Ministry,"²⁵⁵ but it is not clear how swiftly that order was carried out.

On September 1, Sihanouk, deeply unnerved by the events of August, declared that the CCFA would now be placed under the leadership of government-selected individuals, a gesture pointed particularly at China. Ten months earlier, the Prince had toasted the CCFA at its annual banquet; now he saw it as a hive of opposition against him. On September 2, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs cabled the CCFA in an act of defiant recognition and declared the Prince's behavior "reactionary" and aligned with the US and USSR. On September 4, Sihanouk declared that the Chinese were "walking on

the wrong path...At present they are off their heads.”²⁵⁶ Apparently aware at that point of a growing relationship between the Cambodian leftists and Beijing, he also strongly criticized China for “meddling in internal affairs.”²⁵⁷ On September 5, 1967, a Cambodian Chinese-language newspaper suggested that if relations were to be reestablished, it would present an opportunity to “give the gift of struggle,” a rare exhortation of GPCR rhetoric in another country.²⁵⁸

By the middle of September, Sihanouk threatened to recall the embassy staff from Beijing. On September 13, Han Nianlong told Truong Cang for the first and only time that Beijing had always “considered aggression against Cambodia to be aggression against China.”²⁵⁹ These words represented a powerful commitment that China would come to Cambodia’s military defense in the event of an invasion. Zhou implored Truong not to leave Beijing, and a few days later Sihanouk backed down, but not without reminding Zhou that he expected the relationship to return to the basis of the Five Principles, not the Cultural Revolution. By the end of October Zhou declared a desire to “rebuild the traditional friendship,” which Sihanouk described as “a clear retreat” from “Red Guard diplomacy.”²⁶⁰ Sihanouk did make the ritual National Day phone call to Beijing in early October,²⁶¹ and in November more military aid arrived, the Beijing CCFA had recognized the new Phnom Penh CCFA, and relations appeared to be back on track.²⁶² Heder argues that in late 1967 Nuon Chea made another plea to Chinese embassy officials in Phnom Penh to support an armed struggle, but that acquiescence was not forthcoming.²⁶³

What was happening in Beijing? If 1967 had been stormy, the first half of 1968 was very quiet as “foreign affairs [were] in a state of suspended animation.”²⁶⁴ The MFA

essentially remained closed. Hundreds of diplomats had been recalled and sent to re-education schools in the countryside, and the basic logistics of making the MFA functional again were overwhelming. One diplomat wrote that at this time the MFA was “clarifying diplomatic thinking, reorganizing groups of people, and resuming participation in major diplomatic activities, removing all traces that diplomacy might not be normalized.”²⁶⁵

Returning to moderation. On May 1, 1968, Chairman Mao “fulfilled the wishes of those at the Foreign Ministry” by calling for the regularization of diplomatic activities in a speech at Tiananmen.²⁶⁶ But it was not until the following May Day that Lin Biao confirmed to the CCP’s Ninth National Congress that foreign policy would return to the Five Principles framework.²⁶⁷ In the spring of 1969, the first ambassadors since the 1967 recall were sent to postings overseas. Huang Hua was one of the only two pre-GPCR ambassadors to be returned to a previous posting, France. Two first-time ambassadors were sent to Albania and Yugoslavia, while Wang Youping was assigned to Vietnam and Li Qun, who had previously served in Laos, was sent as an interim representative to Phnom Penh in May 1969.

The Cultural Revolution did not officially end until 1976, after Mao’s death, and the atmosphere of turmoil continued to pervade Beijing politics well into the early 1970s. This makes the reversion to Five Principles foreign policy curious. One would expect at least a degree of radicalism to continue to influence foreign policy, yet it had returned to its pre-PRC roots. Why? Because it had worked and GPCR-style diplomacy had failed miserably. Kang Maozhao later wrote in his autobiography that the GPCR,

...wrecked all the great achievements in diplomatic relations. Our party and government had gone through 17 years of hard work in diplomacy...[but] under the influence of the 'extreme right,' China took 'the thoughts of Mao Zedong' as the sole basis of foreign relations...our diplomatic strategy was increasingly curtailed, our friends became fewer and fewer, and China's international standing and image were greatly harmed. This situation chilled Premier Zhou's heart.²⁶⁸

What was Beijing missing during its two ambassador-less years in Phnom Penh? It had issued a slew of statements supporting Cambodia against American imperialism in 1968, but there is little other available material. One of the only accounts of what happened at the Chinese Embassy in Phnom Penh following Chen Shuliang's departure illustrates the disconnect between embassies and the MFA. The embassy was run for several months by a "rightist" faction that "made a number of mistakes," including welcoming Cambodian radicals with similar views into the embassy.²⁶⁹ No detail is provided as to who was admitted, for what length of time, or what was discussed, but it is not impossible that this may have provided another opportunity to deepen ties with the KR. One retired MFA official suggest that Kang Sheng might have visited the "liberated zones" held by the Khmer Rouge in the northwest in January 1968.²⁷⁰ As Gurtov suggested, the turmoil in the MFA "at the very least enhanced the opportunities for fanatical elements abroad to 'revolutionize' foreign affairs..."²⁷¹ If a relationship was formed between Embassy radicals and members of the Khmer Rouge and the MFA had not disavowed it, was it official policy?

In a June 1968 discussion between Zhou and senior Vietnamese officials, Zhou asked his guests about the Cambodian communists, stating that he knew little about them.

Although Zhou said twice during that conversation that he did not want the Chinese Embassy in Phnom Penh to have contact with the Cambodian Communists (“...our cadres...are of low rank...”), he did also note that, “...our embassy...reported that the Khmer Communist Party complained that Vietnamese comrades did not supply them with weapons when the opportunity had been ripe for an armed struggle.”²⁷² Clearly some contact had been made and had been reported to Beijing. Zhou tried to impress upon the Vietnamese intermediaries that the Khmer Rouge should still be focused on an anti-US united front, not a struggle for independence.²⁷³

Where had the GPCR-induced turmoil left Sihanouk? His anti-left purges had strengthened organized opposition to him in the form of the Khmer Rouge. Sihanouk, uncertain as to what policies would emanate next from Beijing and increasingly concerned about the rapidly developing strength of the Khmer Rouge and the North Vietnamese, had drifted back towards the US as Cambodia’s primary protector. After the US publicly agreed in April to recognize Cambodia’s neutrality within its own borders, Sihanouk opted in June to reestablish ties with the United States.²⁷⁴ This entailed a trade-off: the US would halt its support to the Khmer Serei, which had failed to make much progress²⁷⁵, but Cambodia would covertly allow the US to begin a bombing campaign of its territory to destroy Viet Cong strongholds along the border.²⁷⁶ Although the US embassy did not reopen until July, the bombings began on March 18, 1969 and continued on and off for four years.²⁷⁷

Curiously, Beijing chose not to respond that spring with any vehemence to the renewed US-Cambodia relationship. In Beijing, Zhou and Kang Sheng told Pham Van Dong and other Vietnamese officials in April 1969 that, “[Sihanouk] carries out a policy

of double-dealing, he is tilting to the right.”²⁷⁸ But a few explanations are worth considering. Zhou may well have felt that the foreign policy hiatus of the GPCR, coupled with the Chinese Embassy’s activities and relationship with the Khmer Rouge, drove Sihanouk to reconcile with the Americans. Moreover, it was maddening to the Chinese that they were unable to exercise sufficient influence over the North Vietnamese to limit their activities in Cambodia, and that fact was all the more embarrassing when Sihanouk sought help from Moscow to influence Hanoi. Zhou was also preoccupied with the reconstruction of the MFA and would have tried to discourage any incendiary rhetoric that would re-ignite domestic policy disputes. And it is not impossible that Zhou would have sympathized with Sihanouk’s choice with respect to the bombings.

Zhou does appear to have gone to considerable lengths to choose and brief Kang Maozhao, China’s third ambassador to Cambodia.²⁷⁹ Before leaving for Phnom Penh, Zhou cautioned Kang that the posting would be difficult but was extremely important. It was so important, in fact, that in addition to a new ambassador, all four of the positions in the embassy were filled with new appointees – a gesture tantamount to “the highest possible apology” from Beijing.²⁸⁰ Sihanouk, encouraged by Beijing’s change of attitude, received Kang in late June and was pleased to be reminded of their earlier meeting at Bandung. Kang set to work repairing relations, catching up on two years of political developments, and trying to grasp the rapidly changing environment. He lamented that, “few people realized” Cambodia’s “importance...for liaising with the international community. Particularly Cambodia, because Prince Sihanouk led the country on the basis of policies of peace and neutrality, and because it had good relations with the east,

west, and third world countries, and for the purpose of advancing my country's diplomatic work, it increased our influence a great deal."²⁸¹

By autumn, the relationship between Phnom Penh and Beijing appears to have returned to its previous dynamics. After almost a year without a Cambodian ambassador in Beijing, in November newly-appointed Nay Valentin hosted a National Day reception, at which he noted that Cambodia and China “rejoice over this constant development of the ties of friendship and close solidarity between our two countries, alike determined to oppose the machinations, threats and schemes of the imperialists.” Nay also expressed support for the “wise leadership” of Chairman Mao, while Vice Premier Li Xiannian reiterated China’s thanks to Cambodia for its support to the one-China policy.²⁸²

Ambassador Kang’s made assiduous efforts to quickly grasp the threats posed to Sihanouk as a result of his vacillations between China, the US, the USSR, and the competing Cambodian and Vietnamese factions. But it was too late for him to influence the situation. He cabled Beijing in mid-February: “Cambodia is like an arrow on a bowstring,” suggesting that the situation could not be rectified.²⁸³ Various right-wing politicians, including General Lon Nol and Prince Sirik Matak, took advantage of domestic anger over increasing Vietnamese attacks on Cambodian territory. The debate continues today about whether the CIA actively encouraged these two to stage a coup, but it was with a degree of confidence in at least US backing that they agreed to cooperate in an attempt to overthrow Sihanouk.²⁸⁴ Sihanouk left Cambodia in late February 1970 for a medical exam in Paris. On March 15, the French Foreign Ministry, aware of the plans set to unfold in Phnom Penh, tried to convince Sihanouk to return to

Phnom Penh²⁸⁵, but it was already too late. On March 18, 1970, the Cambodian National Assembly stripped Sihanouk of his office and awarded it to Lon Nol.

V. Conclusion

To what extent were policy choices towards Cambodia during this period driven by principles rather than other imperatives? Achieving immediate physical security from the United States in Vietnam and longer-term security obtained through principled relations only once pulled Chinese foreign policy in different directions, leading to Zhou's request to Sihanouk to facilitate Chinese assistance to the Vietnamese communists reflected the importance of a North Vietnamese victory to Beijing. The more significant deviation occurred during the Cultural Revolution, a period in which the first-generation leadership at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was sidelined and the Five Principles were ignored in favor of aggressive, interventionist policies. These episodes suggest that in extreme circumstances, principles could be subordinated to security or ideological concerns.

But, thus far, several important Chinese policy choices remained squarely within the framework of the Five Principles. Rather than concentrate its efforts only on other socialist states in Southeast Asia, China devoted considerable energy to cultivating ties to a variety of states. That many of those states saw these gestures as a façade for communist expansionism did not deter China as it gave to Cambodia resources it could barely afford. It is absolutely true that Beijing wanted to minimize the American presence in Southeast Asia, but it did not insist that Cambodia cut its ties to the US. Even though such a position could have been pursued and would have contributed considerably to increasingly China's security, it was deemed inappropriate and thus not pursued.

Instead, China continued to support and enable Cambodia's neutrality. The decision to revert to the Five Principles after two years of Maoist foreign policy clearly demonstrates that most Chinese foreign policy makers did not approve of an ideological component in external relations. This is even more compelling when one considers the repeated exhortations that the Khmer Rouge not take up armed struggle.

Rather than forcing smaller states like Cambodia into alliances or conditioning aid on stances toward third states, China sought to increase its own security by engaging in a different, and seemingly illogical, way. In this initial phase, a principled approach toward Cambodia worked relatively well. Yet it is worth contemplating whether Beijing's behavior would have been the same if, to paraphrase Brantly Womack, the US had disappeared from Southeast Asia in the late 1950s or early 1960s. Beijing's magnitude of diplomatic gestures and aid might perhaps have been somewhat less, yet there is no evidence to suggest that it would have vanished. Part of what motivated Beijing was the need to demonstrate – regardless of the threats – its commitment to a new way of conducting state-state relations. But would Beijing stick to its principles and not intervene as Cambodia came under the rule of first a US-backed regime and then a genocidal Cambodian one?

CHAPTER TWO: MARCH 1970-JANUARY 1979

I. Introduction

The 1970s proved to be a decade of major transitions. In 1970, Mao Zedong still spoke about preparations for revolution and world war; by 1978, Deng Xiaoping stressed the primacy of economic security in foreign policy. Between 1970 and 1972, China managed to normalize relations with 38 countries, but the mid-decade leadership crisis following Mao's death saw the figures decrease considerably. At the beginning of this decade, the United States still loomed large in Beijing's estimation of global threats; by the middle of the 1970s the US had effectively withdrawn from Southeast Asia and within a few years the two countries had normalized. The success of Vietnam's communists did not result in a closer ally or greater security for China as Moscow and Hanoi forged increasingly close ties. Another spasm of radicalism in foreign policy – thought to have been overcome by the early 1970s – dramatically narrowed the choices available to Mao's successors.

A close examination of this period ascertains whether principles remained a determinant in foreign policy across leadership changes, the end of the Vietnam War and the Cultural Revolution, and the beginning of the reform era. Chinese policy makers were convinced that the United States had encouraged Lon Nol's coup, a conviction further strengthened by the subsequent US invasion. But rather than quietly welcome Sihanouk into exile and find other ways to channel supplies to the Vietnamese resistance, Beijing instead continued with past practice and went to considerable lengths to support what they considered the legitimate rulers of Cambodia in the early 1970s. While

support for the Khmer Rouge (KR) prior to 1975 indicated a resurgence of ideology in foreign policy, the decision to treat its Democratic Kampuchea (DK) regime, which killed about one-fifth of Cambodia's people, as it would any other demonstrated the discomfiting boundaries of non-interference. Deng Xiaoping's moderate, developmental foreign policy agenda dictated that China's attention should have shifted away from extraneous conflicts, yet Beijing refused to abandon Cambodia as its relations with Vietnam spiraled towards war. Rather than let its choices be dictated by what was ideologically, militarily, or economically most expedient, or by the changing leadership, Beijing continued to navigate according to the same principles.

There were, however, episodes in which principles were overridden. The prospect of normalizing relations with the United States and possibly regaining control over Taiwan caused the Chinese to soften their stance, much to the exiled Cambodians' dismay. Another period of radical control of foreign policy accounts for the shift of attention from Sihanouk to the Khmer Rouge in 1973 and 1974. It does appear that Beijing, sufficiently concerned about the possible loss of supply lines to and sanctuaries for the Vietnamese communists following Sihanouk's ouster, may have made overtures to the Lon Nol regime. As the previous chapter suggested, principles could be subordinated not only by radicalism, but also by moderates when territory China claimed as its own was at stake.

II. Staying on track: 1970-1973

Following Sihanouk's ouster, Beijing immediately turned its energies to recreating Cambodian autonomy. It bent its own diplomatic rules to help create an exile government capable of commanding diplomatic respect and military strength – a startling

step, given its strenuous opposition to such a regime in Taiwan. Did it do so to ensure access to supply lines that the Lon Nol regime would cut off? Although Beijing appears to have made an overture to that regime, it would not have been particularly difficult to outwit its military, which was inept and corrupt. Did increasing Chinese attention to the Cambodian radicals indicate a shift towards more ideological foreign policy? Although Dittmer suggests that Chinese foreign policy had returned to its “ecumenical” foundation by the end of 1969, tensions between Chinese radicals and moderates began to emerge again during these four years.²⁸⁶ While both these factors influenced China’s choices, the official emphasis on opposing American imperialism and forming a coalition prevailed.

An exception to the rules: hosting an exile government. On March 14, sensing the downward spiral in Phnom Penh, Zhou had met with Nay Valentin, Cambodia’s ambassador to China, to inform him that China would continue to “support the prince’s policy of peace, neutrality, and independence.”²⁸⁷ Concerned that the instability in Phnom Penh might result in anti-Chinese violence, Zhou had sought assurances on March 16 from the North Korean embassy in Beijing that its counterparts in Phnom Penh would act as a liaison should such assistance be necessary (ironically, it turned out to be the other way around). And as soon as Zhou and Mao received news of the coup on March 18, they agreed that China would continue to recognize Sihanouk as head of state.²⁸⁸ Before Sihanouk even arrived in Beijing, Chinese leaders committed to helping him in whatever way they could, and some of those efforts were, by Chinese foreign policy standards, indeed quite unorthodox.

When Sihanouk arrived in Beijing from Moscow on March 19, Zhou had arranged to have roughly forty ambassadors on hand to greet the Prince at the airport, a diplomatic gesture to underscore his head-of-state status. During the drive to the city, Zhou inquired as to the Prince's plans, having reassured him already that Sihanouk would always find a personal home in China. Sihanouk declared that he intended to fight against Lon Nol "to the end," and while Zhou discouraged him from trying to return to Cambodia right away, he did assure Sihanouk of China's support and ongoing recognition. On March 20, Zhou convened the Politburo, which agreed to provide full support to Sihanouk in Beijing.²⁸⁹

To China, the situation in Cambodia called for a national liberation movement, not of communist revolution against a monarchy. Although Beijing had already reiterated its commitment to Sihanouk's leadership, Zhou's proposed strategy of a coalition should not have been a surprise to those who recalled his discussion of united fronts with Khieu Samphan at the May 1960 press conference. To the Chinese leadership, united fronts were not just interim strategies to get regain power, they were also part of a process by which domestic political differences could be examined in the hope of reconciling those peacefully. As Zhou pointed out that week: "We can exert political influence, but they, as Khmers, have to deal directly with each other."²⁹⁰

Over the coming days, Chinese leaders held separate meetings with Sihanouk and Pol Pot, who was making another secret visit to China, to discuss the possibility of a coalition. Sihanouk initially resisted, telling Zhou on March 20 of his wish to pursue a tri-lateral effort with Laos and Vietnam to promote international solidarity and resistance to the United States; Zhou replied that priority should be placed on establishing a united

front with the Cambodian communists. Pol Pot found the idea of a coalition more palatable than Sihanouk did, though he expressed the need to consult with the in-country leadership before committing to such a coalition.²⁹¹ On March 21, Zhou expressed to Pham Van Dong his concerns about Sihanouk's commitment to a united front, but also reiterated Beijing's commitment to the Prince.²⁹² There is no evidence to suggest that Zhou insisted or conditioned China's support on the Cambodians' following his advice.

The alliance between Sihanouk and the KR was not going to be an easy one – had the Lon Nol coup not happened, it is plausible that the royalists and communists would have soon been battling each another. Zhang Xizhen described their relationship as one of “mutual resistance,” because Sihanouk was “not opposing a social revolution, he was opposing an imperialist revolution.”²⁹³ Kang Maozhao saw the intersection of interests slightly differently and noted that the KR were aware that “their social struggle against feudalism would be transformed into a struggle against imperialism, so they responded positively to Prince Sihanouk's call...this [response] further inspired...Sihanouk.”²⁹⁴ Regardless of their respective positions on class contradictions, however, the Cambodians had few other choices. Without the kind of infrastructure only the Khmer Rouge maintained inside Cambodia, it was unlikely Sihanouk would ever be able to regain control over the country; without Sihanouk's international profile, it would be difficult for the Khmer Rouge to garner much assistance.

On March 23, Sihanouk issued his “Communiqué to all Cambodians” from Beijing. This Five Point Proclamation, as it was also known, called for the establishment of the National United Front of Kampuchea (FUNK) and urged all patriotic Cambodians to take up arms against the Lon Nol regime.²⁹⁵ He spoke of ejecting the United States and its

regional “associates” from Cambodia, against the “United States invaders and their new colonialism of Vietnam,” and for “achieving full territorial independence, self-initiative neutrality, peace, democracy, and prosperity.”²⁹⁶ This was the kind of unity Beijing was hoping for, and throughout the coming years the Chinese press and policymakers frequently made reference to the Communiqué. That same day, Pham Van Dong, anxious to ameliorate the vulnerability of the southern Vietnamese communists, also expressed his support for and willingness to cooperate with a coalition government.²⁹⁷

Throughout April, Beijing stepped up its criticisms of Lon Nol and the US and continued to encourage the establishment of a united front. By the middle of the month, Peking Review was referring to the regime in Phnom Penh as “reactionaries” and “paper tigers,”²⁹⁸ and claiming that regime intended to use local Chinese as “cannon fodder.”²⁹⁹ It also excoriated the United Nations for its April 6 recognition of Lon Nol.³⁰⁰ On April 1, Zhou informed Sihanouk that the Five Point statement had caused such enthusiasm in Cambodia that Lon Nol cancelled plans to hold an anti-Sihanouk demonstration.³⁰¹ Four days later, Zhou stated at a banquet in Pyongyang that China would back Sihanouk’s March 23 position.³⁰² China hosted talks between Sihanouk, Laos, and North and South Vietnam on April 24-25³⁰³; in this forum, Zhou pushed for a united front against the United States and Lon Nol, though he stressed that all sides could “count on China and its 700 million people”³⁰⁴ to serve as a “rear area.”³⁰⁵ The official Chinese statement at the close of the conference declared that China would “firmly support[s] the Cambodian people in taking up arms in response to...Sihanouk.”³⁰⁶

Sihanouk spent two hours discussing the situation with Mao on May 1. The Prince conveyed that his April discussions with Khieu Samphan had assuaged his fears about uniting with the Cambodian communists.³⁰⁷ Pleased with this apparent commitment to solidarity amongst the Cambodians, Mao reassured him with a further pledge of assistance: “You must tell us what you need. If we’ve got it, you’ll have it. Anything we give you is nothing compared to what you give us by heading the struggle of the Cambodian people.”³⁰⁸ Mao continued the pep talk by saying that supporting Cambodia “is like supporting ourselves.”³⁰⁹

Sihanouk finally agreed to a coalition, and the Royal National Union Government of Kampuchea (known by its French acronym, GRUNK) was formally established on May 5 in a meeting at Diaoyutai³¹⁰, China’s state guesthouse. Its “congress” adopted a guiding political platform³¹¹, and China formally recognized GRUNK and cut “all diplomatic relations already long severed with the Lon Nol-Sirik Matak Rightist traitorous clique... and [we] will withdraw the Chinese diplomatic mission, personnel and experts from Phnom Penh.”³¹² Beijing agreed to “wholly support” GRUNK and provide “military assistance and materials.”³¹³ A loan agreement was signed between the two sides.³¹⁴ On May 10, Sihanouk declared that GRUNK would have no relations with the US.³¹⁵

The events in Cambodia compelled Mao to issue a major policy statement regarding the ongoing threat of American imperialism to small states. Earlier in May, Mao defended China’s moral right to support countries against the US: “You [the US] invade another country...[but you] forbid China to become the rear? Which law has set up this [right]? You have occupied our Taiwan Island, but I have never occupied your Long Island.”³¹⁶ On May 20, following discussions with Sihanouk, Kang Maozhao, and Le

Duan, Mao gave a blistering speech at Tiananmen Square in support of Cambodia. He argued that the threat of world war still loomed, and that in such an environment, China would continue to support Third World struggles it deemed just, ranging from the cause of the Palestinians to that of the Cambodians.³¹⁷ Clearly with the US in mind, Mao insisted that small countries could win great victories over large countries, and that other countries with anti-imperialist leanings should also support him.³¹⁸ Supporting Sihanouk and Cambodian autonomy continued to reflect a commitment to the Five Principles.³¹⁹ On May 25, Zhou wrote to Sihanouk officially conferring China's recognition of GRUNK.³²⁰

The Chinese did not simply adopt policies favorable to the coalition, limit its support to different kinds of aid, or encourage other countries to recognize GRUNK. Rather, Beijing made it possible for the coalition to literally construct a government in exile – a novelty for Beijing that begged questions about its own scathing rhetoric regarding “its” Taiwan and “splittist” governments. China had not yet recovered the UN seat from Taiwan and it regularly issued statements excoriating other governments who maintained contacts with the “illegitimate regime.” It was only through its absolute belief that the coalition was the sole and rightful government of an autonomous, anti-American Cambodia that such behavior can be understood.

In addition to \$2 million per year, guards, and drivers, GRUNK was given a suite of offices and apartments at the Friendship Hotel, which flew the Cambodian flag when Sihanouk was in the office.³²¹ The office provided a comfortable and spacious environment that allowed the coalition to function and host meetings and dignitaries.³²²

The apartments, which had previously been used by the Soviets, housed approximately thirty staff members, several of whom were Cambodians with previous ties to the Cambodian Communists or the royal family who happened to be pursuing graduate studies in China at the time of the coup. The living arrangements facilitated a kind of physical and intellectual proximity between extreme ends of the Cambodian political spectrum that was previously unimaginable.³²³

By the end of the year, Sihanouk had taken up residence in the former French legation building, a grand mansion with a ballroom and a heated swimming pool not far from Tiananmen in the Dongdan neighborhood.³²⁴ A building further down the street was intended for Pen Nouth and Ieng Sary³²⁵, though the latter apparently did not move to Beijing for about another year. Apparently Pen Nouth preferred to stay at the Friendship Hotel; thus the smaller building in Dongdan came to be known as the “hongse gaomian jia” – “the home of the Khmer Rouge.”³²⁶

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ institutional contortions to serve the Cambodians were by its own standards even more unorthodox. On March 19, 1970, Ambassador Kang, still in Phnom Penh, received a request from the Lon Nol’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs for a meeting. Kang cabled Beijing for advice, and Zhou personally responded that there should not only be absolutely no contact between the Chinese Embassy and the Lon Nol government, but that Kang should also prepare to close the embassy. Kang wrote in his memoirs that Chinese aid experts called back from the provinces to Phnom Penh had to scuffle with Lon Nol’s guards to gain access to their Embassy; moreover, staff members from the North Vietnamese and North Korean embassies and South Vietnamese Provisional Revolutionary Government’s (PRG) liaison office also sought

refuge with the Chinese. “So we established the ‘three nation, four-side’ diplomatic compound.”³²⁷

It was not until mid-May – almost seven weeks after the coup – that Beijing arranged for a chartered Swiss Air flight to go to Phnom Penh to retrieve its diplomats. The plane did not actually arrive in Phnom Penh until May 25. At the airport, journalists asked Ambassador Kang to say a few words, to which the Ambassador simply replied, “We will be back.” Kang wrote that he had, “originally planned to leave three people to watch the door, but we found an old *huaqiao* (ethnic Chinese) and gave him the key, and took care of the other matters. By the time we left, not a single person from the Foreign Ministry remained.”³²⁸ One cannot help but wonder who the *huaqiao* was, or whether it was MFA policy to simply hand over the keys to an embassy. The flight, which was shared by about 65 embassy staff and aid technicians, as well as staff members from the North Korean, DRV, and SVNPRG embassies³²⁹, took them to Guangzhou, where they were met by Zhou and Li Xiannian, and a crowd cheering, “*Xihanuke wan sui!*” (“Long live Sihanouk!”)³³⁰

Within hours of his return to Beijing, Kang Maozhao was informed that the MFA had decided to effectively transfer the Chinese embassy in Phnom Penh to Beijing. On May 27, Zhou called Kang to the leadership compound at Zhongnanhai for a meeting with Deputy Foreign Ministers Ji Pengfei, Qiao Guanhua, and Han Nianlong. Sun Hao and Zhang Longbao, who had been second secretaries at the embassy in Phnom Penh, were also present. Zhou explained to Kang that supporting the coalition was essential to resisting the US³³¹ and that the “Cambodia office” would act as the liaison between the Ministry and GRUNK. The office was under Han’s direction in an office at Diaoyutai,

was staffed by people from the embassy in Phnom Penh, and handled high-level visits and other normal liaison work. Kang effectively remained ambassador and headed the small group on internal policies regarding Cambodia.³³²

Creating normalcy. Over the coming years, GRUNK functioned as normally as an exile government could. The thin veneer of a coalition could not mask some of the very distinct divisions of labor between the royalists and the communists – divisions that would have longer-term consequences. Pre-coup Sihanouk allies, including GRUNK Prime Minister Pen Nouth, focused from the Beijing base on international diplomatic activities. He and Sihanouk traveled extensively to promote GRUNK's cause and also worked through friendly embassies in Beijing.³³³ Foreign Minister Sarin Chhak was posted to Cairo.

The communists, who maintained the only political or military infrastructure inside the country, dominated most of the in-country agencies. Only one Khmer Rouge official appears to have served in a diplomatic position – Chau Seng, who was dispatched to France.³³⁴ Other members of the KR – including Khieu Samphan (Deputy Prime Minister), Hu Nim (Minister of Information), and Hou Yuon (Minister of Interior) – traveled back and forth between Beijing and the “liberated zones” of Cambodia. There they liaised with Pol Pot, who continued to oversee the military campaign against Lon Nol troops and the coordination with Vietnamese communists. In May 1970, Sihanouk told visitors that Khieu Samphan, Hu Nim, and Hou Yuon were “in the home country leading the Cambodian people to carry out a heroic struggle.”³³⁵ While this division of labor seemed suitable given each factions' strengths, it in effect meant that only the

Khmer Rouge maintained any ties within Cambodia and that the royalists may have been putting a more respectable face on GRUNK than they might want.

Nevertheless, GRUNK held regular cabinet meetings in Beijing, and in order to improve its ability to keep in touch with the more public side of the resistance, Ieng Sary, Pol Pot's second in command, was appointed "special ambassador" and shifted his base to Beijing in July 1970.³³⁶ At a GRUNK cabinet meeting in late August 1970, routine matters such as finances and administrative structure were discussed, though KR members at this time came to occupy more positions. Khieu Samphan was approved as the Vice Prime Minister, while Keat Chhon and Thiounn Prasith become alternate members for Central Committee's Permanent Secretariat.³³⁷ In the summer of 1971, Ieng Sary became the official representative of the Communist Party of Kampuchea (CPK) to the CCP, though at that point still less than a dozen people in the GRUNK office knew the CPK existed.³³⁸

Taking a page from the PRC's book, and with Zhou's clear encouragement and assistance, Sihanouk focused on establishing bilateral relations between GRUNK and as many other countries as possible. By the end of 1970, Sihanouk had received diplomatic credentials in Beijing from, among others, Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Sweden, France, the USSR, East Germany, Pakistan, the Palestine Liberation Organization,³³⁹ and North Korea.³⁴⁰ By November 1972, 30 countries recognized GRUNK, and an additional 30 voted to include it in NAM meetings.³⁴¹ In September 1973, GRUNK earned the unanimous support by the third NAM meeting in Algeria³⁴², and a month later the UN agreed to reconsider who should occupy Cambodia's seat at the General Assembly.³⁴³ On some of his trips

Sihanouk actually did spadework for China, including reassuring the Chinese ambassador to Yugoslavia on a November 1971 visit that Lin Biao's demise was a positive step for Zhou and for China.³⁴⁴

Not only did China facilitate the diplomatic activities, it made the military resistance possible. Although GRUNK's first military agreement for "full support and unconditional material assistance" was actually with the North Vietnamese³⁴⁵, the terms of that agreement were quickly surpassed by Beijing's contributions. The August 17, 1970 agreement on "gratuitous" military aid from China³⁴⁶ essentially promised the resistance whatever it wanted short of Chinese troops. Similar military aid agreements were signed in February 1972³⁴⁷ and January 1973.³⁴⁸ In June 1971, Lin Biao, then the Minister of National Defense, congratulated Khieu Samphan on becoming commander-in-chief³⁴⁹, while the following March, the Chinese press noted that Pol Pot was the head of the united front forces.³⁵⁰ China quietly allowed some of its bases, including one on Hainan Island, to be used by coalition forces.³⁵¹

The diplomatic rituals established in the earlier period of the relationship continued as well. Rallies were organized for Cambodian National Day beginning in November 1970³⁵², and occasions such as GRUNK's anniversary elicited statements from Zhou, Dong Biwu, and other Chinese leaders about the two countries' common experiences and struggles against American imperialism and the legacy of European colonialism.³⁵³ Ker Meas, a Sihanouk supporter, replaced Nay Valentin as Cambodia's ambassador to China in late May 1970. At a December 17, 1970 banquet celebrating the tenth anniversary of the CCFA and the Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Non-aggression, Zhou reiterated that the relationship with GRUNK would continue to be based on the Five Principles.³⁵⁴

Sihanouk was clearly honored in January 1972 to be one of only four non-Chinese to attend Foreign Minister Chen Yi's funeral.³⁵⁵ Throughout these years, whenever Sihanouk departed from or returned to Beijing, Zhou would escort him to the airport, greet him on return, or hold a banquet for him. The Cambodians would often reciprocate the hospitality when Zhou traveled out of China.³⁵⁶ Sihanouk and Monique became favorites of CCP propagandists and "quickly came to be seen by the Chinese people as if they were movie stars."³⁵⁷ It was almost as if the Lon Nol regime did not exist.

Chinese overtures to Lon Nol? But the Lon Nol regime did exist, and Sihanouk's ouster was not simply a matter of Beijing losing an ally in Southeast Asia. It also meant the strong possibility of losing crucial supply lines to the Communist resistance in South Vietnam and sanctuaries in Cambodian territory for North Vietnamese communists. Both kinds of access were critical to the success of Vietnamese forces struggling to drive out the Thieu regime and the US. Some historians have argued that the delayed departure of Chinese embassy staff and technicians from Phnom Penh until about six weeks after the coup was done deliberately to facilitate secret talks with the Lon Nol regime. Despite repeated claims by Beijing that the Lon Nol regime was illegitimate due to its lack of popular support³⁵⁸, could it be true that Beijing was talking to the Phnom Penh "reactionaries"?

In 1972, Sihanouk claimed that Lon Nol had given a speech on May 11, 1970 in which he suggested that China had sent an "emissary" to talk to him about the sanctuaries.³⁵⁹ Zhang Xizhen mentions a representative of the Lon Nol regime visiting Beijing on October 1, 1970, but being turned away.³⁶⁰ By October 22 of that year, the Cambodian Ministry of Information categorically denied that China had tried "again" to

negotiate with Lon Nol with respect to getting supplies to the Vietnamese communists³⁶¹ -- but the “again” implied that there had been previous efforts. According to Gurtov, Lon Nol later claimed that Chinese officials offered to consider the coup “an internal affair” in exchange for ongoing access to the North and South Vietnamese communists.³⁶²

There is insufficient evidence to prove the claim, which if true would have constituted a significant departure from the Five Principles. Kang Maozhao wrote that by the end of March, army tanks surrounded the Chinese embassy³⁶³ – an environment not particularly conducive to negotiations. Gurtov wrote that even if such talks were attempted, they would have been brief, given that Lon Nol closed the transshipment lines from Sihanoukville on March 25.³⁶⁴ William Shawcross also suggested that Beijing had tried to persuade Lon Nol to allow continuing access to the sanctuaries, though he provides little compelling evidence, and he states that such efforts would have been abandoned following the US’ April 30 invasion.³⁶⁵ One diplomat who served in the Asia division of the MFA found the implication about the delay illogical. “We told Sihanouk when he arrived that we would support him, and until May there was no other government to recognize. We never had any intention of recognizing anyone else.”³⁶⁶

Negotiating a new relationship with the US. As noted above, Beijing remained convinced that the US instigated the Lon Nol coup.³⁶⁷ If anyone in Beijing had been soothed by Nixon’s April 20 announcement that the US would withdraw 150,000 troops from South Vietnam, those good feelings would have been obliterated by US’ April 30 invasion of Cambodia. The US claimed that it was doing so to protect Cambodia’s neutrality and to pursue both states’ communist enemies in Vietnam. The invasion

motivated Mao's May 20 speech, which reinforced a sense in China that American imperialism remained a serious threat. As important, the invasion contributed to a sense amongst those in the "Cambodia office" that war was effectively inevitable in Cambodia.

Beijing was sufficiently irate that, three weeks after the invasion of Cambodia, it called off the secret bilateral talks it had held with the US since 1955 in Geneva and Warsaw.³⁶⁸

The minimum condition for resuming the talks was a full withdrawal from Cambodia, while conditions for normalization entailed acknowledging that Taiwan was part of China and agreeing to a relationship based on the Five Principles.³⁶⁹ Although the US claimed it had withdrawn its troops by late June³⁷⁰, Zhou promptly dismissed this claim on July 2. He reiterated that that, "The vast expanse of China's territory will for ever remain the reliable rear area of the Khmer and other Indo-Chinese peoples."³⁷¹ *Commentator* (the editorial page of the People's Daily) offered the following prognosis for American involvement: "The U.S. aggressor, like a mad bull, will be burnt to ashes in the raging flames of the war waged by the people of Cambodia, Viet Nam and Laos against U.S. aggression and for national salvation!"³⁷² The talks remained on hold for half a year.

But the talks quietly resumed in early 1971, paving the way for Henry Kissinger's secret visit in July 1971. *Xinhua* announced on October 5, 1971, that Kissinger would visit the following month³⁷³, and that visit in turn set the stage for Nixon's historic February 1972 visit. What had changed? To Beijing, the United States' new willingness to reach a compromise on Taiwan took priority over most other matters. Such a shift on Washington's part was necessary in order for Beijing to host a public visit. But did Beijing's choice to deal with the US not compromise its principled approach to

Cambodia? Given a choice of regaining Taiwan or Cambodia's autonomy, China would choose the former, but foreign policy makers did as much as they could to pursue the latter without sacrificing the former.

Certainly Sihanouk was enraged that the backers of those who had thrown him out of power were now being welcomed in Beijing, and when Zhou was unable to facilitate a meeting between Sihanouk and Nixon or Kissinger, Sihanouk left China for an unofficial visit to Vietnam.³⁷⁴ Despite Sihanouk's fit of pique, and despite China's interest in forging ties with the US in order to resolve the Taiwan issue and mitigate the increasing hostility of the USSR, Zhou took an aggressive position with Nixon on Cambodia. At one point in their February conversation, Nixon tried to persuade Zhou that the US had not been involved in the Lon Nol coup; Zhou laughed at him.³⁷⁵ Zhou made very clear that to China it was the US sabotage of the Geneva Accords that had broadened the conflict and that Lon Nol's regime was itself part of the war. He continued to insist that the Lon Nol regime, US troops, and Thieu regime soldiers withdraw from Cambodia immediately. The following summer, when Kissinger and a Congressional delegation visited Beijing, Zhou took them to task and informed them that, with respect to Cambodia and a need to stop the US bombing of it, "China's own patience is not unlimited."³⁷⁶

Radicals vs. moderates in Beijing. As noted above, GRUNK itself was hardly known for "setting aside differences," and it was this lack of unity, combined with its geographical proximity, that made Cambodia policy a particular focus for the next round of *Chinese* radical-moderate tensions. The second wave of Cultural Revolution radicalism made it possible for the Cambodian royalists and communists, who had increasingly divergent agendas, to find official Chinese support.

Sihanouk feared the Khmer Rouge's radicalism and growing military strength, while it feared his indisputable popularity amongst the Cambodian people. Mao cautioned Sihanouk in 1971 that Cambodian "problems should be solved by" Cambodians, and that they should not rely on outsiders to help them³⁷⁷, and Zhou would frequently find ways to remind the KR members of GRUNK that China saw Sihanouk as the head of the government.³⁷⁸ But it did little to soothe the hostilities within the group. Sihanouk and Ieng Sary detested one another, and Chanda wrote of Sihanouk's attempts to torment Ieng by showing pornographic films in Beijing. Both sides remained suspicious that their patrons would choose to support the other side, while the Chinese and Vietnamese remained focused on encouraging them to act as a coalition and to not jeopardize the success of Vietnam's revolution. In February 1973, Zhou and Dong persuaded Ieng Sary to allow Sihanouk and Monique to make a trip down the Ho Chi Minh Trail.³⁷⁹ This briefly pacified Sihanouk's demand to be allowed to make a trip to Cambodia without excessively compromising the KR's desire to keep him out of the country and maintain total control over military operations.

But Chinese foreign policy radicals, who promoted revolutionary movements, chafed at what they saw as an unnecessarily conservative position with respect to the Khmer Rouge. In the early 1970s, Pol Pot and Ieng Sary's early friendship with Kang Sheng branched out to include Yao Wenyuan, who ran the CCP's international liaison department³⁸⁰, and Zhang Chunqiao, both of whom went on to become members of the Gang of Four (the other members were Jiang Qing, Mao's wife, and Wang Hongwen). In early 1971, *Xinhua* published a glowing account of the KR army as well behaved, disciplined, and respectful of local populations, and making no mention of the royalist

half of the coalition.³⁸¹ In at least one 1973 debate over whether it was worth supporting anyone other than the KR³⁸², Yao pointed to a May 1970 statement by Hu Nim, Hou Yuon, and Khieu Samphan pledging to develop relations based on the Five Principles and committing to support the 1954 and 1962 Geneva Agreements.³⁸³ By November 1973, the coalition's military success against Lon Nol appeared to justify discussions about post-liberation government arrangements, a discussion that indicated most important positions would go to KR cadres.³⁸⁴ The KR leadership would have had at least two periods of one³⁸⁵ to three months when Sihanouk was absent from Beijing, which created an opportunity for them to deepen their ties to the rising Gang of Four leadership.

Zhou's moderation in foreign policy, and probably his continuing care to treat Sihanouk as head of state, were not popular with the radicals. In August 1970, the 9th Party Congress "declared that the nation's foreign policy was 'on the basis of adhering to the five principles'...It was the first time in more than five years that this phrase had been heard in public. Once again the foreign policy line designed by Zhou was endorsed by the Party."³⁸⁶ In May 1971, Zhou began to insist that the Party's leaders take responsibility for the destruction of the GPCR, a position that would hardly have been popular with a faction eager to keep that Revolution going³⁸⁷ -- or with the Khmer Rouge.

Zhou appeared to hold the upper hand throughout the first half of 1973. In March, largely as a result of his efforts with the Central Committee, his protégé Deng Xiaoping was formally rehabilitated after four years in internal exile.³⁸⁸ Deng "caught people's attention by also presiding over" and "openly serving as the Vice Premier of the State Council" at a banquet Zhou organized to welcome Sihanouk back from his visit to

Cambodia.³⁸⁹ But the radicals were not about to acquiesce, and by July Mao had placed Zhang Chunqiao and Wang Hongwen in influential foreign policy positions.³⁹⁰ The “Cambodia office” of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs came under particular criticism by the Gang of Four³⁹¹, and more radical language could be detected in a November 1973 Peking review article which praised GRUNK’s slogan of “a gun in one hand and a hoe in the other.”³⁹² Qiao Guanhua, an ally of Zhou’s, became the foreign minister, but this did little to stop the criticism leveled at Zhou as his influence again waned in late 1973.³⁹³

Nayan Chanda argued that by early 1973 Zhou was already concerned about the future of Cambodia if KR forces were to conquer the country before Sihanouk had a chance to return. This sense was reinforced by the KR’s unwillingness to participate in negotiations with respect to the end of the war in Vietnam³⁹⁴, and the late 1971 split among the Cambodian communists cannot have escaped his attention. In February 1973, Zhou told Henry Kissinger that, “...it is impossible for Cambodia to become completely red now. If that were attempted, it would result in even greater problems.”³⁹⁵ Zhou actually sought American assistance to persuade the Lon Nol regime to allow Sihanouk to return as head of state³⁹⁶; sadly, the US did not pay attention to this strategy until four days before the April 1975 fall of Phnom Penh.³⁹⁷

Complications with North Vietnam and the Soviet Union. Supporting GRUNK also added another degree of difficulty to China’s slowly deteriorating relationship with the North Vietnamese. North Vietnam had broken relations with the Lon Nol government in March 1970 and promptly began making even more liberal use of Cambodian territory in its war against the US. Its ongoing assistance to the Cambodian communists made it possible for those troops to take and hold considerable territory without having to

develop a genuine political base – precisely the approach against which Chinese leaders had cautioned.³⁹⁸

Although both China and North Vietnam were of crucial assistance to GRUNK, neither particularly trusted the other. Beijing remained concerned that the Vietnamese communists harbored expansionist plans for Cambodia, a sense heightened by Le Duc Tho's April 1971 comment to Pen Nouth that North Vietnam "might overthrow Lon Nol for Cambodia," a statement that Geng Biao claimed was not one of magnanimity.³⁹⁹ In addition, Beijing found the Vietnamese insufficiently grateful for the Chinese assistance. The Vietnamese, on the other hand, remained angry at China's position at the Geneva Conference and thus did not trust them to act in the best interests of the Cambodian communists. That September, Le Duc Tho also cautioned Ieng Sary that, "We will always remember the experience in 1954. Comrade Zhou Enlai admitted his mistakes in the Geneva Conference of 1954. Two or three years ago, comrade Mao also did so...we have proposed that the Chinese comrades admit their mistakes..."⁴⁰⁰

In April 1971, Zhou received a request for assistance from Vietnam to help circumvent the US naval blockade of North Vietnamese ports. China did provide help, but Zhou not only noted recent instances in which the North Vietnamese had "found excuses to harm Sino-Vietnamese relations," he also wanted to know if they had first asked the Soviets for help.⁴⁰¹ In November 1972, China and Vietnam signed a new unconditional economic and military aid agreement; two weeks later Vietnam signed a similar agreement with the USSR.⁴⁰² Beijing was pleased that the Paris Peace Accords of January 1973 would remove US troops from Vietnam, but it was concerned that the US would violate them and continue bombing Cambodia.

North Vietnam was not the only country whose ongoing communications with Lon Nol worried the Chinese. Thailand established relations with Lon Nol in May 1970.⁴⁰³ GRUNK and the Chinese MFA dismissed the January 1971 border agreement signed by Lon Nol and the Thais as illegal.⁴⁰⁴ Beijing was also concerned about the Soviets' efforts to develop a relationship with Lon Nol, which had begun with recognition in May 1970.⁴⁰⁵ Kang Maozhao contrasted the USSR's recognition of Lon Nol to China's support of North Korea and concluded that Moscow's actions "led Prince Sihanouk to see the positions of fake friends."⁴⁰⁶ Pham Van Dong tried to persuade Wang Youping (now the ambassador to the DRV) in September 1970 that China should coax the USSR into supporting Sihanouk, but to no avail.⁴⁰⁷ By March 1972, Beijing was convinced that the Soviets were "scheming to rig up a so-called 'third Khmer force' in a vain attempt to split the [coalition] and undermine the Cambodian people's war." But according to Ker Meas Beijing made no effort to influence Soviet-GRUNK ties.⁴⁰⁸

Chinese foreign policy choices toward Cambodia reflected the primacy of principles in most circumstances. Even when faced with the prospect of reasserting some control over Taiwan, China also sought to regain autonomy for Cambodia, demonstrating that it would not automatically subordinate other states' concerns about American imperialism in order to resolve similar concerns of its own. Hosting an exile government was an unprecedented act in Chinese foreign policy, while encouraging a united front embodied another means of using the CCP's own experiences as a model for developing a functioning government. But as Chinese radicals again began to influence foreign policy, some of China's choices sought to promote an explicitly ideological agenda.

III. Seismic waves: 1974-1975

During these two years, some of the core ideas and personalities of Chinese foreign policy seemed to be shaken loose. Both Mao and Zhou were increasingly unwell, and Zhou's most prominent protégé, Deng Xiaoping, fell victim again to the Gang of Four, as did his efforts to assert a less ideological and more developmental agenda for China. As the Gang of Four came to dominate foreign policy, attention shifted away from Sihanouk and toward the Khmer Rouge. A GRUNK victory in Cambodia seemed increasingly likely throughout 1974, yet that outcome in April 1975 had critically different meanings for all involved. These changes, further complicated by Vietnamese victory and reunification, resulted in a remarkably different roster of Southeast Asian allies and enemies for China.

Focusing on the Khmer Rouge. By the beginning of 1974, Chinese radicals were again dominating foreign policy. As a result, more attention focused on the Khmer Rouge, particularly as they were coming to assert greater control over GRUNK. At this point, it was relatively clear that GRUNK forces would defeat Lon Nol's army (a reality the United States had not yet accepted), but in starker terms it meant that the Khmer Rouge was likely to soon achieve full control over the country. Was Beijing continuing to push for Cambodian national liberation or endorsing a communist victory?

Khieu Samphan's April 1-May 27, 1974 visit to China was the first visible evidence of Beijing's redistribution of official attention. To date, Beijing had been extremely careful about according head of state status solely to Sihanouk. But the fact that 11 Politburo members attended the welcome rally ("the largest turn out of the Chinese leadership since the 10th party congress"⁴⁰⁹), as well as Khieu's meetings with Mao and

Zhou, indicated elevated status for the Khmer Rouge official. Qiang Zhai claims that Khieu was the first Cambodian communist to be given the honor of meeting Mao⁴¹⁰, and while that may not strictly be true, Khieu was certainly the first Cambodian leader other than Sihanouk to have been given such a formal, public welcome. Although Sihanouk hosted banquets for the visitors and their hosts on April 3 and April 10, respectively, his participation in the visit was otherwise negligible.⁴¹¹ An April 1 *Renmin Ribao* editorial noted that, “This is the first important delegation to China from the interior part of Cambodia.”⁴¹²

Different reasons are given for the visit. According to Kang Maozhao, it was GRUNK’s Foreign Minister Sarin Chhak, not the Chinese Foreign Ministry, who initiated the visit.⁴¹³ Khieu had just returned from leading delegations to North Korea and Yugoslavia, and perhaps Beijing wished to remind the KR who its most important patrons were.⁴¹⁴ A former Khmer Rouge cadre suggest that this was a courtesy visit to thank the Chinese for their support as well as an opportunity for the KR to “show the world how strong it was.”⁴¹⁵ Earlier that year, an internal CCP discussion had “described the Cambodian Communists as the most brilliant upholders of Mao’s thought abroad”⁴¹⁶, so it is also indicative of increasingly radical foreign policy.

During this visit, Khieu discreetly voiced concerns to his hosts about China’s military aid, alleging that Vietnamese intermediaries were keeping the better materials from China and passing old equipment on to the Cambodians.⁴¹⁷ Perhaps the Cambodians’ military successes despite the lack of good materials accounts for the enthusiastic joint communiqué, which attributed the victories to, “...relying closely on the people, preserving in the position of independence, initiative and self-reliance and adhering to the

correct line of the people's war...The victories...are inseparable from the help rendered by the fraternal Chinese people."⁴¹⁸

Zhou's own rhetoric was relatively muted, perhaps indicating his diminished political standing or his discomfort with the Khmer Rouge. He continued to emphasize Mao's May 20, 1970 speech on the possibility of small countries winning victories over large states. Despite the presence of "great disorder under heaven"⁴¹⁹, Zhou also expressed optimism that the "entire world will continue to advance amidst violent turbulence."⁴²⁰ At the April 2 banquet, Zhou did take a strong position with respect to the US' intervention in Cambodia, but Wang Hongwen's more strident rhetoric seems to have dominated.⁴²¹ Khieu Samphan characterized the relationship as "a pure one based on the correct principles of equality, mutual benefit and unqualified mutual respect."⁴²²

At the end of the visit on May 26, the two sides signed an agreement on the "gratis provision of military equipment and supplies" in 1974.⁴²³ This marked the first formal agreement on military aid. According to one former Khmer Rouge cadre, selected Cambodian youth – mostly ones who had worked with GRUNK in Beijing – would now accompany the weapons and supplies into the liberated zones in order to ensure that Vietnamese soldiers would not confiscate them.⁴²⁴ In June, a Khmer Rouge cadre, Tauch Kham Deuan, replaced Ker Meas as GRUNK's ambassador.

William Shawcross, Etienne Manac'h (France's ambassador to China in the early 1970s), and Qiang Zhai all wrote that Khieu Samphan's spring visit marked a shift from a "political solution" for Cambodia to a "military end"⁴²⁵ as the Khmer Rouge moved closer to Phnom Penh throughout the latter part of 1974. When in November Ieng Sary led a GRUNK economic delegation to Beijing, Ieng "expressed the conviction that the

rock-firm revolutionary friendship and militant unity long forged by the Cambodian and Chinese people will surely grow stronger.”⁴²⁶ Clearly he was confident about the future relationship, and of victory when it was announced in a November 9 GRUNK communiqué that ministers were to be moved back to Cambodia.⁴²⁷ That year most Chinese aid, about \$1.8 million, was spent on military hardware.⁴²⁸

Sihanouk and his diplomatic efforts were marginalized throughout this year. Press coverage of his and Pen Nouth’s activities, including diplomatic tours to friendly countries, decreased considerably. One of the only mentions occurred when in March Queen Kossamak was moved from Guangzhou to Beijing.⁴²⁹ As noted above, Sihanouk participated on the margins of Khieu Samphan’s visit, and in his memoirs Kang Maozhao wrote of taking Sihanouk, Monique, and “more than forty distinguished Cambodian guests” to Zhongshan Park.⁴³⁰ One of the translators along that day recalled that Sihanouk took the opportunity to quietly berate Ambassador Kang for forcing him to participate in the outing.⁴³¹ The Prince occasionally took advantage of interviews with western journalists to berate his GRUNK colleagues.

Chanda wrote that by late 1974, France attempted to take Zhou’s suggestion about getting Sihanouk back to Cambodia and into power before a KR victory. But when the French sought assistance from the Chinese, Chanda wrote that they “adopted an ambiguous position.”⁴³² Yet Zhou continued to express a preference for a coalition and concern over a Khmer Rouge victory.⁴³³

Did the Chinese come to show greater support to the KR because of its military successes? Or had Beijing now determined that military might, rather than diplomatic prowess, was the primary indicator of the right to rule, thus necessitating a shift away

from Sihanouk? The former suggestion is less plausible, given that such a position should also have elicited greater support in the 1970-1973 period. It is also somewhat illogical, given that Sihanouk never had a separate fighting force against which the KR's successes could be compared. Three factors support the latter point. That the KR's relationship with Hanoi was cooling certainly did not hurt in Beijing's estimation, but the virtual certainty at this point of a North Vietnamese victory probably rekindled old concerns in Beijing about post-independence Vietnamese aspirations for Indochina. If Cambodia's sovereignty were to be challenged, the KR would be best equipped to defend it. Second, the rhetoric used to describe past and future KR battlefield successes support the latter point, as did the clear belief amongst its proponents in Beijing that a military victory was by definition of a vote of confidence from the Cambodian people.

Moreover, those proponents, who certainly did not care about Sihanouk, were on the rise again in Beijing. Although Mao had begun to speak out against Jiang Qing and other members of the Gang of Four in July 1974,⁴³⁴ his and Zhou's failing health made it difficult for them to implement policies, including promoting Sihanouk, counter to the Gang of Four's agenda. Kang Maozhao noted that, "This was the time when Premier Zhou's illness was very serious, and aside from major policy matters, he rarely gave concrete advice."⁴³⁵ The radicals' criticisms had initially focused on Lin Biao, but extended at this time to Zhou for his efforts to cultivate relationships with countries like the US and leaders like Sihanouk. Zhou could still articulate his support for Sihanouk's role in GRUNK, but he was increasingly unable to ensure that this view was made manifest in policy. As 1974 came to a close, China remained confident that the Khmer Rouge would soon triumph over Lon Nol, and Sihanouk's future became less clear.⁴³⁶

*Victory and its many meanings.*⁴³⁷ Throughout the early months of 1975, the Khmer Rouge military campaign steadily advanced toward Phnom Penh. The Chinese press documented these victories with a combination of mocking rhetoric towards Lon Nol (one article referred to him as a “political mummy” kept alive by “American imperialist blood transfusions”⁴³⁸) and reaffirmations of Sihanouk’s Five Point Proclamation. On March 9, *Commentator* wrote of the imminent victory in Cambodia that, “Disregarding the lesson of history, the U.S. imperialists are still repeating what has led them to defeat in the past.”⁴³⁹ GRUNK’s fifth anniversary elicited particularly gleeful commentaries, including one stating that, “A just people’s war is sure to win. No enemy intrigue during his death-bed struggle can prevent the Cambodian people from braving the storms and winds and advancing triumphantly.”⁴⁴⁰ A delegation of Chinese journalists reported meeting all of the senior KR leadership except Pol Pot, and reported that an important river crossing and the Phnom Penh airport had fallen to the “people’s armed forces.”⁴⁴¹

Ieng Sary returned to Beijing on March 1 and called on Zhou in the hospital. Ieng no doubt provided Zhou with the Khmer Rouge’s plans for a final assault on Phnom Penh. He also told Zhou that the KR would repay China’s aid, an idea Zhou discouraged.⁴⁴² While in Beijing, Ieng also began to arrange the logistics to transport GRUNK staff members and new currency printed in China back to Cambodia. Later that month, four or five convoys of trucks, driven by Vietnamese and accompanied by those staff members, left Nanning for Phnom Penh.⁴⁴³ Sihanouk, increasingly anxious about his role, invited a group of Cambodian students who worked for GRUNK to lunch, asking them to convey to the KR leadership his desire to return to Cambodia “only as an ordinary citizen.”⁴⁴⁴

A last-minute American policy reversal to some extent vindicated Beijing's five-year effort on Sihanouk's behalf. In early April, George Bush, then the head of the US liaison office in Beijing, finally attempted to follow Zhou's advice and tried to persuade Sihanouk to return to Cambodia.⁴⁴⁵ At the same time, the United States continued to pump money and advisors into the corrupt and inept Royal Cambodian Army. On April 10, the Ford administration pledged more assistance to the Lon Nol regime, only to have the US ambassador leave Phnom Penh two days later.⁴⁴⁶ Justin Corfield wrote that, "the evacuation from Cambodia was the first complete US evacuation from any country since the fall of mainland China in 1949."⁴⁴⁷ The point would perhaps have been underscored by Beijing's preparations to reopen its embassy as soon as possible.⁴⁴⁸

Beijing did not have to wait long. The journalists' delegation, en route home to China, "heard the good news of Phnom Penh's liberation on April 17. We jubilantly raised our arms in salute to the historic great victory of the fraternal Cambodian people."⁴⁴⁹ The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs promptly issued a statement claiming that, "the Cambodian people achieved a triumph in their struggle to resist American hegemony."⁴⁵⁰ *Renmin Ribao* said of the victory, "The verdict of history is merciless"⁴⁵¹, while a CCP-run journal enthused, "With the force of a thunderbolt and like a whirlwind sweeping away the clouds, the patriotic Cambodian people and their armed forces liberated Cambodia on April 17, 1975."⁴⁵² According to Chinese sources, its aid had helped create a 20,000-man army, a navy, an air force, and an artillery unit⁴⁵³; as such, it had played an important role in the Khmer Rouge's victory. However, Stephen Heder cautions that, "The Vietnamese played a much more important and insidious role" in the Khmer Rouge's victory.⁴⁵⁴

To the KR leadership, victory meant the opportunity to implement their vision of radical Maoism. Weary of warfare, Phnom Penh's population initially welcomed the teenage soldiers who marched into the city, but the relief was quickly replaced by dread. Within days the KR forced almost all of the city's one million people to leave on foot, ostensibly on the grounds of protecting them against air raids, but in reality the first step in radical agricultural collectivization. Thousands of refugees poured across the border into Thailand and those high officials aligned with Lon Nol who had not yet fled the country were executed. Foreigners were expelled, and almost four years of isolation and devastation began. During that time, between one and three million people, approximately one-fourth to one-third of the total population, died as a result of starvation, overwork, or execution.⁴⁵⁵ It would be almost another year until the name and leadership of the regime was announced; for the time being, people were simply told that the "angka," or organization, was in charge.

For China, the victory meant the reestablishment of a legitimate regime in Phnom Penh, one that it would treat as any other. But in the same way that China had treated GRUNK as a coalition despite its obvious divisions, foreign policy moderates expected that the new regime would also be a coalition. Mao, Zhu De, and Zhou sent congratulations to Phnom Penh and the GRUNK office in Beijing on April 17, 18, and 19, respectively. Deng and other senior CCP members also called on Sihanouk at home.⁴⁵⁶ Various communiqués stated that "under GRUNK and Sihanouk Cambodia will have a great future"⁴⁵⁷, and that the government would continue "under Sihanouk's leadership."⁴⁵⁸ It is possible that these messages forced the KR into offering Sihanouk the top slot, given that they did not do so until April 25. But soon no one would be able

to influence the Khmer Rouge. They would now receive Chinese military aid directly, rather than through Vietnam.⁴⁵⁹ As important, they were convinced that their military success, achieved a week before the increasingly hated Vietnamese, meant that their approach was right and that they were free to rule as they saw fit.

For some in Beijing, this must have seemed ominously familiar. Others at the MFA were satisfied that GRUNK's special session in late April reaffirmed Sihanouk's and Pen Nouth's positions and reiterated its commitment to basing foreign policy on "independence, peace, neutrality, and non-alignment."⁴⁶⁰ But a few of the more moderate diplomats at the MFA were concerned about another aspect of the GRUNK statement – that "other patriotic personages who have made contributions to the struggle for national liberation...will be rewarded in conformity with their concrete contributions and their qualifications."⁴⁶¹ Such criteria would by definition exclude most of the royalists, whose efforts outside Cambodia suddenly did not seem to count for much. "We knew then," said one former diplomat, "that Ieng Sary only wanted his own people in the government, and that made us uneasy."⁴⁶²

Despite these concerns, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs proceeded to reopen the Chinese Embassy in Phnom Penh by early May.⁴⁶³ Sun Hao, a second secretary in Phnom Penh under Chen Shuliang, then a first secretary in Phnom Penh and Beijing under Kang Maozhao, succeeded Kang as ambassador in August 1974.⁴⁶⁴ Fu Xuezhong, who would eventually become the ambassador, served as a 'special counselor' to the Embassy beginning in May 1975, and Zhang Longbao served again as a political secretary. Geng Biao acted as a special advisor to the KR.⁴⁶⁵ Zhang Qing, who had been a member of the MFA's Asia division staff, made frequent trips throughout the KR

period, and the *Xinhua* contingent included up to eight journalists at a time.⁴⁶⁶ Either Zhang Longbao or Zhang Qing served as an important advisor to the KR.⁴⁶⁷

It was immediately clear to the returning Chinese diplomats that Khmer Rouge rule was not going to be one of united fronts, measured progress towards socialism, or political tolerance. By the time the embassy delegation arrived Phnom Penh was virtually deserted. Sun Hao was apparently concerned when he learned on arrival that the KR had abolished the currency recently shipped in from China.⁴⁶⁸ As one *Xinhua* correspondent later wrote of Cambodia in 1975, "...in Phnom Penh 'unprecedented' [events were occurring, such as] 'emptying cities,' forcing people to go labor in the countryside...and other absurd actions. But this was the 'Angka' using Pol Pot's special methods, with the flavor of extremism."⁴⁶⁹

Critical or skeptical Chinese accounts of the Khmer Rouge would not begin to be published until after the regime fell, and most accounts were not forthcoming until the 1990s. In the meantime, the Chinese accounts ranged from the inaccurate to the delusional. For example, a group of Chinese journalists visited the front lines in May⁴⁷⁰, interviewed KR officials including Thiounn Thioeunn and Son Sen, and proclaimed the existence of "bumper harvests" that came from "self-reliance."⁴⁷¹ But Cambodia was in no way self-reliant and there are no spring harvests. In early June, *Peking Review* published a piece by journalists who had in March visited the Cambodian provinces of Kompong Chhnang, Siem Reap, Prey Veng, Kampot, and Kompong Cham and had seen "thriving villages" with good harvests.⁴⁷² Clearly they had either not seen or chose not to write about the villages across the country where people were already starving to death in droves.

Over the coming months, Chinese leaders reiterated the importance of unity and leadership to the KR leaders. Following the arrival of hundreds of Chinese aid technicians in Phnom Penh⁴⁷³, Pol Pot made a brief trip to Beijing in late June, accompanied by Zhang Chunqiao.⁴⁷⁴ Mao told him, “You should not completely copy China’s experience, and should think for yourself.”⁴⁷⁵ Deng, who had not yet fully recovered from his second purge, and Zhou, who at that point was dying, also saw Pol Pot and encouraged him to involve Sihanouk in the government. In mid-August, Khieu Samphan and Ieng Sary brought the first official government delegation to Beijing. Amidst the Chinese congratulations on the Cambodians’ “high political enthusiasm and rousing revolutionary zeal”⁴⁷⁶ and the two countries’ “profound revolutionary friendship,”⁴⁷⁷ Mao bluntly told Khieu that the coalition had been successful in its campaign against the US because its members had “set aside their differences” and that divisions could bring down the new regime. Zhou cautioned Khieu not to make the mistake of ignoring the people’s wishes⁴⁷⁸, and both Deng and Zhou reiterated to Khieu and Ieng the importance of treating Sihanouk well.⁴⁷⁹

Zhou made his most frank comments to Khieu Samphan and Ieng Thirith (a senior KR cadre and Ieng Sary’s wife) from his hospital bed on August 26, 1975. He advised patience and moderation in achieving their political goals⁴⁸⁰, and his criticisms of the CCP’s failings and their consequences are noteworthy for their bluntness.

Our CCP, if it makes mistakes, it must take responsibility and fix them. We want to raise a point with you: do not strive to be more active in order to get to the final stage of communism. You want to be careful, because on the road to communism there are many dangerous steps. Your purpose should not actually be to realize communism, or to even fully achieve socialism. If you ignore prudent and

thoughtful methods, then you will certainly bring a catastrophe upon the people...Communism should be like a gift you bring people, full of autonomy and freedom. If anyone thinks he fully knows how to realize communism, and doesn't consult the people for their ideas about the real situation, then you will bring dangerous catastrophe to the people and the nation. Our China committed this mistake, and I want to advise you [not to repeat this mistake].⁴⁸¹

The following day, Mao cautioned Khieu Samphan in Sihanouk's presence that GRUNK must stay united and must not mistreat Sihanouk. If the latter came to pass, Sihanouk would again get "a warm welcome" in Beijing.⁴⁸² After the formal meeting ended, Mao privately asked Khieu and Ieng Thirith, "Please do not send Prince Sihanouk and his wife to the cooperative."⁴⁸³ Was China cautioning the KR that it too could be treated like the Lon Nol regime? It is more likely these statements were again reiterating the value Beijing placed on a genuine role for Sihanouk and a coalition government.

Clearly the advice had little effect. Why? First, the KR leaders were likely much more focused on the promise made on this visit of \$1 billion over the coming years, \$20 million of which was to be an "outright grant."⁴⁸⁴ It is possible that this may have been (at least to that date) the single largest gift in China's history. Although Beijing had recently informed Hanoi that their aid relationship was soon to end, Beijing had also opted that year to forgive all of North Korea's considerable loans – so the financial burden was not small. Second, there was no indication of what effect a failure to comply with the advice might bring. At no point did Beijing suggest that aid would be cut off or redirected, though such practices would have been unusual. If Beijing was serious about autonomy, it could not intervene.

Beijing's commitment to assisting the regime in spite of its brutality was quickly born out. Wang Shangrong, the PLA's deputy chief of staff, made a short visit to Cambodia in October 1975. The KR had told its hosts on the August visits that it required more military aid as soon as possible, and Wang's meetings with Son Sen, the Khmer Rouge's senior military official, yielded a draft aid plan in which China would supply four new patrol boats for the naval base at Ream in southwestern Cambodia. Wang also committed China to providing "four thousand tons of weaponry and thirteen hundred vehicles by the end of March and, soon after, a hundred 120-millimeter artillery pieces and shells." By the end of 1975, in addition to the military equipment, China had also shipped significant quantities of rice, fuel, cloth, medicine, and basic farm equipment to Cambodia.⁴⁸⁵ By late 1975, Beijing established a holding company in Hong Kong, Reng Fung⁴⁸⁶, which may have served as a means of transferring some funds to Phnom Penh.

What had a Khmer Rouge victory meant to Sihanouk? In 1973, Sihanouk told a journalist that the KR would "spit him out like a cherry pit" once they had no use for him. Seemingly unable to elicit any sympathy from Beijing throughout the spring of 1975, Sihanouk refused to attend a celebration rally organized by the Chinese on April 19. He sent Pen Nouth in his place⁴⁸⁷ and abruptly departed for an extended stay in Pyongyang.⁴⁸⁸ Khieu Samphan followed him there and tried to persuade the prince to return to Cambodia as head of state. Zhou, too, had quietly encouraged Sihanouk to return home, arguing that working with the KR was more productive than removing himself from politics and living out his life in exile.

On September 9, 1975, Sihanouk left Beijing for a visit to Phnom Penh. He was escorted to the airport by Deng Xiaoping, who once again repeated Mao's thanks: "It is not the Chinese people who have given assistance to the Cambodian people, but the Cambodian people who have supported the Chinese people."⁴⁸⁹ Sihanouk replied, "My return to Cambodia does not mean that I approve the cruel policy of the Khmer Rouge, but I must sacrifice my own views out of consideration for China and His Excellency Chou En-lai, who have done so much for Cambodia and myself."⁴⁹⁰ Sihanouk remained in Phnom Penh for about three weeks before making trips on behalf of GRUNK to New York, Paris, and Beijing, where several members of his entourage opted to remain. In October Sihanouk told the *Far Eastern Economic Review* that he had been "double-crossed" by the KR, both in their execution of his loyalists and in their clear intent to exclude him from the government.⁴⁹¹ According to Zhang Xizhen, Sihanouk "knew deep down that in these past few years the Chinese leaders 'could not know Pol Pot's extremism actually exceeded that of...the 'Gang of Four'...[Mao] also did not think that if I returned to Cambodia, my family and I would be treated as prisoners and cut off from the world."⁴⁹² Nevertheless, he returned to Phnom Penh for good in December.⁴⁹³

Swapping friends and enemies. The victories in Cambodia and Vietnam contributed to what looked like a reversal of fortunes for China's efforts in Southeast Asia – one that, just a few years earlier, would have seemed inconceivable. Apparently assured that the Cultural Revolution-induced chaos in foreign policy was over for good, and by the thawing relations between Beijing and Washington, Malaysia normalized relations with Beijing on May 31, 1974, and the Philippines followed suit on June 9, 1975.

More interesting was Thailand's recognition of the Khmer Rouge regime on April 18, 1975.⁴⁹⁴ The recognition was widely regarded as a countermeasure against a potential Vietnamese threat, and that concern, as well as the tie to the KR, helped pave the way for the PRC and Thailand to normalize on July 1, 1975. The Khmer Rouge and Thailand exchanged state visits in October and November 1975⁴⁹⁵, and visits between Bangkok and Beijing followed shortly thereafter. As a long-time ally of the US, particularly during the Vietnam War, Beijing had reserved a special scorn for the Thais. With the growing concerns in both capitals about Vietnam, however, these differences appear to have been put aside.

North Vietnam's victory over the South came about ten days after Phnom Penh fell to the KR. The North Vietnamese and their South Vietnamese communist counterparts were understandably jubilant at finally winning a protracted civil war and defeating the United States. But the country's devastation almost immediately played on Vietnam's interaction with its western and northern neighbors. The problems, which were economic and military, began even before the July 2, 1976 ceremony in which the Northern Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the Southern Provisional Revolutionary Government united to become the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

The economic problems stemmed to a large extent from the cessation of Chinese aid to Vietnam. If anything, the end of the war increased rather than decreased Vietnam's need for aid, and it was dismayed to find Beijing claiming it could no longer afford to support them. According to Chinese sources, aid to the North Vietnamese cause had since 1971 "consumed 6-7 percent of annual Chinese government expenditure."⁴⁹⁶ The Central Committee had decided in the summer of 1975 to pare back all of its aid. But in

September, Le Duan, the de facto Vietnamese leader, traveled to Beijing to argue his case to Mao, only to be told that, “Today, you are not the poorest under heaven. We are...”⁴⁹⁷

The Vietnamese victory also had repercussions for its relationship with the Cambodian communists. From March 1970 until April 1975 – the period in which two sides were supposed to have been cooperating against a common enemy – there were 174 armed skirmishes between them.⁴⁹⁸ According to Chinese sources, Vietnam “began threatening” Cambodia in June 1975. One report claimed that Vietnam had occupied a small piece of territory in southeastern Cambodia. The border was badly marked and poorly patrolled, which caused frequent and benign confusion. But Chinese sources claimed that this particular episode “created great difficulties” for the Khmer Rouge with local ethnic minorities.⁴⁹⁹ Another report dated the “incursions” to June 4.⁵⁰⁰

In August 1975, a Chinese military delegation visited Cambodia, apparently in response to Cambodian allegations of Vietnamese encroachments into Cambodian territory. None of these reports considered the possibility that local Vietnamese commanders might have been acting on their own or the possibility that they were responding to provocations by Khmer Rouge military units. Although Geng Biao later claimed that by the end of 1975 all Vietnamese troops had left Cambodia⁵⁰¹, enabling the Khmer Rouge to resist these incursions became the centerpiece of China’s efforts and, eventually, the lynchpin in China’s diplomatic efforts to normalize ties across Southeast Asia.

Although it was radical ideology in China that had helped give the Khmer Rouge something of an edge over Sihanouk in Beijing, it was principles that led Beijing to treat

the new regime as it would any other. Neither Zhou nor Mao seems to have underestimated what Khmer Rouge rule might entail, and while both sought to caution the Cambodian communists against extremism, neither appears to have contemplated cutting aid or publishing criticisms of the regime in an attempt to discipline it. Although it was with clear concern that they encouraged Sihanouk to return, it was also out of a conviction that failing to forge a consensus inside the country among different factions was almost as untenable as allowing the Lon Nol regime to stand. At a time when Beijing could have taken advantage of communist victories to concentrate on its domestic concerns and make use of a peace not experienced in three decades to promote better relations across Southeast Asia, it continued to provide Cambodia with considerable aid and compromised its relationship with Vietnam on Cambodia's behalf. Principles dictated nothing less.

IV. Auto-pilot: 1976-September 1977

Paralysis in Beijing. 1976 was a legendarily difficult year for China. Zhou Enlai died in January. In April, approximately 200,000 people gathered in Tiananmen Square to memorialize Zhou (and therefore implicitly criticize Mao and the Gang of Four), but this was treated as a protest and countless people were arrested in the largest act of political defiance in decades. Another senior CCP official, Zhu De, died in July. Days later, a massive earthquake in Hebei Province killed approximately 400,000 people. Mao died in September after designating Hua Guofeng, a relatively unknown Politburo member, as his successor. October brought the arrest of the Gang of Four, and although

Hua was elevated shortly thereafter to the position of Premier, the following eight months were a time of great political uncertainty.

Zhou had not been the Foreign Minister for almost twenty years, but his death and the Gang of Four's downfall prolonged the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' limbo. One former MFA political analyst explained that, out of fear at the prospect of another dramatic political change and out of a lack of any meaningful direction at the MFA, the policies in place at the beginning of the year were quietly pursued.⁵⁰² To the extent that Beijing was looking outward, it was again considering progress towards normalizing with the US, increasingly concerned about Soviet threats in the region and along its border, and managing deteriorating relations with Vietnam. Although foreign policy was again shifting away from ideological determinants, it was not necessarily turning away from ideologues.

Business as usual with Democratic Kampuchea. On January 5, 1976, the KR leaders adopted a new constitution and formally changed the country's name to Democratic Kampuchea⁵⁰³, and Beijing soon became its only link to the outside world after landing rights were reestablished that month.⁵⁰⁴ On the surface, the relationship appeared to proceed along familiar dimensions of economic and military aid, diplomatic niceties, and trade.

Adequate descriptions of the DK's brutality, paranoia, and racism are beyond the scope of this project, but a brief description is necessary.⁵⁰⁵ By January 1976 the *New York Times* was reporting the forced transfer of hundreds of thousands of people. As Cambodian refugees crossed the border into Thailand, they told of mass exterminations of anyone with an education, anyone thought to sympathize with the Vietnamese, and

anyone whose behavior irked Khmer Rouge cadres. Members of ethnic minorities were singled out for particularly harsh treatment. Typically people were beaten to death in order to save the cost of ammunition. Families were deliberately separated and children were encouraged to spy on their parents. Education and religion were banned. The economy ground to a halt as efforts at forced collectivization failed, and untold numbers starved to death. “To kill you is no loss” was a common cadre refrain. As one former cadre noted, “None of us expected what happened. You can imagine that if we knew about the way of conducting the revolution, none [of us] would [have gone back].”⁵⁰⁶

Chanda described the period of October 1976 to March 1977 as ones of “benign neglect”⁵⁰⁷ on China’s part, but in reality Beijing was neither ignoring Phnom Penh nor restraining its malignant policies. Not only was Beijing aware of the regime’s proclivities towards extreme brutality, it in some cases facilitated them. In an attempt to imitate the Great Leap Forward – which Mao had admitted more than a decade earlier had been a terrible mistake – the DK undertook several large infrastructure projects with the assistance of Chinese engineers, including finishing the Kompong Chhnang airport and erecting a dam in Battambang. Both required “volunteers” – slave labor – and thousands of people died working on these projects.⁵⁰⁸ Apparently non-interference included uncritical assistance to projects that killed thousands of ordinary citizens.

More alarming are persistent allegations regarding China’s assistance to the DK’s security apparatus and particularly to the management of S-21, its main torture facility. David Chandler noted that the DK took China’s strategy of incarceration and “reeducation” as a model, and suggests that Kang Sheng, the Khmer Rouge’s closest

CCP colleague, had been in charge of similar disciplinary efforts for senior Chinese cadres.⁵⁰⁹ While it remains unclear whether the promotion of such facilities was actually Chinese state policy, Stephen Heder notes that there is some evidence that “S-21 combatants were trained by Chinese as ‘special forces’”⁵¹⁰, but that there was no training in torture *per se*. David Chandler wrote that the Chinese “certainly didn’t disapprove” of the DK’s use of such facilities, noting that such prisons were not unknown in China.⁵¹¹

That same year, China would have been aware that “extreme economic measures” toward ethnic Chinese Cambodians⁵¹² had mutated into extreme physical measures as purges turned on these supposed capitalists.⁵¹³ A group of Chinese officials visiting that year asked Pol Pot in a meeting about the treatment of this community. That group’s reaction to Pol Pot’s response – that they were fine, but, due to security concerns, the delegation’s request to visit them could not be honored – is not known.⁵¹⁴ It is worth noting that Vietnam’s poor treatment of ethnic Chinese would soon become point of serious contention between Beijing and Hanoi.

But why was a group of diplomats who had themselves just endured the Cultural Revolution not moved by the plight of the Cambodians, and why were they willing to help deepen the Cambodians’ misery? Responses to this question suggested a complex mix of beliefs consistent with the Five Principles. Some former diplomats emphasized that ruling was not wielding power brutally but governing responsibly, and these individuals implied that the DK would have soon collapsed due to its unpopularity. At the same time, they felt it was inappropriate for Beijing to intervene. One former Cambodia desk officer at the MFA during the same period simply said, “It was up to the Cambodians to decide what to do with their country.”⁵¹⁵ Others felt that this was an

extraordinary case and that they were culpable in the genocide. Yet they felt that they literally did not have the mechanisms or the means to change the DK's behavior. One former diplomat who served in Cambodia during the DK regime, visibly distressed at remembering the circumstances, said, "We were barely able to stop doing this to *ourselves*, how could we stop anyone else from doing it to *themselves*?"⁵¹⁶ "If we had left, the situation would only have gotten worse," said another.⁵¹⁷ While many continue to dismiss the lack of Chinese intervention as evidence of cold brutality on Beijing's part, these comments suggest a high level of concern constrained by a conviction that external efforts to change the situation would not be helpful.

The DK's requests for a steady flow of arms to Cambodia certainly did not appear benign to Vietnam. As the border conflicts continued, Wang Shangrong returned to Cambodia in early February 1976. This time the Cambodians requested the hardware and training necessary to develop their air force and navy. Kiernan described China as "not prepared for such a large program"⁵¹⁸, although it seems likely that the PLA could have easily managed such an exchange program of about a thousand people. A former PLA official stated that the program did not materialize because the focus on a DK air force was utterly unrealistic.⁵¹⁹ Nevertheless, Wang and Son Sen signed another agreement on military aid on February 10, though the details of the agreement are unavailable.

The Chinese press continued to offer up glowing accounts of life inside Cambodia.⁵²⁰ In late February, another Chinese delegation visited Cambodia to sign an agreement with the DK on economic and technological cooperation.⁵²¹ At a March 5 meeting, Ieng Sary told the delegation that, "a good harvest basically solved the problem of feeding the people."⁵²² In April, Mao, Zhu De, and Hua Guofeng sent greetings on the first

anniversary of the fall of Phnom Penh and praising the regime's great achievements.⁵²³ But there were no such achievements, nor had there been a good harvest.

The DK, with its already-established ties to the Gang of Four, lavishly praised the news the previous week that Deng Xiaoping was once again being purged. Hua Guofeng, who was Mao's chosen successor, was now the nominal leader of a radical-dominated Politburo, though he remained vulnerable to the Gang of Four. The DK would have been pleased by the new leadership lineup, and Chandler suggested that their adoption that spring of Hua's 1975 slogan, "three tons [of rice] per hectare," was another indication that "what was good enough for China would suffice for Cambodia as well."⁵²⁴ Pol Pot chose the occasion of a memorial service for Mao on September 18, 1976 in Phnom Penh to publicly admit his regime's Marxist ideology.⁵²⁵

Where was Sihanouk, the purported head of state? Beijing would certainly have noticed a lack of messages from him on the occasion of Zhou's death in January 1976. The economic delegation that visited Phnom Penh in March 1976 attended a dinner hosted by Sihanouk at the palace⁵²⁶, but that group appears to have been the last to see him for the next few years. Frustrated by his inability to participate in state affairs in any meaningful way, increasingly uneasy about KR rule, and almost entirely cut off from ties to other states, Sihanouk announced his retirement on April 2. Two days later the DK effectively sacked him and put him under house arrest.⁵²⁷ There was no response from Beijing, possibly as a result of Deng's purge just a few days later. But even after Sihanouk failed to send a message or visit the Chinese embassy in Phnom Penh following Mao's death in September, little appears to have been said or done by the MFA. One

western journalist wrote that, “In Peking, diplomats from countries maintaining diplomatic relations with Cambodia say they have no information whatever on the current situation of the former Cambodian chief of state.”⁵²⁸ With his most reliable Chinese protectors dead or again in political limbo, Sihanouk was indeed quite alone.

It is likely that the DK delegation visiting Beijing in October 1976 was considerably more focused on how to negotiate the post-Mao and post-Gang of Four leadership era. Apparently it had not occurred to Ieng Sary and others that, like Deng without Zhou’s protection, the Gang of Four without Mao’s protection could also be vulnerable. Wang Dongxing and Ye Jianying took the lead in the October 6 arrests of Jiang Qing, Wang Hongwen, Zhang Chunqiao, and Yao Wenyuan – all figures familiar to the DK. Presumably the DK delegation was reassured by a new economic aid agreement and a commitment from the Chinese Ministry of Defense to provide equipment to bolster all branches of the Cambodian military.⁵²⁹ Khieu Samphan, Nuon Chea, and Ieng Sary had no choice but to enthuse, clearly through gritted teeth, to a visiting group of Chinese journalists in November how “pleased” they were about the “great victory” “won in crushing the Wang-Chang-Chiang-Yao – the ‘gang of four’ – anti-party clique.”⁵³⁰ What did the future hold for them in Beijing?

Qiutong cunyi – “*setting aside differences.*” How did the DK readjust to the latest leadership shifts in Beijing? Ironically, they appear for once to have followed one of Zhou’s cardinal principles of diplomacy. All other differences during this period were set aside to focus on a commonality: Cambodia’s and China’s growing difficulties with Vietnam. While it is true that Beijing’s ongoing relationship with Phnom Penh coincided with a deteriorating relationship between Beijing and Hanoi, there is no evidence that the

former caused the latter. Although the aid to Cambodia in 1976-1977 was not intended by Beijing as anti-Vietnamese, it did coincide with a decrease in aid to Vietnam, such that Hanoi took it as a snub. But there is no evidence to suggest that Beijing encouraged the DK to attack Vietnam – in fact, it counseled negotiations.

In November 1976, “neither the Chinese nor the Cambodians attend the Fourth Party Congress in Hanoi.”⁵³¹ The following month, a Chinese political and economic delegation to Cambodia not only signed the protocol for the last round of military aid but also opted to supplement it through an additional agreement on cooperation in science and technology⁵³², which facilitated the DK’s ability to produce some weapons locally. By the end of 1976, “Cambodia’s leaders had obtained assurances of increased military aid from China, without which they would have been unable and unwilling to mount offensive operations against Vietnam.”⁵³³ The military aid was intended to help the DK defend itself against Vietnamese provocations.

The downward spiral of relations between Hanoi and Beijing accelerated in 1977. This coincided with, though did not necessarily cause, more military aid from Beijing to Phnom Penh. Border skirmishes between Cambodia and Vietnam were increasingly frequent. By April, China had provided the DK with standard tanks, armored personnel carriers, artillery, guns, 30 tanks, and 10 amphibious tanks.⁵³⁴ One Chinese historian described the friendship agreement signed between Laos and Vietnam in June 1977 as the beginning of the beginning of the “special relationship,” and as the first concrete sign of post-independence Vietnamese imperialism in Indochina.⁵³⁵ By late July, *Peking Review* was using language not heard in almost a decade – and language that had previously been

used in Vietnam's defense – to highlight the “naked war of aggression carried out by Viet Nam against Kampuchea.”⁵³⁶

Privately, though, some officials at the MFA in Beijing were increasingly concerned about the DK's attacks on Vietnam.⁵³⁷ Shortly before a trip to Beijing in September, Pol Pot closely monitored developments as DK military units stormed into Tay Ninh Province and brutally slaughtered hundreds of Vietnamese civilians. According to Chanda, Pol Pot thought it would be wise to take such an “offering” to Beijing.⁵³⁸ There is no evidence that the Chinese requested such an offering and Deng was later described as “disgusted” by the attack.⁵³⁹

Nevertheless, on September 28, 1977, Pol Pot arrived in Beijing with a delegation for a state visit. Until this visit, very little was known to anyone other than the Chinese about the DK, CPK or Pol Pot. Chandler suggested that Pol Pot may have only agreed to participate in such a showy state visit out of desperation in his fight against Vietnam.⁵⁴⁰ The Chinese may have only hosted as a means of deterring Vietnamese attacks by making a grand gesture of support to the Cambodians, and as an opportunity to discourage the DK's aggressive border raids. All of the standard head-of-state protocol was accorded to Pol Pot, who was accompanied on this visit by Ieng Sary and Von Vet (a member of the CPK's standing committee). Hua Guofeng, then the Chairman of the CCP's Central Committee and State Council Premier, and Deng Xiaoping and Li Xiannian, then Vice Chairs of the CCP Central Committee and Vice-Premiers of the State Council, welcomed the visitors.⁵⁴¹

The speeches at the welcoming banquet on September 28 were shocking for their apparent lack of irony. Hua marveled that, “The heroic Kampuchean people are not only

good at destroying the old world but also good at building a new one.” He then went on to express China’s gratitude for DK support in “smashing” the Gang of Four.⁵⁴² Pol Pot spoke for almost two hours, ranging from the status of the international proletariat struggle to the DK’s virtual elimination of illiteracy to his firm belief in the Five Principles as the basis of the relationship with China. Pol Pot claimed, among other things, that Mao had always “personally supported and encouraged us.”⁵⁴³

After a visit to Mao’s mausoleum the next day⁵⁴⁴, Pol Pot spoke at length to Hua Guofeng about the Soviet-Vietnamese collusion to infiltrate the DK’s intelligence operations, attack the borders, and assassinate Cambodian leaders “with high accuracy guns and poison.” Hua did not appear to find these comments strange. Unprompted, Pol Pot explained to Hua that the problem had already been dealt with in June, when the DK had “placed carefully selected cadres” in the east – a euphemism for the purges of DK cadres. Pol Pot complained of Vietnam’s desire to occupy Southeast Asia, claimed that Cambodia had offered to negotiate with Hanoi, and stated that his regime was making efforts to achieve unity in Southeast Asia. Hua simply responded, “Your strategy regarding the neighboring countries is correct.”⁵⁴⁵

Chinese sources note only a few details about this visit. On September 30, Pol Pot met with Deng Yingchao, Zhou Enlai’s widow and a close friend of Sihanouk’s.⁵⁴⁶ Perhaps it was at this meeting that, as Chanda suggested, the Chinese again encouraged Pol Pot to allow Sihanouk back into politics, partly as a means to improving the regime’s image.⁵⁴⁷ That same day, a speech by Pol Pot – acknowledging for the first time ever the existence of the Communist Party of Kampuchea – was broadcast on Chinese radio.⁵⁴⁸

The speech was given in honor of the CPK's 17th anniversary, and Geng Biao responded with a message drawing comparisons to the CCP's victory.⁵⁴⁹

Why did Beijing host this visit, and why did it make no indications of its displeasure with the regime's domestic abuses, its counter-productive border attacks, or its poor treatment of Sihanouk? Very little information was published about foreign relations at this time, so it is possible that such messages were conveyed behind closed doors. But Beijing's leadership crises had once again limited its options, as concerns about Vietnam had by this point made it difficult to back away from the DK. Hua's non-responses to Pol Pot may have been a function of the MFA's auto-pilot status. More important, the DK remained, in China's eyes, the legitimate regime of Cambodia. There was nothing for China to change.

V. Plate tectonics: October 1977-January 1979

As Deng Xiaoping finally wrestled political control away from Mao's appointed successor, Hua Guofeng, ideologically oriented foreign policy came to an end. With the Cultural Revolution finally over, normalization with the United States appeared more likely, as did reopening to the outside world and pursuing economic development. At the same time, China faced growing concerns in its relationships with the USSR and Vietnam – concerns compounded by the DK's increasing skirmishes with Vietnam. Given its past efforts to ensure Cambodian autonomy, though, why did Beijing opt not to provide all the support Phnom Penh needed to protect itself?

Another reversal. One Cambodian likened the subtle shift in China's DK policy in late 1977 to the seasonal reversals of the Bassac and Mekong Rivers. "One day it is

flowing downstream, the next day it changes, and unless you look very carefully, you don't notice it."⁵⁵⁰ Pol Pot's delegation left Beijing on October 2, convinced that the visit had been a success.⁵⁵¹ Yet within weeks, Deng was not only urging the DK and Hanoi to solve their problems through negotiations rather than military means, but also insisting that the two sides would have to solve the problems themselves.⁵⁵² Why was China suddenly backing away from the DK?

Part of the answer lies in Deng's return to power. Although he had been formally rehabilitated in July 1977 and been reinstated to his former offices, it took time for Deng to eclipse Hua. The Eleventh National Party Congress, held in August 1977, had formally ended the GPCR and confirmed Hua as Chairman of the Party and Deng as one of three Vice Chairman. But by the fall, Deng had managed to begin placing his own loyalists in senior positions (most notably, Hu Yaobang replaced Wang Dongxing in a top Party position), and Deng's more moderate approach to economic reform, in addition to his quiet pledges to rehabilitate those who had been purged, earned him a greater degree of support amongst key Party members. Deng's influence, particularly on foreign policy, can be seen as early as the fall of 1977.

Deng picked up where Mao's and Zhou's more moderate policies had left off. These included the Four Modernizations and the "three worlds" theory. The former concept had originally been employed in mid-1977 to encourage and respect innovative science and technology research, an idea previously "sabotaged" by the Gang of Four.⁵⁵³ Deng reformulated the Four Modernizations as the cornerstones of China's new economic policy, which identified agriculture, industry, science and technology, and national defense as priorities. The "three worlds" theory not only emphasized solidarity with the

Third World and with any states opposed to Soviet hegemonism. It also indicated that China no longer classified the states according to their ideology but according to their level of development – an approach that would later pave the way for Deng’s foreign policy of “peace and development.” With respect to foreign policy, preferences of the Mao-Zhou era were still the same: peace was preferable to war, establishing ties to other countries was important, and supporting “oppressed” peoples was still key.

But there were also important changes. Although Beijing and Washington had been discussing bilateral ties for almost twenty years, normalizing was now pivotal to Deng’s economic agenda, and to the strategic goal of partnering against the USSR. The week before Pol Pot’s September 1977 visit Deng had hosted former CIA director George Bush and former US Secretary of State William Rogers to discuss normalization. Moreover, seemingly contradictory new policies – a greater emphasis on mutually beneficial economic relationships with developing countries, not simply gifts of aid, and a stronger articulation of a more equitable international economic order – were actually clearly linked. Deng was not abandoning past principles of upholding “bounden internationalist duty” by providing aid – rather, he saw China’s ability to help others as a function of China’s own economic vitality. The era of “belt tightening” efforts, such as those for Vietnam in the 1950s and 1960s, was over. Relations now had to be mutually economically beneficial, though in the long term Beijing still aspired to rewrite the rules of the international economic order to benefit those in the Third World.

Deng apparently did not think highly of the DK or of Pol Pot. Deng had suffered at the hands of those the DK leadership most admired, and, according to one of Deng’s former staff members, “Pol Pot reminded him of Jiang Qing.”⁵⁵⁴ Several of the other

Chinese officials who participated in that visit had recently been rehabilitated, so it is possible that they too were uncomfortable with DK rule. Deng may have been irked by Pol Pot's failure to mention hegemonism or the "three worlds theory" on the visit.⁵⁵⁵ At that time, China was itself choosing to develop good relations with countries it did not particularly like not simply out of a need to improve the domestic economy but, more importantly, as an indication that there would be no more spasms of ideological zeal in foreign policy. Having become aware of China's material backwardness relative to the west, and attributing that outcome in part to political extremism, the Chinese leadership would not have looked favorably on the DK's tactics. As Chana wrote, "The reemergent pragmatic leaders around Deng Xiaoping were not only critical of the procrustean policies of the Khmer Rouge but also reluctant to endorse their provocative approach toward Vietnam."⁵⁵⁶ Although there was no indication that China would change its stance toward the DK, some in the MFA continued to hope that the DK would fall and be create an opportunity for Sihanouk to return to power.⁵⁵⁷ But those hopes were tempered by the increasing likelihood of conflict between Cambodia and Vietnam.

In the spring of 1977, Fang Yi, then the minister of foreign economic relations, and Fu Hao, the Chinese ambassador to Vietnam, both reported back to the MFA that they thought the KR's domestic policies were dangerously extreme.⁵⁵⁸ There was no mention in the Chinese press when one of the DK's Eastern Zone commanders, Heng Samrin, fled Pol Pot's "extreme left policies" to "set up a new kitchen"⁵⁵⁹ in Vietnam in June 1977.⁵⁶⁰ A *Xinhua* journalist acknowledged that this information and this terminology came from a classified MFA cable. He speculated that the Embassy was increasingly concerned about the divisions within the DK, one that was borne out by a meeting the following

month in which Foreign Minister Huang Hua discussed the DK's instigation of border conflicts with Vietnam, Laos, and Thailand with a group of MFA officials.⁵⁶¹ Presumably these concerns were heightened when Chea Sim and Hun Sen, two more DK Eastern Zone commanders, followed Heng Samrin to Vietnam the following year.⁵⁶²

By July 1977, the US State Department was reporting that 1.2 million Cambodians had died under the DK. In September 1977, the *Far Eastern Economic Review* published an article on Beijing's increasing discomfort with the DK: "It was difficult for China to criticize Cambodia...but Cambodia had gone 'too far' in pursuing egalitarianism and self-reliance: instead of tackling the democratic and socialist revolution in stages, the Cambodians were trying to telescope the process of social transformation."⁵⁶³ Yet this was *precisely* what Mao and Zhou had warned the DK not to do. Why did Beijing not take the opportunity to say this publicly?

The choice to continue supporting the DK – at a moment when Beijing could have cooled relations considerably and prevented protracted war, which it had always said was its goal – is telling. On one hand, the MFA argued that if support to the DK was reduced, the regime would collapse, a Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia would be easier and more likely, and the country would once again be isolated and at war.⁵⁶⁴ On the other hand, increasing support was, "...our duty...even though we knew it would not help...the regime was too unpopular."⁵⁶⁵ Beijing knew it was partly responsible for creating this difficult choice because its aid had made it possible for the DK to remain in power, and perhaps that is why, of two dozen current and former MFA staff members interviewed for this project, none had or could conceive of simply walking away from the DK. Most felt that to leave Cambodia vulnerable to incursions – after two decades of trying to prevent

precisely that – was simply inconceivable.⁵⁶⁶ To abandon the DK was simply not an option. Indeed, as Geng Biao later wrote, autonomy was still paramount:

No matter what kinds of mistakes the Cambodian Communist Party and the Government of Democratic Kampuchea have committed in the past, this should absolutely not be taken as a pretext by any regime to interfere in, subvert, and invade Cambodia, which is still a sovereign state. The Cambodian Communist Party is our fraternal party and the people of Cambodia are friends of the Chinese people. Their struggle is our struggle, and their victory is also our victory. In this time of difficulty, we shall do what we have done before.⁵⁶⁷

Nevertheless, Beijing certainly did see the flaws in DK rule. Geng Biao wrote in January 1979 that the victorious DK's mistakes in failing to resolve "contradictions" amongst the people and therefore sowed the seeds of their own downfall. As Geng saw it, the DK had failed to unite the workers and peasants who made up the bulk of the population, those who remained loyal to Sihanouk, and those who were inclined to sympathize with Hanoi. Rather than "conducting like ideological reform...they went so far as to persecute, dismiss...disarm...[and] put to death" their opponents. This was a rare acknowledgement that the DK murdered people. Geng noted that this was "unlike what we did to the troops of Wu Hua-wen and Tung Chi-wu," referring to Guomintang units that had been persuaded to join the Communist forces in the Chinese civil war.⁵⁶⁸ Mao and Zhou had been serious when they spoke of the importance of united fronts, but with the rising Vietnamese threat, there was little time for discipline of the DK's domestic tactics. Although Geng did not mention how many Cambodians had died under the DK regime, his analysis suggested – perhaps hoped – that the DK would collapse due to its unpopularity. In the meantime, Beijing would continue its lifeline of assistance to

this regime – even if mean appearing complicit in genocide, and even if it meant an increasingly serious conflict with Vietnam.

Shortly after China and the DK signed a communications protocol on November 10⁵⁶⁹, Le Duan traveled to Beijing to ask one more time that the KR be reined in. China refused to “disengage”⁵⁷⁰ from the DK, but it did dispatch Chen Yonggui, a Politburo member, to Phnom Penh. Most public accounts of this visit suggest that Chen, the architect of the China’s legendary model commune Dazhai, was sent to comment on the DK’s agricultural programs, which he proclaimed “entirely correct.”⁵⁷¹ However, he also quietly pressed the DK leaders to negotiate a settlement with Hanoi. By mid-December, “...the Party Central Committee decided to give energetic support, Cambodia, strengthening it so that it might cope with the possible new situation when negotiations fail to solve the problems.”⁵⁷² According to Chinese sources, 1977 closed out with 14 Vietnamese units launching attacks into Cambodia.⁵⁷³

If it became clear quickly that the KR intended to pursue a Chinese-style revolution through agricultural and then industrial development, it was less obvious that, amidst all the aid and advisors, the KR were disdainful and suspicious of the Chinese. In late 1975, one senior KR official, recounting China’s weaknesses, pointed out that Beijing had failed “in liberating Taiwan.”⁵⁷⁴ Others spoke of China’s desire to make Cambodia a satellite⁵⁷⁵ or a colony⁵⁷⁶. In the summer of 1978, at the peak of the DK’s dependence on China, Ieng Sary told a KR seminar in Phnom Penh that China was “plunging into an inextricable quagmire” by pursuing economic opening and ties to the United States.⁵⁷⁷ These comments were not publicized at the time.

Qualified support. In late January 1978, Deng Yingchao, Zhou Enlai's widow, and Han Nianlong visited Cambodia.⁵⁷⁸ She must have irked her DK hosts by demanding to see Sihanouk despite their best efforts to distract her with a side trip to Angkor Wat and a special showing of one of Sihanouk's films on the wall of a building.⁵⁷⁹ That she was denied probably only confirmed suspicions in Beijing; that she chose to remind the DK of China's commitment to the Five Principles "as the 'fundamental principles by which all countries...must abide in the effort to settle relations'"⁵⁸⁰ would not have been well received by Pol Pot and Ieng Sary. The Cambodians' attempt to negotiate full diplomatic relations on the basis of the Five Principles with Thailand later that month⁵⁸¹ may have been a half-hearted attempt to satisfy China, but it was clearly not Thailand to which Deng Yingchao had referred. Throughout the year, China would repeatedly encourage the DK to negotiate with Hanoi.

The DK was not just trying to shift Deng's attention. It was trying to shift everyone's focus away from its disastrous domestic policies and onto Vietnamese attacks, a tactic also driven by its racism and paranoia. Beijing was caught between conflicting imperatives: while it continued to try to "restrain the Khmer Rouge adventurism against Vietnam"⁵⁸², it also did not want to leave Cambodia vulnerable to Vietnamese attacks, something that appeared increasingly likely following the DK's suspension of relations with Hanoi in January 1978.

Beijing accelerated its arms shipments to the DK in February⁵⁸³, sending 130-millimeter long-range artillery, assorted antitank weapons, and amphibious vehicles via the port at Kompong Som.⁵⁸⁴ Geng Biao later claimed that at this time, the DK "acted to strengthen the discipline of its armed forces," which was, "a right measure." Son Sen,

the DK's Defense Minister, must have relayed to Beijing his conviction that following this "discipline" (which would in reality mean a purge of the armed forces), the DK would have "the confidence to eradicate pro-Vietnam forces in June or July this year. We believed in him and provided him with necessary aid."⁵⁸⁵ Throughout the spring, China not only continued the delivery of, "tanks, armored cars, and MiG-19 fighters... but...also accelerated work on a new large airfield in Kompong Chhnang"⁵⁸⁶ in central Cambodia. Up to 20,000 Chinese advisers remained in Cambodia.⁵⁸⁷

China's frustration with Vietnam – a result of perceived Vietnamese ingratitude for decades of Chinese aid, border skirmishes with China and Cambodia, a growing relationship with the Soviet Union, and concerns about Vietnam's aspirations for Laos and Cambodia – deepened throughout 1978. The diplomatic and rhetorical Chinese offensive against Vietnam continued, as did the border skirmishes. Five days after DK-Vietnam ties were suspended, *Peking Review* began another litany of complaints against Vietnamese soldiers for "breaking into" Cambodian territory.⁵⁸⁸ It cannot have helped that, by this time, some Vietnamese leaders had taken to referring to the DK leadership as the "Gang of Six."⁵⁸⁹ Vietnam saw China's support to the DK as "continuing the traditional policy of imperial China...extending...hegemony over...Southeast Asia"⁵⁹⁰ – as part of China's "anti-Vietnamese crusade."⁵⁹¹

In late February, Hua Guofeng cautioned that, "No country...should seek hegemony in any region or impose its will on another. Whether a country treats others on an equal footing or seeks hegemony is a major criterion by which we will tell whether or not it follows the five principles."⁵⁹² Vietnam's March seizure of ethnic Chinese assets in Saigon triggered a wave of refugees and outrage in Beijing. In May, Deng told the

visiting US Assistant National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski that China saw Vietnam as “the Asian Cuba” – which implied, according to journalists recounting the events, “that China was the ‘Asian United States.’”⁵⁹³ In July, *Peking Review* published two lengthy articles blaming Vietnam for the border fights with Cambodia, and cataloging aid to Vietnam in an apparent attempt to embarrass Hanoi.⁵⁹⁴

Any doubts about the direction of the relationship between China and Vietnam would have been dispelled by the end of June. On June 8, a final meeting took place in Beijing between Pham Van Dong and Vice Premier Li Xiannian. Chanda described it as “a watershed”⁵⁹⁵; one of the Chinese participants labeled it “a waste of time.”⁵⁹⁶ A week later, according to the Chinese, Vietnam launched a major attack on Cambodia, killing 3,500 civilians.⁵⁹⁷ According to the Chinese press, the DK army “smashed” this “invasion” of “Vietnamese aggressor troops.”⁵⁹⁸ And on June 28, Vietnam joined COMECON, the Soviet economic bloc. This move struck a chord in Beijing that was not just outrage at Vietnam’s alliance with the Soviet Union – to Beijing, this constituted the most profound of betrayals. As has been previously noted, China rarely publicizes the details of its aid to other countries, yet *Renmin Ribao* did precisely that shortly after the Vietnam-USSR agreement.⁵⁹⁹ Beijing wanted to widely publicize just how much Vietnam had needed China’s support in its revolution.

Son Sen, escorted by a PLA general, brought a DK military delegation to Beijing from July 29-August 5, 1978, and was joined by Ieng Sary on August 2.⁶⁰⁰ By this point the DK’s self-inflicted weaknesses were painfully obvious to the Chinese, even if the DK leaders would not themselves admit it. It is therefore not surprising that Son Sen “...got an earful about the merits of self-reliance. Particularly harsh in the lecturing was Deng

Xiaoping...He bluntly told Son Sen that Chinese aid would be of no use if Cambodia did not abandon its 'sectarian policies and form a united front against the enemy.'"⁶⁰¹ In other words, if the DK did not stop its insane purges of its own membership, no amount of assistance could help it stave off the Vietnamese. Vice Premier Chen Xilian did state that China would "stand on the side of" Cambodia⁶⁰², but it was clearly out of patience with the DK's excessive domestic policies and the corresponding influence on its ability to defend itself. A DK national assembly delegation brought to Beijing by Nuon Chea the following month – which brought greetings from Sihanouk – probably did little to assuage these concerns.⁶⁰³ Although China continued to discourage attacks, by the end of 1978 it had given Cambodia "two fast gunships ...and four patrol boats, plus two hundred tanks, three hundred armored cars, three hundred artillery pieces, thirty thousand tons of ammunition, six jet fighters, and two bombers. The Chinese were also building a new railroad from Phnom Penh to Kompong Som."⁶⁰⁴

At the UN General Assembly meeting in September 1978, Huang Hua couched his concerns about the Soviet Union and its ties to Vietnam in terms of "social imperialism, which [wa]s at the root of all struggles," and which might lead to another world war.⁶⁰⁵ According to Hua, only through the establishment of a new international economic order, which would enable developing countries to compete on more equitable terms, and by achieving true disarmament could such conflict be avoided. China, he argued, would do its part through "unity with oppressed peoples" on the basis of the Five Principles.⁶⁰⁶

On October 26, the Chinese MFA lodged yet another a formal protest against Vietnamese "encroachments" along Chinese border⁶⁰⁷; on November 3, the USSR and Vietnam signed the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in Moscow. Two days later,

Deng began a trip to Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore. At a press conference in Bangkok, Deng reiterated China's disinterest in promoting communist parties, particularly through local ethnic Chinese populations. Rather, Beijing wanted to emphasize "opposing hegemonism and foreign interference," its desire to develop economic relations, and its concerns about threats to regional stability.⁶⁰⁸

While Deng tried to succeed where past Chinese leaders had failed in assuaging Southeast Asian concerns about China's agenda in the region, Wang Dongxing (then the Vice-Chair of the CCP's Central Committee), Hu Yaobang, and Yu Qiuli (then Vice Premier of the State Council) spent four days in Phnom Penh.⁶⁰⁹ Little of substance appears to have been discussed during the November 5-9 visit, suggesting that it was as much a gesture of deterrence to Vietnam as it was of assurance to the DK. Apparently the DK attempted to extract a commitment of troops from the visitors, but Laurence Picq, a French woman married to a senior DK official, described in her autobiography deleting precisely such a pledge from the visit's final communiqué. As it turned out, "The government of Democratic Kampuchea and the Communist party could absolutely" *not* "count on the aid of the fraternal Chinese army in case of need."⁶¹⁰

On December 2, several of the former KR commanders who had fled to Hanoi in 1977 and 1978, including Heng Samrin, Hun Sen, and Chea Sim, assembled in eastern Cambodia and proclaimed the establishment of the Kampuchean United Front for National Salvation⁶¹¹; within a week, Hanoi announced its establishment of a "national salvation government" that would replace the DK regime. Aware of the December 2 meeting, the DK again requested military assistance and troops from China, but on December 5, Ye Jianying, the Chairman of the Standing Committee of the NPC, wrote to

Khieu Samphan merely expressing China's "firm support."⁶¹² Rather, Beijing chose to respond in two ways to the news coming out of Hanoi. On December 11, General Wei Guoqing, chairman of the PLA's political department, stated in Guangxi that, "Vietnam has taken many hostile actions [presumably border attacks] against China and that Peking would 'teach Vietnam a lesson.'"⁶¹³ Clearly Hua's comments on disarmament did not apply to China's – or Cambodia's – self-defense capabilities. On December 16, the Chinese MFA issued a statement:

[China] condemn[s] the Vietnamese authorities for their rabid acts of aggression and subversion against Democratic Kampuchea. Their frenzied military aggression and subversion against a sovereign state constitute a most grave and crude violation of the code of conduct in international relations and pose a serious threat to peace and stability in Southeast Asia and the Asia-Pacific region.⁶¹⁴

Two days after this statement was issued, the historic Third Plenary of the 11th National People's Party Congress opened. This meeting officially launched China's reform era, one in which the CCP would allow a modicum of openness and would relinquish a degree of political and economic control to other state institutions. The CPPCC agreed to "develop equitable and mutually beneficial relations with other countries on the basis of self-reliance...[and] acknowledge problems of past extreme rightism."⁶¹⁵ The Third Plenary also committed to a "more comprehensive concept of security"⁶¹⁶, one that included economic security ensured in part by foreign policy that "served domestic causes."⁶¹⁷ Finally, on December 24, a CCP working meeting attached to the Third Plenum adopted a formal "repudiation of Lin Biao, the Gang of Four, and their work."⁶¹⁸

The next day, about 150,000 heavily armed Vietnamese troops invaded Cambodia, and chaos ensued. The Khmer Rouge herded thousands of people across the northwestern border into Thailand. Taking advantage of their abrupt freedom from the DK, some Cambodians began to make their way to their home provinces; others took advantage of the opportunity to attack Khmer Rouge.⁶¹⁹ By the time Vietnamese troops reached Phnom Penh on January 7, 1979, thousands of Chinese advisors had been evacuated by truck to Kompong Som, by train to Battambang, and by ferry to Siem Reap. About six hundred Chinese technicians and advisors, some of them having walked all the way from Phnom Penh, crossed the border with Thailand at Aranyaprathet in mid-January. Ambassador Sun Hao and his staff members were evacuated on January 5 by road to Battambang, then returned to Phnom Penh the next day. Some embassy staff members, aid workers, and students were allowed to fly out of Phnom Penh on January 6.⁶²⁰

Sihanouk was allowed to leave on that same flight. Ambassador Sun escorted him to the airport, and it would have been the first time in about three years that they had seen each other. Ieng Sary had on January 2 called for the UN Security Council to convene a special session to condemn Vietnam's invasion.⁶²¹ On January 5, Pol Pot, who had not seen Sihanouk since 1975, asked the Prince to take Cambodia's case to the UN.⁶²² Sihanouk agreed to do so⁶²³, but first spent a few days in Beijing meeting with Chinese leaders. On January 9, Deng reassured Sihanouk that, as always, he was welcome to make his home in Beijing.⁶²⁴ Although the permutations of enemies and allies had changed dramatically, particularly following the China's January 1 normalization of relations with the US, Deng and Sihanouk must have felt some sense of déjà vu.

Why not unqualified support? Beijing would have known better than anyone else at this point just how weak the DK military was. Despite the steady stream of munitions from China, few of the troops knew how to handle the equipment properly, and many were young conscripts who had little training or enthusiasm for war in the DK's name. Given these circumstances, and Beijing's degree of concern about Vietnamese expansionist aspirations, why did China stop short of sending troops to Cambodia? After all, Beijing had fulfilled all of the DK's other requests.

The idea was debated on several occasions throughout 1978. At a May Politburo meeting, the conclusion was reached that sending troops to Cambodia would "frighten non-Communist Southeast Asia, antagonize the West, and upset China's modernization plans... One should not expect others to come and do one's cooking."⁶²⁵ At the same time, an unspecified but "significant" number of troops were based in Nanning, awaiting "emergency airlift to Phnom Penh."⁶²⁶ This group included at least two units that had advised North Vietnamese commanders during the war against the US; presumably they would bring considerable insight to benefit the Cambodians in the event of a war.⁶²⁷ Pol Pot had again requested Chinese "volunteers" in November, but was told he should be practicing "self-reliance."⁶²⁸ At another Politburo work session from mid-November to mid-December, three members argued for sending troops, but in the end China only extended its "energetic support"⁶²⁹ for fear of jeopardizing its economic agenda.

Even after the Vietnamese invasion, China did not send troops. Geng Biao explained,

We have never sent our troops, planes or fleets to any other country and we oppose other nations which do so... If we send our soldiers to Cambodia, we shall violate this principle and, what's more what kind of impression shall we create in the eyes of the Southeast Asian countries and

other countries of the world?...[to do so would mean becoming] another new hegemonic power. Such a big mistake, once committed, is hard to be remedied...most of the countries in the world, no matter whether they like the regime led by Pol Pot or not, still recognize Democratic Kampuchea...all our support is for supporting a righteous struggle against foreign invasion...it is impossible to use the Hitler-type blitz to solve the whole matter within three months...[and] we are not strong enough to fight such a war of attrition unless we abandon the four modernizations...If we join the war [in Cambodia] and fight a good battle with the Soviet Union, our people will of course be greatly satisfied. However, will there be still hope of getting investments, loans and other kinds of assistance for our four modernizations from the United States, European countries and Japan? This is not a question of whether we are afraid to join the war, but a question of weighing the pros and cons.⁶³⁰

Although Geng seemed to have forgotten about sending Chinese troops to Korea and India, there were several reasons for not providing such military assistance to the Cambodians. Beijing did not want to jeopardize its slow progress improving relations with Southeast Asian countries and with the United States. Nor did it want to expend the resources and jeopardize possible gains – one of the first indications that such calculations could now override principles. But at the same time, Beijing appears to have wanted the DK to bear primary responsibility for its actions. Chanda suggested that Beijing may have refused to send troops so that the KR would fail and thus be forced to moderate.⁶³¹ Geng Biao's statement revealed that autonomy still mattered a great deal to Beijing, but now there would be limits to how China would support that cause.

VI. Conclusion

What evidence is there to suggest that principles prevailed as a determinant of Chinese foreign policy across this particularly turbulent decade? There were two significant deviations from principled foreign policy during this time. The unofficial yet consequential shift of attention away from Sihanouk, the acknowledged head of state, and towards the Khmer Rouge in 1974-1975 must be understood as a result of radicalism. In effect, China had two foreign policies at this time – the official, more moderate line, and the implemented radical line. Had the Gang of Four not propelled the Khmer Rouge to such prominence in Beijing, it seems unlikely that Zhou would have done so, even if provided the only cohesive military force inside Cambodia.

The choice to discuss normalization with the United States also appeared to be highly unprincipled, given the US' recent maneuvers in Cambodia. Yet the prospect of achieving some kind of agreement on Taiwan – an issue that mattered more to China than anything else – led the Chinese to place their concerns ahead of the Cambodians'. At the same time, the Cambodians' issues were hardly ignored, as Zhou's ongoing efforts with the Americans on Sihanouk's behalf illustrate.

To what extent were Chinese decisions about backing the Khmer Rouge and Democratic Kampuchea a function of ideological imperatives? Without a doubt Chinese radicals wished to back the DK's revolutionary agenda in much the same way they did with similar movements elsewhere. Yet more moderate Chinese foreign policy makers, particularly Zhou, could not have been more explicit in their statements cautioning against excessive positions and policies, going so far as to cite CCP mistakes. China's support to GRUNK had designed to promote national liberation, not socialist revolution, though it became difficult to rein in the Khmer Rouge once the military campaign over

which it exercised exclusive control gained momentum. But it is important to note that there is no evidence to suggest that, outside periods of radical foreign policy, China would have supported the Khmer Rouge against Sihanouk. Perhaps the best indication of the non-ideological nature of Chinese foreign policy was that the Khmer Rouge would have been unlikely to achieve power in Cambodia without China's strong relationship to *Sihanouk*. As was the case in the previous period, foreign policy only sought to promote Marxism when Chinese radicals were in control.

As was also the case in the previous period, China did base some of its decisions on security concerns, particularly ongoing access to sanctuaries and supply lines for Vietnamese communists prior to their 1975 victory. Beijing should have felt less threatened as the US withdrew from Southeast Asia, but those concerns were to some extent replaced by a growing relationship between Moscow and Hanoi. But Beijing's responses to these challenges were not the defensive, aggressive, or dominating actions some theorists would predict. It did not need to reconstruct a full Cambodian government in exile to retain access to the supply lines; if it was so concerned about a Soviet presence in Southeast Asia it should have sought a balancing relationship with Washington much sooner. If China was so concerned about Vietnam's possible aspirations across Indochina, why did China not provide Cambodia with all necessary assistance? Why had it neither disciplined the DK nor encouraged it to fight?

Attributing China's choices purely to economic imperatives is equally difficult. Not only did China continue to materially support GRUNK at a time when its own economic circumstances were dire, it paid considerable opportunity costs by delaying normalization with the United States and again unnerving Southeast Asia. Deng's choices in 1978

reflected a shift that was to some extent economic, in that China would no longer provide aid as freely as it would before. This did not mean that it would stop providing it, or that it would only materially support potentially lucrative trading partners. But Deng's choice was as much about moving away from cults of personality and isolationism from the west as it was about economic imperatives.

Rather, China continued to pay – literally and figuratively – for its principled foreign policy. Defending what Beijing saw as the legitimate Cambodian government in the 1970s brought neither wealth nor security – in fact, it compromised both for the sake of Cambodia's autonomy. Despite overwhelming evidence of barbarity, China continued to treat the DK as a normal regime. Ultimately Beijing blamed the DK's demise on its extremism and its unwillingness to moderate by including Sihanouk. Yet when it became clear that those weaknesses were going to make Cambodia vulnerable to Vietnam, China did not, in spite of its own frustrations, encourage the DK to engage in armed conflict. But once that conflict had begun, would China leave the DK to bear responsibility alone? Or would China again move to support a legitimate, ousted government?

CHAPTER THREE: 1979-1991

I. Introduction

After decades of disruptions due to collectivization, failed industrialization schemes, and the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese leadership was keenly aware that valuable resources had been wasted on ideological campaigns and cults of personality. Deng Xiaoping's domestic agenda emphasized the Four Modernizations, a view in which security stemmed as much from economic development as it did from territorial sovereignty. But Beijing's focus on economic development did not render its principles irrelevant in foreign policy – to the contrary, sovereignty and autonomy were seen as integral to any given state's ability to achieve development.

At the January 1980 Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) session, Deng highlighted the foreign policy challenges with respect to the Four Modernizations: fighting against hegemonism, promoting peace, reclaiming Taiwan, and focusing on domestic economic growth.⁶³² Under Deng, foreign policy would be bounded as much by principles and its commitment to the Third World⁶³³ as it was by the goals of advancing economic development and by greater caution with respect to limited resources. By October 1981, Premier Zhao Ziyang was characterizing economic development as a means to security.⁶³⁴

China's foreign policy during the early reform era, which remained the purview of senior leaders, is widely regarded as motivated almost exclusively by a desire for economic gain and to some extent by a need to defend its ideological heritage. But a closer look at China's choices with respect to the newly ousted Democratic Kampuchea

regime and Prince Sihanouk in the 1980s shows that the Five Principles could not only transcend leadership changes, but they could also influence China's growing involvement with a variety of states and international organizations like the UN, its normalizations with Asean, the USSR, and Vietnam. Its greater emphasis on domestic development as a means to achieving security did diminish Beijing's tolerance of factionalism, and its expectations of leaders' abilities to "set aside differences" became even more pronounced.

If ever there was a time when Beijing should have shed any complex and unrewarding relationships – especially ones that posed obstacles to the Four Modernizations – this was it. Yet for another decade, China delayed re-normalizing relations with the USSR and Vietnam in response to the invasion of Cambodia, a choice that was not only costly but on several occasions actually compromised not just economic development but territorial security. Although the Cambodia problem eventually created some common ground for China with the United States and Asean, this outcome was not easily seen at the beginning of the period, and nor were these multilateral efforts without their complications. Instead, Beijing employed precisely the same strategy it had a decade earlier. Despite its obvious shortcomings, China once again helped forge and support an exile coalition government, insisted on the Khmer Rouge's rightful place in determining Cambodia's future, and made sacrifices for the sake of defending Cambodia's autonomy. Had China chosen to accept a Vietnamese occupation of or regime in Cambodia, little more than principles would have been sacrificed, and the tangible gains would have been considerable. But once again, China chose to navigate in accordance with its beliefs.

II. Digging in: 1979-1982

Beijing clearly perceived the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia as a threat not only to regional security, but also as confirmation of China's long-standing suspicions about Soviet hegemony. Rather than accept that the Khmer Rouge⁶³⁵ were incorrigible and that Democratic Kampuchea's problems were not worth China's efforts, Beijing again subordinated some of its own economic and security interests, particularly by precluding earlier improvement to relations with Vietnam, the USSR, and some Southeast Asian nations, by trying to reestablish Cambodia's autonomy through another exile coalition government. Beijing's choice to invade Vietnam – a decidedly unprincipled action taken in response to the invasion of Cambodia – further diminished China's security, particularly in the short run, and did little to advance economic development.

The short-term strategy. In January 1979 Vietnamese forces moved swiftly across Cambodia, encountering only scattered resistance as they reached the northwestern town of Sisophon less than a week after taking Phnom Penh. On January 11, Hanoi announced the establishment of the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK)⁶³⁶, which was promptly recognized by the USSR.⁶³⁷ It cannot have escaped Beijing's attention that former DK officials who had fled to Vietnam to escape the 1977 purges occupied the top echelons of the PRK, or that one of its first foreign policy statements called for "Indochinese solidarity."⁶³⁸ Vietnamese sources imply that the establishment of the PRK was a wholly Cambodian initiative⁶³⁹, and that Vietnam's involvement was "a response to the Kampuchean's call for help."⁶⁴⁰

Ieng Sary and Sihanouk arrived separately in Beijing on the same day the Vietnamese reached Phnom Penh. Although the fall of Phnom Penh and the Cambodian leaders' return to Beijing would "cause many problems to [Chinese] comrades,"⁶⁴¹ the former GRUNK offices at the Friendship Hotel had once again been made available for their use.⁶⁴² Although China swiftly made it clear that it was not going to back away from supporting those it deemed to be the rightful rulers of Cambodia, the situation was not going to unfold in the same way as it had in the early 1970s.

Sihanouk's return to Beijing must have been strange. Although he was given a warm welcome, he had had no contact with Chinese diplomats or Beijing since his house arrest began in April 1976. Sihanouk's closest ties had been to Zhou and Mao, but he had met Deng in the early 1960s, and would perhaps have been reassured by Deng's continuation of Zhou's policies toward Cambodia. On January 8, Deng received Sihanouk, but the conversation appears to have consisted mostly of Deng trying to reassure the again-exiled Prince that a solution would be found.⁶⁴³ Presumably this led to Sihanouk's reiteration of China's support for Cambodia in a press conference later that day. It is unclear whether Sihanouk told Deng that the DK had killed fourteen of his family members, including five of his children.

Ieng Sary, on the other hand, had to wait another week for a private meeting with Deng, and that discussion was not nearly so amicable. According to Chanda, who drew on Vietnamese accounts of this conversation, Deng sharply rebuked Ieng for the DK's purges, which Deng saw as the cause of their weakness. The Chinese premier pointed out – again – the importance of uniting with disparate domestic factions in the face of an external threat, such as those CCP had twice undertaken with the GMD when facing the

Japanese, and chastised him for poor treatment of Sihanouk.⁶⁴⁴ Beijing's immediate solution to the problem was for the DK leadership to tone down the extremist rhetoric and reconcile with Sihanouk. In order to help the Cambodians, China had "put at Cambodia's disposal a fund of \$5 million, which would be replenished" and would be accessed through the Chinese embassy in Bangkok.⁶⁴⁵ Deng agreed to provide a radio transmitter but said the broadcasts would be monitored for "absurd rhetoric." Maguire also claims that Deng threatened to withhold aid until the KR reconciled with Sihanouk⁶⁴⁶, but such an explicit quid pro quo seems unlikely given the MFA's formal statement later that day: "The Pol Pot government is the only legitimate regime" of Cambodia.⁶⁴⁷

On the same day, January 14, Premier Geng Biao, who had been involved in Chinese policy toward Southeast Asia since the late 1950s, and Vice Foreign Minister Han Nianlong were following in Zhou Enlai's footsteps.⁶⁴⁸ Similar to his quiet request of Sihanouk that Chinese weapons to the Vietnamese resistance be transported through Cambodian territory, Geng and Han held secret talks with Thai Prime Minister Kriangsak Chomanan at Utapao to secure Thai approval for Beijing's plan to provide aid to the DK resistance through Thai territory.⁶⁴⁹ According to Chandler, China offered to cease its support to the Thai Communist Party⁶⁵⁰, though Geng himself later said a delegation of TCP members had come to Beijing to discuss "detailed arrangements for supporting Cambodia" and had been counseled to cooperate with the Thai government.⁶⁵¹

Geng returned to Beijing on January 15 and presented a detailed report on the Cambodia situation to the senior leadership the following day. The document provides information crucially important to understanding Beijing's view of what had happened

and what would come next. First, the document forcefully contradicted Hanoi's explanations for the invasion, which included allegations of DK attacks on Vietnamese civilians and the need to topple a genocidal regime. Geng made clear China's fury at the Vietnamese Workers' Party's "infringe[ment] upon the right of independence of other Communist parties or interfere in the internal affairs of a fraternal party."⁶⁵² What the DK had done to itself was indeed awful, but it was a sovereign state; what Vietnam had done had violated one of the most basic rules of state-to-state relations. In what would be common refrain over the coming decade, Geng stated the conflict was a result of Vietnam's hegemonic aspirations, not a result of the DK's provocations. Yet there had to have been irritation with the DK for having adopted policies against which China had explicitly cautioned.

Second, Geng presented an overview of China's efforts to secure support from key allies: Thailand and the US. Because Thailand had not yet replied with respect to the issue of transshipping material aid through Thai territory, Geng also described Beijing's hope that aid could be sent via sea with US Navy protection from Soviet and Vietnamese ships. Geng told his audience that Deng would raise this issue during his imminent visit to Washington with President Carter and would offer in return the prospect of opening Shanghai to the Seventh Fleet.⁶⁵³ Third, Geng outlined a global offensive to generate support for its anti-Vietnamese, anti-Soviet position. The invasion of Cambodia had confirmed China's fears about Soviet expansionism, and to Beijing détente was simply not an option: "...today's Cambodia will become the shadow of Southeast Asia and other countries in the Asian-Pacific area of tomorrow and Czechoslovakia of yesterday will become the shadow of Europe and America of tomorrow." This was a message that

resonated in the United States and in Asean, important new allies in the campaign against what Beijing called “Soviet social-imperialism.”⁶⁵⁴

Days after Geng’s report was delivered, one of more unorthodox expressions of Chinese support for the DK began to unfold inside Cambodia. On January 15, Geng Biao delivered a pep talk to the Chinese diplomatic staff at the Bangkok embassy and those just evacuated from Cambodia. Geng, a Long March veteran, reminded the assembled group of Zhou’s exhortation that diplomats were like the PLA without uniforms and were expected to carry out assignments with courage and conviction.⁶⁵⁵ According to this account, eight of the people to whom Geng had spoken, including Ambassador Sun Hao and future ambassador Fu Xuezhong⁶⁵⁶, set out from Bangkok to the Thai-Cambodian border in early February. The DK’s Foreign Ministry Secretary-General Suo Hong, who was Pol Pot’s nephew, met the group at Aranyaprathet, across the border from northwestern Cambodia, and by February 10 the group had traveled by jeep and on foot to Malai. There they proceeded to establish the first Chinese “embassy” – literally, a few grass huts – in DK-held territory. Ambassador Sun was apparently frustrated at not being met by the senior DK leadership or an invitation to the DK’s general headquarters, a breach of protocol that may have underscored some of Beijing’s growing concerns about the DK. Regardless, China had diplomatic representation inside Cambodia.⁶⁵⁷

A week later, the “embassy” and its staff moved to Pailin, where Ieng Sary and Pol Pot visited on February 19 and 22, respectively, to discuss the status of the resistance against Vietnam. Ambassador Sun and his colleagues moved again on February 23 to a base in the Cardamom Mountains, where they remained for about a month, and were visited, with varying degrees of frequency and diplomatic protocol, by a variety of DK

leaders. But Vietnamese reconnaissance flights eventually spotted the “embassy,” and despite the staff’s construction of an air raid shelter, the DK leadership felt compelled by late March to encourage the group to begin walking back towards the Thai-Cambodian border. After marching for about ten days, accompanied at some points by Ieng Sary, the Chinese diplomats stumbled upon the DK’s headquarters, an event mentioned on DK radio and noticed by the US military. On April 11, Pol Pot, Ieng Sary, Khieu Samphan, Nuon Chea, and other DK leaders saw Ambassador Sun and his staff off at the border.⁶⁵⁸

Although Chinese ambassadors to Thailand throughout the 1980s would be jointly accredited to Thailand and the DK, there is no evidence of later attempts to establish an embassy inside Cambodian territory. Yet the episode, in which the diplomats made a telling reference to the Long March and throughout which they suffered hardships unimaginable to the diplomatic corps of other most other countries, was an indication of how Beijing perceived the situation and that it was not simply going to walk away from the DK, despite its now-notorious past and an uncertain future.

Taking its case to the world. Beijing could have opted to take the invasion up directly with Hanoi or Moscow. But the presence of Soviet troops near China’s border appeared to make China seek strength elsewhere, and particularly with the US and through the UN, before pursuing a diplomatic solution, such as proposing negotiations with Hanoi or issuing an ultimatum for a Vietnamese withdrawal.

Beijing had engaged in an anti-US and anti-Lon Nol propaganda campaign in the early 1970s, but that effort was run strictly out of Beijing and invited voluntary support from other countries. That Beijing was now moving as swiftly in the international court

of public opinion as the Vietnamese had moved across Cambodia indicated that different tactics were to be employed. As Geng explained, “We want to create public opinion so that all governments in the world can clearly see who is the creator of bloody conflicts and who is the aggressor.”⁶⁵⁹ Other major states were taking that which Beijing saw as problematic very seriously, particularly the United States, which remained firm in its Cold War perceptions of the USSR and its post-loss hostility towards Vietnam. Consequently, Beijing had an historic opportunity not only to be in the Security Council majority in an international crisis, but also to set the agenda for resolving that crisis.

It had been eight years since China regained a seat at the United Nations, though the turmoil surrounding Mao’s death had effectively nullified its participation for a few years. In the wake of the Vietnamese invasion, though, Beijing made up for lost time. Not only had Beijing long cautioned the world about precisely this kind of hegemonic behavior from the USSR, it could also explain those threats in principles that were shared by the world’s leading international forum. It is interesting that one of Beijing’s first official statements on the Vietnamese invasion placed that event squarely in the context of international norms:

This war of aggression was part of Vietnam’s plan to establish the ‘great Indochinese federation’ and the product of the USSR’s southern strategy, yet violated the UN Charter and the basic principles of international relations, and received strong criticism and opposition from the international community.⁶⁶⁰

By January 10, Sihanouk was addressing the UN General Assembly⁶⁶¹, and, at Chinese insistence, the UN Security Council held a special session from January 11-15. At that meeting, Chen Chu, China’s Ambassador to the UN, lodged China’s first official

demand that the Vietnamese withdraw⁶⁶², and at least one very public battle between Chen and his Soviet counterpart ensued. Asean foreign ministers, meeting in Bangkok on January 13, echoed Chen's insistence that Vietnam withdraw.⁶⁶³ To the dismay of the Soviets and the Vietnamese, the Security Council condemned the invasion.⁶⁶⁴ By September, the UN opted to award Cambodia's seat to the DK⁶⁶⁵, a position advanced by China, among others.

Beijing did not limit its condemnation to Vietnam's actions in Cambodia and apparently saw no irony in its promotion of a "Vietnam threat theory." At the UN, Chen reiterated China's concern for the "grave situation," insisted that the UN intervene, and accused Vietnam of jeopardizing not just regional but *world* peace.⁶⁶⁶ He argued that the "Le Duan clique" had, "by invading a small, weak country...ruin[ed] not just Vietnam-Cambodia relations but also Vietnam-world relations."⁶⁶⁷ By mid-January, *Shijie zhishi*, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' journal, amplified all of these concerns in an article that claimed, "Vietnam has long planned this attack." Since it "started encroaching on Cambodia in 1977," its "every move [in Cambodia] was dictated by Moscow," but it faced danger by "ignoring the world's criticisms and becoming the region's hegemon."⁶⁶⁸ By April, *Peking Review*, another government journal, wrote, "To hell with this sophistry that aggression is justifiable and resistance to aggression is criminal."⁶⁶⁹ Others compared Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia to the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, and charged that the USSR was also threatening the sovereignty of Iran, Africa, and Eastern Europe. Beijing remained confident that the USSR would not succeed: "...[but] the invaders are laughing too soon...as history makes clear, war isn't won until every city and place falls. Both China and Cambodia have this historical experience."⁶⁷⁰

Much of the amplification was designed to elicit support from Asean. *Shijie zhishi* claimed that Southeast Asian had “recently said that what happened in Cambodia could happen to us.”⁶⁷¹ By early February, *Dongnanya yanjiu ziliao*, a prominent journal of Southeast Asian studies, explained in detail that Asean was in danger of falling to the Vietnamese and counseled a strategy of closer Sino-Asean cooperation in economic and military matters, noting that diplomatic “wooing” was insufficient to the threat at hand.⁶⁷² By the end of the year, the same journal reported that Vietnam’s invasion had forced Asean to take a position on military matters, that its members had increased their military cooperation, and that the events had led to a better relationship with China.⁶⁷³ Vietnam, meanwhile, insisted that, “Any settlement of problems between Vietnam and Kampuchea...hinges on a prerequisite: to detach Kampuchea from the Chinese chariot.”⁶⁷⁴

Obviously China had found a strategic benefit in its common ground with Asean and the United States in its rhetorical battle against Hanoi and Moscow. Its use of the UN and particularly the Security Council demonstrated an increasing confidence that China’s positions could become international policy. But over the coming years it would become apparent that greater American, Southeast Asia, or UN involvement was not necessarily helpful to Beijing.

Launching a punitive attack on Vietnam. Geng Biao’s report of January 16 noted that a Chinese military action against Vietnam in response to the invasion of Cambodia was not out of the question. Troops in Yunnan and Guangxi had been on high alert since December 1978. Deng solicited President Jimmy Carter’s opinion on China’s planned punitive attack on Vietnam, and on January 30 Carter lodged only superficial objections

to the invasion.⁶⁷⁵ About seven weeks into the battle for world opinion, Beijing decided it was time for some real warfare.

On February 14, the CCPCC issued “A Communiqué on the Self-Defense Attack on Vietnam to Protect our Borders,” which laid out in careful detail the imminent attack. The document pointed to what China saw as a long history of Vietnamese border incursions, and thus justified the upcoming action as necessary to protect peace and stability and to help achieve the Four Modernizations.⁶⁷⁶ Like the Sino-Indian border war of 1962, the planned campaign had a strictly proscribed duration and distance – it would last no more than a month and not go further than about 30 kilometers. Chanda argued that the Vietnamese leadership was so confident that China would not attack⁶⁷⁷ that Premier Pham Van Dong went ahead with a visit to Phnom Penh from February 16-19 to sign a treat of friendly cooperation with the PRK.⁶⁷⁸

On February 17, China sent 80,000 of the 300,000 troops massed on the border into Vietnam, where they were met by as many as 100,000 Vietnamese troops.⁶⁷⁹ In the first few days, the Chinese side incurred heavy casualties as it came up against seasoned Vietnamese veterans, only a few years into retirement, and the bulk of the northern Vietnamese military infrastructure, much of which had survived the war with the US intact. By March 5, Chinese forces took control of Lang Son and then promptly announced that its mission had been achieved and it would pull all its troops back into China. On March 16, Foreign Minister Huang Hua announced that all troops had returned to Yunnan and Guangxi.⁶⁸⁰ In the course of the month-long campaign, 25,000 Chinese and 20,000 Vietnamese troops died⁶⁸¹, and rather than capitulating in the face of

this onslaught, Vietnam had called for full-scale national mobilization and defended itself admirably.⁶⁸²

Why did China undertake this costly, limited, and decidedly unprincipled assault? After all, there was scant evidence that China's border skirmishes with Vietnam had worsened following the invasion of Cambodia, such that Beijing had to be especially concerned about its territorial security. It was highly unlikely that the Soviet Union would send troops to assist the Vietnamese with an invasion of Cambodia or a defense against China, nor did China send troops to Cambodia, so it is difficult to see a heightened Soviet threat to China. Some suggest that China had hoped to weaken Vietnam's hold on Cambodia by opening another front, yet this underestimates just how easy it was for Vietnam to occupy post-DK Cambodia. Others argue that, as Deng was consolidating power in the early months of 1979, the campaign against Vietnam was in fact an assurance to the PLA that it would continue to have relevance in the reform era.

Apparently Chinese policy makers believed that Vietnam no longer deserved the respect or restraint dictated by the Five Principles. About a year later, Deng told the CCCPC that, "...if a party and the country which it leads pursue a foreign policy of interference in the internal affairs of other countries, or an invasion or subversion of them, then any other party is entitled to make its stand known and express its criticism."⁶⁸³ Yet this language implies a worst-case scenario of public criticism, not of sacrificing 50,000 troops. The anomalous behavior was likely a combination of Beijing's outrage at Vietnam's perceived ingratitude and aggression towards Cambodia and some embarrassment over the DK's rise and fall. General Wei Guoqing had bluntly explained that China was trying to "teach Vietnam a lesson." A former Guangxi-based military

official added more perspective: “China could not just sit idle while Vietnam invaded a sovereign country...[we] could have taken Hanoi, but that would have constituted an occupation. Our purpose was to make the Vietnamese think about their actions in Cambodia, to demonstrate to them how they would feel if they were occupied.”⁶⁸⁴ “Occupations only lead to chaos,” said a retired MFA staff member, “so that was not our purpose in Vietnam, we did not want to stay. We hoped it would make realize they had to leave of Cambodia.”⁶⁸⁵

As Womack and others pointed out, the invasion had no discernable effect at all on Vietnam or on its policies toward Cambodia. It is unlikely that the PLA was content with this campaign, given the heavy losses and the fact that, “the war revealed some of the internal weaknesses of the Chinese army that made it unfit for modern warfare.”⁶⁸⁶ Another diplomat pointed out that, “Vietnam made a big mistake invading Cambodia, but Deng made a bigger one by invading Vietnam and trying to punish its leaders...it sent the wrong message and it made Moscow even angrier at Beijing.”⁶⁸⁷ Still worse, China’s invasion of Vietnam also appears to have unnerved some parts of Southeast Asia, amplifying in some minds the threat of expansionist campaigns from the north and undermining some of Beijing’s hard-won gains on this front. The invasion no doubt spurred Laos, which had tried to remain neutral as relations between China and Vietnam deteriorated through the 1970s, to withdraw its diplomats from China by August 1979.⁶⁸⁸ Asean leaders were probably less concerned about the press than they were about Chinese efforts over the summer of 1979 “to organize defectors and dissidents from Indochina into anti-Vietnamese resistance groups.”⁶⁸⁹ Some must have wondered

whether similar efforts would also be directed against governments not supportive of China.

Beijing's response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. In December 1979, Soviet troops poured into Afghanistan on the pretext of quelling domestic unrest and lending support for the Moscow-backed Khalq regime (for a more detailed discussion of this event, see Chapter Five.). These reasons were not especially plausible, and the invasion only strengthened China's argument about Moscow's global intentions and the need to stop the Soviet threat. China promptly suspended the "friendship talks" it had been pursuing with Moscow.

Interestingly, the greater degree of world attention given to the invasion of Afghanistan in some respects detracted from China's efforts to focus attention on the problems in Southeast Asia. The action in Afghanistan greatly heightened fears in the US and Europe, an area of considerably greater US interest than difficult and remote Southeast Asia. In July 1980, a spokesman for the Republican Party stated that the Soviet invasion of *Afghanistan* was "the greatest threat to the western world."⁶⁹⁰ So while Beijing could count on Washington to be an anti-Soviet ally, it could not rely on the US to perceive the threats in more universal terms. It probably did not help that the DK's representative, Khieu Samphan, most passionately argued the continuity of the Soviet threat to Cambodia and Afghanistan at the UN.⁶⁹¹

In late December 1980, the "Observer" column of *Renmin ribao* staked out Beijing's defining positions and strategy for the coming years. It argued that the invasions of Cambodia and Afghanistan were part of a global strategy and needed to be treated as such, that the USSR and Vietnam would ultimately fail because the small and weak states

they had invaded will “drive them into an inextricable predicament,” and that only united opposition to hegemonism will stop the USSR. The article concluded that maximum pressure be brought to bear on Vietnam for two to three years in order to force it to compromise.⁶⁹² This began to raise questions about who would regain power in Cambodia – the DK? Sihanouk? Or both?

Reform and the DK. A conversation between Sihanouk and Deng on February 16, 1979, indicated another aspect of Beijing’s response to the Vietnamese invasion. Deng, likely referring to information provided by the Chinese “embassy” about the relative strength of resistance and Vietnamese troops, explained to Sihanouk that,

‘If Pol Pot wants to continue his resistance struggle...China has the capacity to support him for 20 or 30 years, though his past methods were a mistake.’ Sihanouk replied, ‘Pol Pot is probably a patriot, but he is also a butcher.’ Deng Xiaoping replied that Pol Pot’s policies had recently become more moderate. Sihanouk asked, ‘Do you really believe that you can change a tiger into a small cat?’⁶⁹³

Apparently Beijing thought such a transformation was both possible and necessary; moreover, efforts to affect it were already underway. Rather than abandon the DK, Geng Biao’s report implied the presence of Chinese advisors to the DK in the liberated zones during this period. Ieng Sary was also making visits to Beijing, as were other DK representatives.⁶⁹⁴ It is difficult to know precisely which advisors provided which suggestions, as documentation of this phase of Sino-DK relations either nonexistent or unavailable to most scholars. But given the regular visits by Chinese diplomats and journalists to the border areas, as well as the parallels to political reform efforts underway in China, it would be difficult to dismiss these events as coincidental.

The first round of reforms focused on changing the leadership and the tactics. By the end of February 1979, Pol Pot had “retired” from all but his position as chief of the military commission, a step that both Deng and Jiang Zemin would eventually take, and Khieu Samphan had become the President of Democratic Kampuchea.⁶⁹⁵ On March 1, *Shijie zhishi* used language not heard in some time to insist that the DK continued to enjoy popular support, evidenced by people getting “ready for the long struggle ahead” at the “long-time revolutionary base” at Doukoushan.⁶⁹⁶ Passing reference is made to the involvement of Chinese advisors – quite likely Ambassador Sun’s group – in preparation for an April DK cabinet meeting in which the leaders decided to “synthesize experience and change military strategy.”⁶⁹⁷ By April 16, the DK said it was ready to “unite with other groups to strengthen the resistance”⁶⁹⁸, though in reality the DK was not at all enthusiastic about such a prospect.

The second phase of DK reforms emphasized a different political line and efforts at understanding their failures. In August 1979, the DK adopted the “Draft Political Line Program for Cambodian Patriots, Democrats, and Citizens to Unite,” which said nothing about socialism but instead emphasized uniting to resist Vietnam.⁶⁹⁹ The Chinese press carried an announcement that the Cambodian Communist Party had officially dissolved itself on December 6, 1979.⁷⁰⁰ Later in the month, the DK announced “the suspension of socialism and communism,”⁷⁰¹ and on December 29 a *Renmin ribao* editorial applauded the DK’s “new political line of unity.”⁷⁰² A former *Xinhua* journalist confirmed the presence of Chinese officials at the internal DK discussions throughout November and December 1979.⁷⁰³ Though he could not name the officials, he recalled the particular emphasis the advisors placed on the DK toning down its ideological convictions in order

to regain some modicum of popular support, emphasizing the same message Deng had given Ieng in Beijing. Yang also recalled refugees' overwhelming support for a possible alliance with Sihanouk.⁷⁰⁴

Accounts of attempts at "self-criticisms" were frustratingly vague. One of the only pieces published at the time suggests that Ieng Sary and Khieu Samphan "admit[ted] major mistakes to visiting Chinese journalists at the seat of the Kampuchean government" sometime in the middle of 1980.⁷⁰⁵ Later Chinese sources state that, around this time, "DK leaders admitted their mistakes"⁷⁰⁶ and that in order to "revise the[ir] unhappy domestic and international image...[they] announced Pol Pot's retirement from several significant posts."⁷⁰⁷ Neither of these pieces goes into detail about the precise nature of the "mistakes." More specific statements were not made until 1987, when *Xinhua* journalist Yang Mu, who covered Cambodia for several years from Bangkok, published a book in English. According to him, in December 1979, the DK leaders "and others" (again, Chinese advisors⁷⁰⁸) agreed on what had gone wrong under their rule: "... officials made mistakes in trying too hard to implement policies...trying to establish socialism too quickly, not taking progress a step at a time, being excessive in all activities...purges and fear were not a good tactic of ruling."⁷⁰⁹ Standard sources contain no particular references to the purges that drove DK officials to flee to Vietnam.

Where else were the themes of new tactics and political lines, retirement of older leaders, and efforts at recognizing and reconciling past mistakes being heard? Beijing's contemporaneous experiences trying to reconcile its own past "contradictions" and problems with political extremism gave policy-makers faith that such change was possible. In a review of the CCP's thirty years of rule, CCP Vice Chairman Ye Jianying

pointed out at the Fourth Plenum of the 11th NPC in September 1979 that while tremendous achievements had been made, “the leadership had made serious political errors...[he] declared the Cultural Revolution ‘an appalling catastrophe’ and ‘the most severe setback to [the] socialist cause since [1949].’”⁷¹⁰ The same speech included the first criticisms of Mao, and both of these public statements would have been unthinkable even just a few years earlier.

In August 1980, Deng Xiaoping revealed a remarkable capacity for criticizing past Chinese political lines when he told Italian journalist Oriana Falacci that the problem of extremism in China should have been stamped out when it first appeared in the 1950s.⁷¹¹ The failure to curtail those political impulses, according to Deng, had compromised democratic centralism, allowed the Party to ignore people’s needs and launch programs like the Great Leap Forward, and caused Mao to “los[e] touch with reality.”⁷¹² Deng saw the consequences of these campaigns in highly tangible terms, ones that made his own goals of economic development that much more difficult to achieve: “Wronged for many years, [these people] were unable to apply their intelligence and talents for the benefit of the people, and this was a loss not only to them personally but to the country as a whole.”⁷¹³

Attention also focused on putting an end to factionalism and cults of personalities. Four years after their arrest, members of the Gang of Four, the DK’s ideological allies in Beijing, went on trial. Among the charges leveled against them in November 1980 were “the usurpation of state power and party leadership; the persecution of some 750,000 people, 34,375 of whom died during the 1966-1976 period.”⁷¹⁴ In January 1981, the Gang of Four was all found guilty. Zhang Chunqiao, who had advised the DK in the

1970s, was given the death penalty, though it was suspended, as was Jiang Qing. In addition, the CPPCC posthumously expelled Kang Sheng, who had also had a relationship with the Khmer Rouge in the early 1970s. By January 1980, Deng informed the CCP Central Committee that at least 2.9 million people had been rehabilitated.⁷¹⁵

Lest there appear to be no causal relationship between domestic Chinese attempts at political rehabilitation and foreign policy, Deng made the point quite clear in an address to the leading group on foreign affairs in April 1981: "...in order to be seen as a great nation internationally, the domestic turmoil [of the Cultural Revolution] had to be resolved for good."⁷¹⁶ China's efforts at coming to terms with its own recent past was as much about demonstrating to the rest of the world its ability to do so, and it may also have been an effort to set a good example for others. There is no evidence to suggest that Beijing encouraged the DK to undertake trials or other similar public gestures, but Beijing's hope may have been that the DK would follow in their footsteps. But it is also telling that throughout the early 1980s Deng had also been particularly careful to reinforce a message to other state and communist party leaders that they should avoid extremism and find their own models for political and economic development.⁷¹⁷

As the only force with a functioning military inside Cambodia, the DK could in theory have continued – unreformed – in its campaign against the Vietnamese. Yet there were signs that Beijing, convinced that Vietnam would yield and withdraw within a few years, was more interested in ascertaining the DK's capability to *govern* again. Deng's discomfort with Democratic Kampuchea had been evident since Pol Pot's September 1977 visit to Beijing, and, as noted above, he was not shy in venting his frustrations at Ieng Sary in January 1979. Geng Biao's report bluntly stated that the DK had made

serious mistakes. Both clearly implied that the DK had inflicted a number of its own wounds. “We had to help them see their mistakes,” said a former MFA staff member.⁷¹⁸

There is also reason to believe that Beijing thought throughout 1978 that the DK was likely to fall because its rule was so unpopular. Geng Biao’s January 16 report reveals that Beijing, in anticipation of a domestic DK collapse, had already developed a plan to reinstate Sihanouk and had sought and obtained American support for this strategy. But such a fate was staved off by the Vietnamese invasion – an event that in Chinese analysts’ eyes actually *prolonged* the DK’s existence rather than allowing it to collapse:

...the contradictions between Vietnam and Cambodia replaced the contradictions between the Cambodian people and the Khmer Rouge, which arose from Cambodia’s important contradictions. The Khmer Rouge made use of an historical opportunity, grasping resistance to the Vietnamese invasion banners, which temporarily kept away the furious masses, and allowed it to continue to exist.⁷¹⁹

The implication here is that the Khmer Rouge continued to exist solely by virtue of the Vietnamese invasion. Beijing’s confidence in the DK’s capacity to rule was not high: if it returned to power alone and without resolving its “contradictions,” a similarly sovereignty-threatening crisis would erupt again in the future. Perhaps signaling a Chinese willingness to let the KR evaporate should they fail to reform, Deng told Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Kwan Yew in November 1980 that China would accept a KR loss in a free election.⁷²⁰ Contrary to common understanding, Beijing’s goal was *not* simply to return the party to power – it was to try, once again, to encourage the development of a viable governing body that could maintain Cambodia’s independence.

It is also possible that Beijing's efforts were driven in part by embarrassment of its support to an appalling regime. Far more information about the DK's brutal rule became available to the world as hundreds of thousands of Cambodians streamed over the border into Thailand, where refugee camps had been established by international aid agencies. The PRK's *in absentia* show trial of the "Pol Pot-Ieng Sary clique" in August 1979⁷²¹ obviously had a propagandistic edge to it, but it reinforced the damning portrait offered up by the refugees. Beijing could not sustain the conclusions of a December 1979 article in which a *Xinhua* correspondent accused *Hanoi* of committing genocide in Cambodia.⁷²²

Beijing's own self-criticisms for China's support to Cambodia's genocidal regime were neither loud nor detailed, but, contrary to common understanding, a few telling statements were offered up. Intriguingly, in January 1979, *Dongnanya yanjiu ziliao* published short profiles of Pol Pot, Khieu Samphan, and Ieng Sary. The article described Pol Pot's regime as "cruel" (*canku*) and, quite surprisingly, notes that China gave assistance to the KR during the Cultural Revolution. It also suggests that it was "hard to know" about Pol Pot's methods of ruling, "as very few people know for sure from the beginning [of the period of rule] what the leadership's actual decisions were."⁷²³ Although it would be another decade until more information was published, this was nevertheless a surprisingly early and frank admission of China's involvement in an obviously unpleasant regime.

In January 1981, *Peking Review* ran an article in outlining China's position. It simply stated: "Pol Pot committed serious mistakes, and China did not approve of his policies."⁷²⁴ This continues to be China's position: that although it provided support to

the DK, it never approved of its barbaric practices. Some consider this to be semantic sleight of hand, yet it may best illustrate the boundaries of non-interference. That same month, *Dongnanya yanjiu ziliao* reprinted an article from the *Far Eastern Economic Review* that not only described in detail the economic and agricultural destruction wrought by the invasion and subsequent intense production strategies. The article also placed responsibility for Cambodia's devastation on "the Vietnamese and their 'former friends' the Khmer Rouge."⁷²⁵ Thus Beijing's efforts at remaking the DK may have been an effort to minimize their own discomfort with the regime that they enabled.

Deng's discussion with Sihanouk in February 1979 was not simply a hypothetical debate. Beijing's preferred strategy, given all of the considerations, was to construct another coalition that would combine Sihanouk's diplomacy and international popularity with the DK's military capacity. Yet without significant change in the DK, Sihanouk would never agree to join forces. Thus a certain amount of reform on the DK's part was an essential component of making the larger strategy work.

Although Chinese advisors made some progress with the DK, they remained concerned throughout the early 1980s about their efforts' efficacy. Minor diplomatic snubs, such as the one to Sun Hao, continued. Although China continued to be highly critical of Vietnam's invasion, its criticisms were almost always based on reasonably accurate facts. When Ieng Thirith, Ieng Sary's wife, assured *Xinhua* in March 1980 that the Vietnamese invasion, rather than the DK's practices, had caused the deaths of two million Cambodians⁷²⁶, Chinese diplomats found this distortion alarming. One said, "Reform is not needed unless mistakes have been made. If you do not see your mistakes, your reforms are not meaningful."⁷²⁷ A *Xinhua* journalist's April 1982 report that the DK

Central Committee was still arranging marriages⁷²⁸ also appears to have caused some consternation amongst the Chinese advisors. One former staff member at the Embassy in Bangkok said that this particular information “worried us, because it was what they had done in the past.”⁷²⁹ Nonetheless, the Chinese press continued to publish more positive accounts of efforts on the border, marveling at the popular will to resist the Vietnamese⁷³⁰ and mocking the enemy for copying America’s “strategic hamlet” approach.⁷³¹

Regardless of the DK’s progress towards reform, Chinese military aid flowed by sea and air through Thailand, a route known as the “Deng Xiaoping Trail.” By the end of 1980, Chinese military aid enabled the DK military to double its size to forty thousand troops.⁷³² In December 1981, a delegation of about ten PLA officials visited the liberated zones.⁷³³ Around the same time, Khem Nguon, a DK military officer sent to China in 1977 for training, returned and took up a senior position with Ta Mok near Preah Vihear in northern Cambodia. In early February, the Chinese director of the Khmer Broadcasting Service visited the liberated zones and was unable to visit the Tonle Sap Lake due to fighting, though his subsequent briefing to the Chinese Embassy in Bangkok praised the work of PLA advisors.⁷³⁴ Other Chinese journalists joined DK units to observe “National Day” on April 17 and claimed to have encountered Vietnamese soldiers who had escaped their own units, “because they knew of the DK’s new tolerance.”⁷³⁵

Why did Beijing not return to its previous aspirations and propose a Sihanouk-led government to the Vietnamese in order to encourage withdrawal? It is possible that this might have been suggested, but it is unlikely Hanoi would have accepted a solution that did not entail Chinese cooperation in fully dismantling the DK. Alternatively, why did Beijing not reject the DK, given its ghastly regime? China continued to believe that the

DK had earned its legitimacy by fighting its way to power, and that it could not lose that status by virtue of being deposed by foreigners. The choice brought Beijing no obvious gain and worsened relations with the USSR and Vietnam, which in turn jeopardized the Four Modernizations. It also earned Beijing an unshakable reputation for continuing to back genocidal regimes. As a result, few give Deng retrospective credit for his November 1980 proposal, which suggested international supervision of Vietnam's withdrawal, disarmament of all factions, and an election – the core of what would later become the Paris Peace Accords.⁷³⁶

Déjà vu all over again. Beijing made its optimal strategy for resolving the Cambodia problem clear in January 1981: another coalition government, preferably with Sihanouk as the head and the reformed DK as one member.⁷³⁷ This seemed a bizarre preference, given what had come to pass with GRUNK, given the possibility that the DK could regain military control of Cambodia on its own, and given the deep hostility Sihanouk harbored toward the DK and the other resistance groups.

Beijing had indeed made an early and unequivocal statement that the Pol Pot regime was the sole legitimate government of Cambodia and it pledged to equally support all anti-Vietnamese factions.⁷³⁸ But it also continued its practice of encouraging the DK to give Sihanouk a prominent role in government, as Beijing remained quite firm in its conviction that united fronts – that “setting aside differences” – against a common enemy was a trial by fire for any regime. Implicitly, the message conveyed from Beijing was that past failures to reconcile their grievances with each other were at least partly responsible for the current predicament.⁷³⁹ Beijing also remained certain that a combined

effort would be strong on the battlefield and compelling in international diplomatic forums.

Others, including some Americans, suggested precisely the reverse: that Sihanouk had nothing to offer militarily and would only be tarnished by an association with the DK.⁷⁴⁰ Others dismissed a coalition as means of papering over China's support to the DK. Such views were defensible, yet the latter implies that reestablishing a coalition was a relatively simple, straightforward proposition. As it turned out, nothing could have been further from the reality: it took three and a half years to put the coalition together; moreover, once it formed, in the words of one former MFA staff member, "We did much of the work ourselves...they would not work together and they did not like tasks."⁷⁴¹ The efforts also required careful negotiations with some Asean members, and it entailed accommodating a third Cambodian faction.

As had been the case a decade earlier, Sihanouk was the most difficult party for Beijing to convince. More than a dozen of his family members had been killed by the DK, and although he claimed at the January 8 press conference in Beijing he knew little about the regime⁷⁴², he began to speak out about the DK's atrocities shortly after arriving in New York a few days later. When Sihanouk requested political asylum in the US on January 13, it seemed in part a statement that he would not return to live in China, the country that had made the DK regime possible. Deng and Sihanouk met in Washington in late January, where Deng succeeded in persuading Sihanouk to again take up residence in Beijing.

Despite the failure of Deng's first overture to Sihanouk regarding whether the Prince would consider again becoming head of a DK state, he persisted as Zhou Enlai had in

1970. Sihanouk recounted that, “Deng’s response was: ‘I respect your decision to refuse to be President of DK.’”⁷⁴³ Deng told Sihanouk, “‘We Chinese must confess that we do not appreciate some aspects of Pol Pot’s policy. He is too tough.’”⁷⁴⁴ Following his tart exchange with Deng about the impossibility of reforming the DK, Sihanouk left Beijing in mid-February 1979 for Pyongyang, now his favorite form of expressing his dismay with Beijing.⁷⁴⁵ Upon his return to Beijing in mid-February, where he received a formal welcome, Sihanouk stated that, “‘I have openly criticized China and yet China still respects my independence.’”⁷⁴⁶

Deng might have respected Sihanouk’s right to refuse a coalition, but this did not seem to mean the Chinese would not keep asking. On February 15, *Renmin ribao* published an article that stated, “‘Because of the new order, we must unite our experiences, revise our policies, and establish the broadest people’s democratic united front, to reflect the hopes of the Cambodian people.’”⁷⁴⁷ At the same time, *Peking Review* argued for a united front, explaining that, “‘The Chinese people had the same experience during their war of national liberation.’”⁷⁴⁸ Deng made another attempt with Sihanouk after he returned from Pyongyang in August 1979. This time he sent Deng Yingchao, Zhou’s widow and Sihanouk’s old friend, who had herself been kept from seeing Sihanouk on her 1978 visit to Cambodia. During her talk with Sihanouk, she “‘raised the idea of a united front. [Her] own experience was comparable to that of China. She said the Chinese Communist Party and the Nationalist Party formed a united front in 1936 to succeed in resisting the Japanese.’”⁷⁴⁹ She also pointed out that the “‘Khmer Rouge State’” was “‘still a full member of the United Nations,’” but Sihanouk wrote, “‘I again dared to

say ‘NO’ to Mrs. Chou En Lai, who told me that she respected my decision not to cooperate with the Khmers Rouges.”⁷⁵⁰ Sihanouk again returned to Pyongyang.

But the Prince must have begun to be swayed, given that he met in July and August 1979 with Khieu Samphan and Son Sann⁷⁵¹, a conservative nationalist and one of Sihanouk’s former prime ministers. Although some Chinese sources claim that Sihanouk himself was beginning to suggest a coalition by late August⁷⁵², it is more likely that his opposition did not begin to waver until either after Son Sann became more involved or the DK rewrote its political program.

In March 1980, Khieu Samphan traveled to Beijing to see Hua Guofeng, Indian diplomats, representatives of some Asean states, and Sihanouk.⁷⁵³ *Peking Review* opted for to emphasize the DK’s internal changes and their effects on the true enemy, Hanoi: “The first visit abroad by the new Prime Minister (Khieu Samphan) since the Government of Democratic Kampuchea was reorganized shows that it has passed through its most difficult period and that the Vietnamese aggressors are weakening with each passing day.”⁷⁵⁴ The Prince left for Pyongyang the day Khieu Samphan arrived. The DK were reportedly interested in a coalition, but the DK’s radio broadcasts throughout 1980 and 1981 continued to criticize Son Sann and Sihanouk for their lack of work on behalf of the resistance.

Military events inside Cambodia in the fall of 1980 could not have escaped Sihanouk’s or Beijing’s attention. Son Sann had returned to the liberated zones in October 1979 and announced his intention to form the Khmer People’s National Liberation Front (KPNLF).⁷⁵⁵ When the KPNLF met for the first time on April 24 and 25, Son Sann explained that his faction also sought to fight against the Vietnamese, but

that they had no intention of joining a united front with the DK.⁷⁵⁶ *Renmin ribao*, which had not reported on Sihanouk's recalcitrance, characterized Son Sann's position as "arrogant" and "inefficient," suggesting that, "The victorious side will be the one representing the most Cambodian people."⁷⁵⁷ In late November, the DK and the Khmer Serei, another loosely organized resistance group, conducted a successful joint attack on Vietnamese forces, after which *Xinhua* published Khieu Samphan's call for a united front.⁷⁵⁸

As the "negotiations" dragged on through 1980, Beijing must have been getting frustrated with Sihanouk. The Prince and Son Sann finally managed to agree to join forces in January 1981, but neither had the military strength of the Khmer Rouge. After several requests from Chinese officials, Sihanouk agreed to meet Khieu Samphan on February 8, 1981 in Pyongyang.⁷⁵⁹ But in March, Sihanouk did not announce his willingness to enter a coalition, but rather the formation of his own political party, Funcinpec.⁷⁶⁰ This earned only terse mention in the Chinese press. In late March, Sihanouk explained that he would only drop his objections to forming a coalition with the DK if Beijing agreed to arm and equip his troops to the same strength.⁷⁶¹ Standard sources do not contain a response from Beijing.

Beijing was not alone in pushing for a coalition, yet Asean's efforts were an early example of the complications created by internationalizing the Cambodia problem. Asean also wanted to see a collective anti-Vietnamese effort, so much so that in February 1981 its foreign ministers expressed their concern that if the DK did not form a coalition it ran the risk of losing the UN seat. Yet Asean and China had very different ideas about what the composition, goals, and strategy of the coalition ought to be, ones that began to

appear at the first International Conference on Cambodia at the UN in July 1981.⁷⁶²

Foreign Minister Han Nianlong reiterated the necessity of Vietnam's withdrawal, the restoration of Cambodian self-determination, and an international guarantee of its non-aligned status to the General Assembly.⁷⁶³ In addition, he insisted that any negotiations about Cambodia's future had to be conducted between the DK and Hanoi and no one else, particularly the PRK but also Sihanouk and Son Sann. The UN should only have a "restricted role" in "managing" the discussions on Cambodia.⁷⁶⁴ Asean, on the other hand, not only wanted to involve all factions in any future talks, but also wanted to remove any major powers from the discussion and to express some sympathy for the suffering of Vietnamese civilians at the hands of the DK.⁷⁶⁵ Beijing dug in its heels by refusing to support an Asean proposal that the DK be disarmed following a Vietnamese withdrawal, as such a requirement would constitute interference.⁷⁶⁶ A compromise was not reached until February 1982.

Probably to Beijing's irritation, Sihanouk himself claims that it was Asean that finally persuaded him to join a coalition. The Prince wrote that, in June 1982, "[It was] at the request of Air Chief Marshal Siddhi Savetsila, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, acting on behalf of Asean, that I accepted to be named (by ASEAN, in Kuala Lumpur) 'President of Democratic Kampuchea.'"⁷⁶⁷ *Xinhua* and *Renmin ribao* published the announcement that a coalition would be formed on June 22⁷⁶⁸, and, according to Yang Mu, Sihanouk made a lightning visit to Phnom Malai to inspect the liberated zones⁷⁶⁹ prior to the formal ceremonies establishing the coalition.

The Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK) was formally established in Beijing on July 9 with Li Xiannian, who would soon become the President

of the PRC, and other senior Chinese leaders present.⁷⁷⁰ After three and a half years of wrangling, Sihanouk became the Chair, Khieu Samphan the Assistant Chair of Foreign Affairs, and Son Sann the President of a united, anti-Vietnamese resistance. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced:

China's government firmly supports these three factions uniting as the government of Cambodia, supports the Cambodian people's struggle to resist the Vietnamese occupation; moreover, in accordance with the basic and practical needs of the Cambodians in this resistance struggle, China provides the three-way nationalists arms, equipment, materials, and training.⁷⁷¹

The PRK promptly dismissed the CGDK as “cosmetic surgery to make up the face of the Beijing Dracula.”⁷⁷²

Was Beijing going to such lengths simply to return the Khmer Rouge to power? Zhang Xizhen noted that, “Although the [coalition] government had contradictions, unifying strengthened them considerably.”⁷⁷³ But if significant differences remained after such efforts to construct a coalition, Chinese policymakers must have realized that a permanent solution was still a long way off. That Asean countries were not of a uniform mind about the Vietnamese or Chinese invasions rendered it impossible for Beijing to seek a solution strictly within regional confines, yet Beijing commenced on a concerted effort to advance and develop confidence in an anti-invasion, anti-Vietnamese – rather than pro-DK – approach with its neighbors. It is hard to see how Beijing's actions could reflect a commitment to recreating Democratic Kampuchea.

Convinced that Vietnamese and Soviet actions were evidence of persistent hegemonism, and that these types of conflict in the developing world had replaced major

wars, China clearly felt compelled to take a stand. Its principled choices – to encourage the Khmer Rouge to undertake reforms like China’s and create a successful coalition to legitimately rule Cambodia – were difficult, baffling to the outside world, and unlikely to succeed. Beijing could have contented itself with strenuous diplomatic objections to the Vietnamese invasion, given Sihanouk a home in exile, and acknowledged that Cambodia was better off without the DK. Beijing could certainly have refrained from invading Vietnam, as this highly unprincipled retaliatory attack on Vietnam only served to remind China that such actions confirmed the “China threat” to Southeast Asia and others. Nevertheless, China diminished its own security and complicated its international relationships for the sake of Cambodian independence. As much as Deng and other foreign policy makers gave priority to economic development, they clearly cared enough about the implications of Vietnam’s invasion to pay the costs of delayed normalization.

III. Bracing for change: 1983-1985

As China emerged from its immediate post-transition phase, it did so with a deepened conviction that the threat of world war had finally receded. At the same time, Deng’s foreign policy, which stressed self-reliance and solving one’s own problems⁷⁷⁴, reflected increasing concerns about the international economic system and the vulnerabilities of developing countries, a reality reinforced by the 1982 debt crisis.⁷⁷⁵ Deng’s theme of “peace and development” in foreign policy, made official by 1985, was not simply an effort to make China appear less threatening, but to suggest to developing countries that their ability to resist external intervention depended in part on their economic

development.⁷⁷⁶ It was this recognition – of the urgent need to promote economic development – that slightly, but critically, altered Beijing’s perception of the Cambodia problem during these few years.

China remained committed to a full Vietnamese withdrawal and a reinstatement of a legitimate government. But at the same time, it was more acutely aware of the need to begin rehabilitating a country devastated by decades of war and removing obstacles to regional economic growth. Such efforts were going to require committed and capable leadership on the Cambodians’ part, yet the CGDK members’ performances did not indicate their willingness to undertake such an effort, let alone their ability to rule. Beijing’s frustrations with the coalition only became more apparent as the Chinese themselves continued the slow trek to normalization with the Soviets, with whom they had considerably more serious differences than the CGDK members could claim with each other. Combined with what appeared to be a draw on the battlefield, Beijing began to contemplate other strategies for reaching a political solution to the Cambodia problem, including negotiating with, rather than punishing, Vietnam.

The inchoate coalition. “Within a year of the coalition forming, we knew they would never really work together,” said one former MFA staff member who had also worked with GRUNK.⁷⁷⁷ Having committed to the CGDK and believing its evolution to be an essential part of a solution, Beijing was reluctant to abandon it, though its frustrations only mounted as pressures from within the coalition and outside of China threatened to destroy it. It began to look as if only Beijing was making any effort on behalf of the coalition.

The MFA tried again to create a sense of formality and normalcy by continuing to accredit ambassadors to the CGDK and treat them with normal diplomatic protocol. Representation and other logistical matters, such as dispensing money and channeling weapons and aid, were handled through the Chinese Embassy in Thailand. In April 1983, Shen Ping, who was already serving as Ambassador to Thailand, traveled from Bangkok to a “liberated zone”, likely quite close to the Thai border, to present his credentials to Sihanouk. Although Shen did not travel the way Sun Hao had four years earlier, the journey was reminiscent to the Doukoushan trek. Ambassadors from Bangladesh, Malaysia, Mauritania, and North Korea also participated.⁷⁷⁸ Assessments of the three factions’ military operations was done throughout this time primarily by Fu Xuezhong⁷⁷⁹, who was then one of the senior political secretaries at the Chinese embassy in Bangkok and who would eventually become the ambassador. Zhang Dewei took over from Shen Ping in August 1985⁷⁸⁰ and presented his credentials at a similar ceremony held in the Dangrek Mountains.⁷⁸¹

Senior Chinese leaders met regularly with the CGDK, typically alongside the coalition’s meetings in Beijing. Deng Xiaoping, Li Xiannian, and Hu Yaobang met jointly and individually with the Cambodians during the CGDK’s cabinet meeting in December 1983.⁷⁸² The Chinese placed unambiguous emphasis on the factions’ behaving as a single unit on the battlefield and off, and one of Son Sann’s staff members remembers Deng’s particular exhortations to Son Sann to cooperate with Sihanouk.⁷⁸³ Similar messages were delivered from the Chinese at the next Beijing meeting between Sihanouk, Son Sann, and Khieu Samphan in July 1984, and when the three returned in September to observe China’s 35th National Day festivities⁷⁸⁴

Despite the stakes, and despite the efforts others continued to make on their behalf, the three factions appeared unable to resolve their grievances with each other. Sihanouk began threatening to quit the CGDK in November 1984, two months before the upcoming congress.⁷⁸⁵ The intervention of a group of Asean foreign ministers was required to talk him out of it.⁷⁸⁶ Following talks between Zhao Ziyang and Sihanouk in May 1985, Son Sann was called to Beijing for “unofficial talks.”⁷⁸⁷ He was again encouraged on the sidelines by Chinese officials to cooperate with Sihanouk and to encourage Sihanouk to cooperate with the DK. But as Son Sann’s staff member later said, “We did not agree with that, because the Khmers Rouge were killing our troops. How could we *not* object?”⁷⁸⁸ In July, Sihanouk strongly criticized the DK, alleging that they had killed three dozen of his troops or supporters, and cautioning that if similar incidents took place he would leave the coalition permanently.⁷⁸⁹ The following month, Sihanouk repeated his intent to resign in order to protect his followers. He also stated that his working relationship with Son Sann had deteriorated and that he would never support talks with the PRK.⁷⁹⁰

The Symposium on the Vietnam-Cambodia Issue, which involved Chinese policymakers and academics, published a report in early 1986. It presented a view that the resistance was not making progress in the war not just as a result of “supply and logistical difficulties in the interior,” but also with “internal unity.” According to this document, the only way the CGDK would “establish a broad base of support” was to “set aside differences, strive for real political and military unity and cooperation, and stick to Sihanouk’s leadership.” Son Sann should not act on his standing with intellectuals and foreigners, and the “Khmer Rouge” should “turn down its voice.”⁷⁹¹

When the coalition leaders returned to Beijing in December 1985 for another cabinet meeting, they were reassured by the promises of more arms and funding. Yet they must have noticed the diminishing anti-Vietnamese rhetoric from the Chinese side, and they should have noticed a change in Deng's attitude. Although Deng told them, "If it takes one hundred years to succeed we will support you until victory,"⁷⁹² a former translator recounted Deng having grumbled following the meeting that, "It will take them *at least* a hundred years."⁷⁹³ By this point, it was also increasingly clear that Vietnamese troops had the CGDK on the defensive, a status that was unlikely to change short of massive intervention.

In addition to its CGDK relationship to Beijing, the DK also tried to maintain distinct contact. Fu Xuezhong reported regularly on DK military actions, and one of these accounts was published by *Shijie zhishi* in October 1984.⁷⁹⁴ Yang Mu escorted a group of journalists in May 1984 to see Pol Pot at Doukoushan and Ieng Sary in Battambang.⁷⁹⁵ But Beijing's perception seemed to be changing. A March 1984 article published in *Dongnanya yanjiu ziliao* repeated accounts of Chinese journalists that less than ten provincial-level Cambodian Communist Party members had survived the purges⁷⁹⁶, and few new members were joining. In 1985, Nuon Chea, Chea Chhun, and Pol Pot, who had retained his position as head of the military commission, all retired⁷⁹⁷, and Pol Pot was reportedly hospitalized in China during this year.⁷⁹⁸ It was also in 1985 that a Chinese journal also published a death toll for the 1976-1979 period that roughly comported with western estimates (about one million people), and although it did not specifically name the DK, blame was squarely placed on "the regime at the time."⁷⁹⁹ Although no documents clearly articulate this sentiment, Beijing seemed to be recognizing that its

efforts at reform were having little effect, and that it was increasingly unlikely that the DK could be transformed into the kind of governing force Beijing would have liked to see.

Given the frustrations and the failures, why did Beijing not make more of an effort to pass responsibility for the CGDK off to other states? The CGDK had garnered some regional support, most notably Asean's June 1983 commitment to support a Sihanouk-led CGDK⁸⁰⁰ and Singapore's provision of weapons to the resistance beginning in August 1984.⁸⁰¹ But two signals from Washington indicated that the US was increasingly less comfortable with the idea of supporting a resistance that included the DK. Beijing took particular notice of the Reagan administration's preliminary plan to support anti-Soviet movements in developing countries, yet its list of movements did not include the CGDK.⁸⁰² The March 1985 debate in the House of Representatives ultimately concluded that it would provide aid to the resistance, but only to Sihanouk's and Son Sann's factions. Beijing responded that this decision only, "contributes to divisions in the coalition, which is encouraging to Hanoi."⁸⁰³ In an effort to counter these moves, President Li Xiannian attempted to persuade Secretary of State George Schultz that the DK had embraced liberal democracy and capitalism, an argument Schultz obviously found unpersuasive.⁸⁰⁴ The other supporters of the CGDK would likely have moved quickly to withdraw support from the DK, which to Beijing meant that the only real obstacle to Vietnam's otherwise total domination of Cambodia would be removed.

The problems were not only coming from Washington. Throughout 1984, Vietnamese officials had tried to contact Sihanouk and Son Sann to see if common anti-DK sentiment could translate into some kind of alliance. A semi-formal overture was

made in February 1985 but appears to have gone nowhere.⁸⁰⁵ Later in the year, on a visit to Pakistan, Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Kapitsa opined that the Soviets might prefer to settle the Cambodia problem through a reunification of the two Cambodian Communist factions, and subsequently “endorsed overtures to the Khmer Rouge.”⁸⁰⁶

Why was this plan not appealing to Beijing? After all, it would return to at least shared power those Beijing continued to insist were the only legitimate government, and they would be sharing power with other former DK officials. Moreover, it would have brought an end to the interminable wrangling with the CGDK. But Beijing continued to regard the PRK as illegitimate. One former MFA negotiator said the suggestion was immediately discarded because Beijing believed the two sides would quickly revert to armed conflict.⁸⁰⁷ Finally, Beijing was also unwilling to consider a solution that did not include Sihanouk, in whom they continued to have faith.

Beijing had few other options, but one can imagine that Li Xiannian’s pitch to George Schultz was not a pleasant experience. Moreover, the MFA invested considerable efforts in persuading Asean and others that the purpose of Chinese aid to Cambodia and others in Southeast Asia during this period was “to work against Vietnam.”⁸⁰⁸ Beijing slogged on with the CGDK.

Progress with the Soviets. The vast majority of China’s criticisms and condemnations of Vietnam’s December 1978 invasion of Cambodia attributed ultimate blame to the Soviet Union, which was accused of practicing hegemonism and social-imperialism. In the wake of the invasion, Beijing opted not to renew the Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance with the Soviet Union, which it had re-

signed annually since 1949, and suspended all talks between the two sides about improving relations.

Beijing's chilly relationship with Moscow was a costly impediment to the Four Modernizations and was obviously in tension with a foreign policy agenda focusing on peace and development. Devoted to these goals and somewhat reassured by its improving with the US, Beijing began making overtures toward Moscow despite all the hostile rhetoric. In 1981, Vice Premier Li Xiannian suddenly announced that China was willing to resume talks with the Soviet Union, and Soviet Premier Leonid Brezhnev responded positively in March 1982.⁸⁰⁹

The talks did not take place until October 1982, though by that time deputy Foreign Minister Qian Qichen had further indicated a shift in China's approach to the Soviet Union as a result of problems that emerged that year with the US over Taiwan. Beijing had already publicly stated its three minimum conditions for normalization: complete Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, troop reduction on the Sino-Soviet border and particularly in Mongolia, and full Vietnamese withdrawal from Cambodia. At the Beijing talks, the Chinese made clear their approach with respect to the Soviets in resolving the Cambodia problem, which stemmed from the belief that if Moscow reduced aid to Hanoi, Hanoi could not sustain its occupation of Cambodia. Beijing expected the USSR to cease its military support to Vietnam, to exert full diplomatic pressure on Vietnam to withdraw from Cambodia, and to allow full Cambodian control of its political leadership following that withdrawal.⁸¹⁰

While the Soviets were unwilling to meet any of these demands at the time, these talks spurred vintage Zhou-style diplomacy: even though there were few points in

common, the two sides kept meeting. By March 1985, Li Peng was making an historic visit to Moscow. There had been no real progress on the three key issues, and Beijing had continued to publicize its conviction that Soviet actions in Asia and the Pacific threatened the whole world.⁸¹¹ But it was at these talks that new Secretary General of the Soviet Union's Communist Party, Mikhail Gorbachev, began to publicly advocate a political settlement to the Afghan conflict⁸¹², a gesture that certainly did not go unnoticed in Beijing. A month later, Deng responded in kind: although China still maintained that the three issues had to be resolved prior to normalization, he not only expressed his confidence in resolving the Cambodia issue, but he also offered to drop China's objection to the Soviets' maintaining a naval presence at the Vietnamese port of Cam Ranh Bay. This was a major concession, one described by Chanda as "the great leap sideways."⁸¹³

Some of the progress between Moscow and Beijing undoubtedly stemmed from both sides' emphasis on domestic economic development, which required that major conflicts be avoided. Taking a tougher stance with Moscow would have been in tension with Deng's agenda of peace and development, and it would have been costly. As important, however, was Moscow's increasing unwillingness to subsidize Vietnam, which made it easier for Beijing to keep the pressure on Hanoi while not softening its position on Cambodia. The costs to Beijing here were not high, likely limited to some unhappiness with some factions of the leadership and some members of the CGDK. Beijing may have also been hoping that its efforts to reconcile with an enemy of 25 years would serve as a model to others.

Maintaining a hard line on Vietnam? During these few years, Beijing began to realize that while it had the upper hand financially and diplomatically, the CGDK's ineptitude and Hanoi's tenacity made it unlikely that Vietnam was going to come to the negotiating table quickly. Moscow was of less and less help in this regard, and, as a result, Beijing opted to continue its hostile actions and rhetoric, but also to create a few opportunities for more cooperative interactions.

Beijing was relentless in its anti-Vietnamese publicity, much of which had a consistent theme of betrayal. Beijing mocked Vietnam's status as a revolutionary country, its inability to inspire revolutionary sentiments in other countries, and its dependence on the USSR. The MFA regularly published statements condemning Vietnamese aggression, claiming that Hanoi kept "hundreds of thousands" of troops in Cambodia⁸¹⁴ (a number that was considerably inflated⁸¹⁵), and threatening that Vietnam would "eat bitter fruit." In February 1983, *Shijie zhishi* detailed the decline of the "Le Duan clique," its "inability to satisfy its Soviet masters," its failed attempts to "capture the CGDK leadership," and its ongoing attempts to launch guerrilla attacks on China.⁸¹⁶ Anti-Le Duan statements were frequently attributed to Hoang Van Hung, a prominent North Vietnamese communist who had defected to Beijing. In February 1983, Hoang Van Hung publicly called on Vietnam to abandon its "puppet status" and establish relations with China on the basis of the Five Principles.⁸¹⁷ Another article suggested that had Ho Chi Minh lived, Vietnam would never have invaded Cambodia.⁸¹⁸ The Chinese press dismissed Vietnamese efforts to split the CGDK, insisted that the KR had reformed, and claimed that the occupation of Cambodia was "bleeding Vietnam dry."⁸¹⁹

Beijing seemed bent on trumpeting Hanoi's betrayal but rarely mentioned the PRK, presumably in an effort to deny it any legitimacy. One of the only articles published on the PRK during this time was a *Far Eastern Economic Review* reprint that explored the ongoing reliance on cadres from Vietnam, implying an inability to generate local support.⁸²⁰ An August 1985 article from *Xiandai guoji guanxi* (Contemporary International Relations) typified the approach of blaming all problems on Hanoi – pointing to “advisors at all levels of the government...tightening control over food production and industry...increasing the scope of the puppet army and encouraging Vietnamese migration” – without ever mentioning the PRK.⁸²¹ As had been the case with the Lon Nol regime, it was as if the PRK did not exist.

Beijing also made efforts to further isolate Vietnam diplomatically, which meshed well with Washington's efforts. In February 1983, the PLA's Chief of Staff pledged Chinese assistance to Thailand in the event Vietnam began to threaten it.⁸²² As a result of Beijing's opposition, Asean rejected Vietnam's March 1983 to discuss the Cambodia problem, even if such talks excluded the PRK.⁸²³ In August, when Thai officials offered to conduct a state visit to Vietnam if Vietnamese troops pulled back from the Thai-Cambodian border, Chinese Foreign Minister Wu Xueqian flew to Bangkok to formally request that the offer be withdrawn. He was successful. More consequential was Washington's message to Hanoi in July 1984: without withdrawal from Cambodia, normalization talks could not be pursued.⁸²⁴ The Vietnamese used the only tools that were available, publishing articles claiming that ethnic Chinese communities in Southeast Asia were “stalking horses” for the PRC⁸²⁵ and amplifying some Asean state's preferences for a Vietnamese regime in Cambodia to block southward Chinese

communist expansion.⁸²⁶ Japan invited Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach to discuss the situation in Indochina in October 1984⁸²⁷, but few of these efforts were effective.

Minor military skirmishes continued throughout this period, but most observers suggested these were not serious incursions. In April 1983, Guangxi troops started a “flare up” near Lang Son, though few were hurt and the action appears to have been undertaken to reassure Thailand, which was increasingly nervous about Vietnam’s new dry-season offensive.⁸²⁸ The concern about Thailand’s security was expressed again when *Xinhua* journalists covered the loss of a KPNLAF base near the border in April 1984.⁸²⁹

At the same time, both sides demonstrated some remarkable flexibility towards each other, though Vietnam’s choices were narrowed by its increasing economic distress. Sino-Vietnamese talks had commenced in Romania in the late summer of 1982, and continued between senior Party members in the spring of 1983. *Xinhua* took an unusually sympathetic approach and did not criticize Vietnam’s domestic troop increase but rather characterized it as a “defensive measure against the USSR.”⁸³⁰

In March 1983, Beijing made a significant concession and offered to discuss normalization with Hanoi after the first phase of a two-stage withdrawal.⁸³¹ According to at least one Chinese source, Vietnam began to withdraw some troops in late 1983⁸³², which may have helped contribute to Beijing’s quiet decision a year later that it did not want to waste the diplomatic capital, the resources, and the military morale on teaching Vietnam another “lesson.”⁸³³ Another round of quiet talks took place in Beijing in the spring of 1985. By August, Vietnam offered to begin bringing troops home with the goal of full withdrawal by 1990⁸³⁴, though it cautioned that “appropriate measures” would be

taken if “these withdrawals are taken advantage of to undermine the peace and security of Kampuchea.”⁸³⁵ And so, despite FM Wu Xueqian’s ongoing public speculation about precisely such a “lesson,”⁸³⁶ the situation was moving in the direction of a diplomatic, rather than a military, solution.

What explains this shift? Beijing knew that it could outlast Vietnam on the withdrawal and normalization and prolong the pain of its isolation, but China pursued other options. Its increasing confidence in the Soviet Union and decreasing confidence in the CGDK made it consider alternatives other than a complete restoration to power of the DK. And, as one MFA staff officer said, “Who wanted to go to war over Cambodia again? Who was going to fight whom?”⁸³⁷ The prickly rhetoric toward Vietnam – particularly when contrasted with the attitude toward the Soviet Union – reflected a continuing Chinese interest in demonstrating Vietnam’s error in violating Cambodia’s sovereignty, yet Beijing’s willingness to negotiate created a real cost: the prospect of leaving some or all of the PRK in power.

It is also possible that China’s view of the PRK had improved slightly during these two years. By 1985, the PRK’s leadership was no longer dominated by Cambodian communists known as “Hanoi veterans” – those who had fled to Vietnam in the 1960s to escape Sihanouk’s purges – but by a group former Khmer Rouge whose ties to Vietnam were weaker.⁸³⁸ By virtue of having been part of the anti-Lon Nol insurgency, did Beijing see this group as having at least some of the same legitimacy that GRUNK or the CGDK had? Certainly they were tarnished by their involvement in the Vietnamese occupation, but it is possible that their growing political distance from Hanoi may have helped shift Beijing’s perception.

By the end of 1985, Beijing knew that the Cambodia problem would not be solved by military means. Why then did China not demand more cohesive, cooperative behavior from the CGDK, given all the efforts Beijing made on its behalf? Chinese policy makers appear to have decided that that would be intrusive and counter-productive – a form of interference. Yet that choice yielded real costs for Beijing. Had China been less adamant about Cambodia, relations with the Soviets and the Vietnamese could have been normalized earlier and contributed measurably to achievement of the Four Modernizations.

IV. Decisive shifts: 1986-1988

The bulk of action in these years took place between China, the Soviet Union, and Vietnam – considerably more action than within the coalition or between the coalition and any other actors. Major changes in and between the USSR and Vietnam spurred on progress with respect to Cambodia. But Beijing, moderately distracted by demonstrations in Qinghai and Tibet, as well as another leadership reshuffle, remained keen on finding a political solution to the Cambodia problem. Not only did it continue to work harder towards this goal than the CGDK did and insist on a role for the universally abhorred Khmer Rouge, it also did not punish Sihanouk for his apparent betrayal of China's agenda. Most notably, China agreed to a solution that guaranteed – rather than precluded – the long-term involvement of senior PRK officials in Cambodia's politics.

Triangular relations. If any single event helped push forward Sino-Soviet normalization, it was Soviet Secretary General Gorbachev's July 1986 speech in Vladivostok. This speech signaled a major turning point not just in the bilateral

relationship but in the remaking of Soviet ties with the non-Communist world.

Gorbachev indicated a willingness to negotiate with Beijing on Cambodia. In early September, Deng told “60 Minutes” that, “if the Soviet Union can contribute to the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from [Cambodia], that will remove the main obstacle in Sino-Soviet relations...Once this problem is solved, I will be ready to meet Gorbachev.”⁸³⁹

Although the Soviets did not directly respond to this, they announced in late October that troops would be pulled back from Mongolia and the Sino-Soviet border, a step that was no doubt welcome in Beijing. But why was there progress with respect to these issue, but not with Vietnam? The relationship between Moscow and Hanoi was beginning to deteriorate. As China had done a decade earlier, the Soviet Union scaled back its aid to Vietnam considerably as it began domestic economic reforms. Hanoi, heavily dependent on Soviet aid in part as a result of the occupation, expressed dismay. At the same time, Vietnam was coping with serious domestic challenges. Senior leader Le Duan died in July⁸⁴⁰, triggering a leadership crisis shortly before the sixth Vietnamese National People’s Congress meeting, at which its reform era was officially launched.⁸⁴¹ Vietnamese officials visited Moscow shortly after the NPC but were unable to secure support, and Vietnamese Communist Party Secretary General Nguyen Van Linh fared no better in a May 1987 meeting with Gorbachev.⁸⁴² As a result, the Soviets had decreasing leverage. Beijing seems to have seen no purpose in demanding of Moscow what it could no longer deliver.

The relationship between Beijing and Hanoi, meanwhile, remained unchanged on the surface. Analysts dismissed agreements between Vietnam and the PRK as “colonialist

tactics.”⁸⁴³ The Chinese press mocked what it saw as Vietnam’s predicament (“If the Cambodia problem is solved, Vietnam will lose aid from the USSR, so it loses twice.”⁸⁴⁴) or its arrogance (“Vietnam cannot bear to abandon its hopes to lead the Indochina Federation.”⁸⁴⁵). Some employed wishful thinking: “Occupying Cambodia has actually been beneficial to Cambodia’s resistance by giving it more encouragement and strength to resist.”⁸⁴⁶ In 1987, a compilation of Xinhua journalists’ articles about Cambodia was published in English. The forward to *Report from the Jungle of Kampuchea* noted that: “Hanoi’s mendacious propaganda, its near-complete news blackout in areas under its occupation...all contribute to the world’s ignorance of what is going on in that country.”⁸⁴⁷ Thousands of copies were shipped to Chinese Embassies for distribution.⁸⁴⁸ None of these criticisms of Vietnamese policy compare those to similar efforts undertaken by the DK with Chinese aid.⁸⁴⁹

And despite the Chinese commitment to de-militarizing the tension with Vietnam, border skirmishes took place in January and April 1987. Those who thought the Chinese initiated the January attack suggested that it was a gesture of reassurance to the Cambodian resistance following Beijing’s discussions with Moscow. Those who thought Hanoi started the battle attributed it to a need to shift attention away from the domestic leadership struggle.⁸⁵⁰ The spring attack was launched by the Chinese in response to a Vietnamese dry-season push through northwestern Cambodia and across the border into Thailand. Some speculated that China would launch another assault on the eve of Foreign Minister Wu Xueqian’s May visit to Bangkok⁸⁵¹, though that did not prove to be the case. In March 1988, the Chinese and Vietnamese navies clashed over the Spratly Islands. Reports claimed that this was “not related the occupation of Cambodia.”⁸⁵²

Throughout late 1987 and 1988, however, the three sides slowly narrowed their differences with one another. In October 1987, Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach attended National Day festivities at the Chinese Embassy in Hanoi.⁸⁵³ In May 1988, the USSR began bringing troops home from Afghanistan with a goal of completing its withdrawal within nine months. By June, China and the Soviet Union had signed new agreements on dismantling stocks of mid-range Soviet missiles and withdrawing some troops from Mongolia.⁸⁵⁴ That same month, full diplomatic ties were restored between China and Laos⁸⁵⁵, which cannot have pleased Vietnam. In September 1988, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs made clear its conditions for normalization with Vietnam, which continued to include a full withdrawal from Cambodia under international supervision and dismantling the PRK.⁸⁵⁶ From China's perspective, considerable progress was being made on issues at least as complicated than those that continued to divide the CGDK.

The beginnings of a political solution. Had the CGDK made commensurate progress during this time? In March 1986, Prince Sihanouk, President Son Sann and Vice-Chairman Khieu Samphan held a cabinet meeting in Beijing, and issued the CGDK's eight-point proposal on resolving the Cambodia problem. It sought to once again make Cambodia an, "independent, united, self-reliant, democratic, peaceful, neutral, non-aligned country, reflecting the original meaning of the treaty of peace and non-interference signed with Vietnam, and peacefully coexisting with Vietnam..."⁸⁵⁷ The proposal envisioned talks with Vietnam, and, following the completion of a first-phase troop withdrawal, direct talks with the PRK.⁸⁵⁸ It was particularly difficult to get the DK to agree to the talks with the Vietnamese prior to a full withdrawal.

It is interesting to speculate how much involvement Beijing had in the development of the document. One Chinese official claimed that Ministry of Foreign Affairs staff members had written all of the eight-point plan⁸⁵⁹, while others simply acknowledged Chinese “assistance” in drafting the plan.⁸⁶⁰ Beijing described the proposal as “not only fair and reasonable, but also extremely generous.”⁸⁶¹ *Shijie zhishi* argued that it was unreasonable for Vietnam to continue opposing talks with the DK because they were an integral part of a legitimate regime.⁸⁶²

Chinese support for a two-phase withdrawal was not new, nor was the language echoing the Five Principles, but Chinese approval for talks with the *PRK* – rather than Hanoi – certainly was. Was Beijing changing its stance towards Hanoi’s appointees in Phnom Penh? There was little mention in the Chinese press that the *PRK* had in 1986 adopted favorable economic policies to entice ethnic Chinese back to Cambodia⁸⁶³, but given Beijing’s sensitivity with respect to this issue in Vietnam, it was unlikely to have escaped the MFA’s notice. Moreover, several states and major international aid agencies were arguing that the *PRK* was infinitely preferable to the DK and was also contributing to reconstructing Cambodia. Alongside its possibly changing position regarding the *PRK*’s leadership, Beijing must also have been concerned that demands to dismantle the *PRK* might create a vacuum. Beijing was also aware of that as aid from Moscow to Hanoi decreased, so did aid from Hanoi to Phnom Penh, creating tensions between the *PRK* and Vietnam.⁸⁶⁴

Although there is no evidence of official Chinese involvement in the eight-point plan, the similarities between it and China’s general position and the differences between it and the Cambodian factions’ positions were probably not coincidental. But was this level of

Chinese involvement a violation of its own standards of interference? Now in its twelfth year of backing Cambodian “coalitions,” China was not about to turn its back on the CGDK. But if the CGDK was going to be so inflexible, Beijing’s foreign policy makers would have to pave the way with respect to a political situation. Although Vietnam initially rejected the eight-point plan⁸⁶⁵, Hanoi and the PRK agreed by the autumn of 1986 to talk to all three CGDK factions.⁸⁶⁶ It seemed obvious which CGDK leader Beijing would encourage to engage with the Vietnamese.

Letting Sihanouk go. The CGDK had made little progress on its own. But the softening positions of China, the USSR, the PRK, and Vietnam with respect to each other created an important opportunity in late 1986 and early 1987. Although much work stood between that moment and an agreement that would include the DK and the PRK, and would be acceptable to all the other countries involved in the dispute, it was most crucial at this point to break the impasse between the CGDK and the PRK.

Sihanouk did precisely that in characteristically dramatic fashion. On May 7, 1987, he wrote to Khieu Samphan and Son Sann announcing his intent to take a yearlong absence from his role with the CGDK. He gave two reasons: as he had complained in the previous few years, KR troops had been attacking his soldiers, and he wanted more political flexibility. Sihanouk’s personal resignation can only have helped protect his troops if it embarrassed Beijing into demanding greater discipline via Khieu Samphan, though by this point at least some of the Chinese officials involved in dealing with the KR had deemed them “incapable of reform.”⁸⁶⁷ It had been clear all along that Sihanouk was deeply uncomfortable with the KR, and resigning from the coalition put more distance between them. Hanoi promptly announced that, “Sihanouk’s resignation this

time makes clear that the CGDK is sleeping together in the same bed but with different dreams, full of contradiction.”⁸⁶⁸

More important was Sihanouk’s desire for “political flexibility,” which clearly signaled his intent to talk to Hanoi, Phnom Penh, or both. Although similar talks had been proposed in the eight-point plan, those were to have been undertaken by the coalition and in clear exchange for some Vietnamese concessions. But just ten days after Sihanouk wrote to Son Sann and Khieu Samphan, the Thai Foreign Minister let it be known that the Prince had already met with “Vietnamese leaders and representatives of the Phnom Penh government.” Over the next two months, Sihanouk reiterated his desire to have “special talks with Vietnam in his personal capacity, and to have a dialogue with Hun Sen...as father to son.”⁸⁶⁹

Little was written about the resignation in the Chinese press, save for affirmations by CGDK faction leaders that they still regarded Sihanouk as their leader. Some read Beijing’s alleged non-response “as indication of its embarrassment”⁸⁷⁰, yet these same analysts in other circumstances read silences as evidence of complicity, of anger, or of disagreement, so it is difficult to accept these interpretations.

But why did Beijing not excommunicate Sihanouk for his engagement of the enemy, and his disregard for the coalition that Beijing had worked so hard to maintain? It is possible that Beijing, increasingly anxious to break the deadlock with the PRK and losing confidence in the CGDK, suggested such an approach. There is no way Chinese leaders were unaware of Sihanouk’s talks with the Vietnamese; moreover, the Prince had also met with senior Chinese leaders several times in the two weeks immediately preceding his announcement.⁸⁷¹

Although Beijing's attitude toward the PRK appeared to be softening a bit, China was not yet ready to make such a dramatic gesture itself; nor was it ready to drop the DK, much as Beijing was weary of it. Yet, presented with an opportunity undertaken by someone *else* to break out of the DK's confines – particularly an individual with a three-decade old relationship to Chinese leaders – Beijing was unlikely to object. Continuing the pattern established in the early 1960s of mutual assistance on complicated political issues, Beijing and Sihanouk were doing one another a favor. Sihanouk's resignation spared Beijing the need to itself engage in talks with the PRK, signaled to the DK that it could not hold the rest of the coalition hostage, and put the Prince back in the spotlight. At the same time, it enabled the negotiations to move forward without Beijing's having to publicly reject the DK or wrangle as much with the coalition.

Sihanouk assured his CGDK colleagues in late June that he would “continue to pursue the struggle” for Cambodia's liberation, and he continued to participate in cabinet meetings, which made some wonder just how “retired” he really was. In yet another effort on China's part to engender some degree of unity amongst the CGDK, Sihanouk, Son Sann, and Khieu Samphan were invited on an unusually formal five-day “friendship visit” to Beijing in August 1987.⁸⁷² The three spent an entire afternoon with Deng, who was reassuring them of China's ongoing support for the coalition, but also cautioning that their unity was more crucial now than ever before.⁸⁷³ The words did little to soothe the irate Son Sann and Khieu Samphan: “It was a good thing we hated the Khmers Rouges as much as we did, otherwise we could have joined together against Sihanouk at that time,” recalled one of Son Sann's staff members.⁸⁷⁴

The first meeting between Sihanouk and Hun Sen took place in France on December 2, 1987. The two agreed that the conflict must be settled through a political solution, that all factions should be involved, that the international community should guarantee whatever agreement was ultimately reached, and that the two would meet again in France in January 1988⁸⁷⁵ and Pyongyang later in the spring. A week later, Sihanouk appeared to have doubts about the failure to include his CGDK partners in the talks and, describing Hun Sen as the “valet of Hanoi and Moscow,” cancelled the February talks.⁸⁷⁶ China, Thailand, and Asean publicly expressed their support for Sihanouk’s position⁸⁷⁷, but privately Beijing encouraged Sihanouk to return to the negotiating table. “We could not go back once we had started down this path,” said one former MFA adviser.⁸⁷⁸ By December 14, Sihanouk announced that he and Hun Sen would meet again on a date chosen by Hun Sen.

Reaching toward a settlement. If Beijing had given the green light to Sihanouk to approach Hun Sen, Moscow returned the favor by encouraging PRK Foreign Minister Hun Sen to meet with Khieu Samphan. Although the parties agreed “in principle” on December 21 and the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Rogachev told a press conference in Beijing the next day that he was “optimistic” about such a meeting, no date was set.⁸⁷⁹

Hun Sen and Sihanouk met again in France on January 20, 1988. These talks began to focus on more substantive concerns, and the two quickly deadlocked over the issue of Vietnam’s withdrawal.⁸⁸⁰ Sihanouk’s response was to return to Beijing and declare ten days later that he had “permanently, irrevocably, and irreversibly” resigned and cancelled all subsequent talks with Hun Sen.⁸⁸¹ This outburst required intervention on February 1

from CCP Chair Zhao Ziyang, who praised Sihanouk's efforts to "set aside differences" in the discussions with Hun Sen, and does not appear to have disputed Sihanouk's insistence that there was no point talking to Hun Sen but instead that he must talk to Hanoi.⁸⁸² By the end of February, Sihanouk had returned to the CGDK⁸⁸³ after less than a year of quasi-retirement.

Despite a growing sense that the KR was incapable of rehabilitation, China doggedly insisted on the faction's inclusion in the political settlement and continued to arm the faction as the Cambodian civil war dragged on. In an apparent attempt to elicit greater clarity about what kind of post-settlement relationship Beijing envisioned with the KR, the *Washington Post* published an article on June 18, 1988 in which an unidentified Reagan administration official claimed that Beijing had offered asylum to Pol Pot and other senior KR officials.⁸⁸⁴ Although Beijing did not respond and some alleged that the Post had wholly fabricated the story, it contributed to growing distaste in Washington for the DK. The Administration announced it would soon be sending more arms to the non-communist resistance, and more members of Congress began to argue that the KR should not be allowed any role in a future government.⁸⁸⁵

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs clarified China's position on July 1: "(1) the key is an early Vietnamese withdrawal with a verifiable schedule; (2) post-withdrawal, China supports an interim government with Sihanouk at the head; (3) after interim coalition is established, the four factions' armies must stop fighting, stay out of politics, and not interfere with the elections; and (4) there must be international verification of withdrawal."⁸⁸⁶ Beijing further demonstrated its flexibility in early August, when Deng told visiting US Secretary of State George Schultz that China would be content if

Moscow merely took a “constructive approach” with Vietnam, thus softening China’s past insistence that Moscow rein in Hanoi.⁸⁸⁷

At the late August 1988 Sino-Soviet talks on Cambodia, Premier Zhao Ziyang confirmed China’s support for a four-way coalition under Sihanouk’s leadership and for an international peacekeeping force to monitor any settlement.⁸⁸⁸ Deputy Foreign Minister Rogachev assured Deputy Foreign Minister Tian Zengpei that Vietnam would adhere to the withdrawal schedule because the Soviets could no longer afford the occupation.⁸⁸⁹ Rogachev also expressed Soviet support for Sihanouk’s return to Phnom Penh.⁸⁹⁰ Although Beijing was not yet ready to halt its arms shipments to the KR, its willingness to allow a role for the “puppets of Hanoi” in the new government was remarkable, as was its tolerance of a multi-national force in Cambodia. A decade earlier, these strategies would have been unthinkable.

Discussions amongst the Cambodians proceeded less smoothly. The KR flatly refused to participate in talks with the PRK, which considerably complicated the CGDK’s position. At a meeting in Jakarta in late July, Hun Sen presented the PRK’s opening position, which entailed immediate cessation of all aid to the DK and barring it from any future government. Sihanouk promptly rejected these demands, and one Chinese account of these talks describes the failure as “heartbreaking.”⁸⁹¹ By late October, the PRK narrowed its position and provided a list of KR representatives with whom it refused to meet, including Khieu Samphan, Pol Pot, and Ieng Sary.⁸⁹² Sihanouk and Hun Sen met again in France in November, and Hun Sen tried to persuade Sihanouk himself to form a government with the PRK. Sihanouk refused to consider arrangements that excluded Son Sann and the KR, while Hun Sen similarly rejected discussions that

included the KR.⁸⁹³ The Chinese had been trying to persuade the DK for several months to take a more flexible position, and Khieu Samphan finally informed Sihanouk in late November that the KR would participate in talks. Hun Sen welcomed this development, and claimed that the PRK had “misjudged” Khieu Samphan.

The final month of 1988 saw two major developments. In early December, Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen and his Soviet counterpart met in Moscow. The two finalized an agreement on Vietnam’s withdrawal from Cambodia. Also, Beijing pledged that it would halt its aid to the CGDK as soon as that condition was met⁸⁹⁴, an assurance Vietnam in particular had long sought and a prospect toward which some in Beijing would have felt considerable relief. Later that month, the DK participated in its first negotiation meeting. Although the meeting made little progress because the PRK rejected Sihanouk’s five-point plan, it appeared that the end might finally be in sight.⁸⁹⁵

What was the cost of these efforts to Beijing? The progress toward a solution for Cambodia required considerable diplomatic effort, and some senior Chinese leaders would surely have preferred to hold out for a tougher stance on Vietnam. Managing the CGDK and Sihanouk was no small task, one that may have contributed to Deng’s growing emphasis on expending diplomatic resources to prevent Third World conflicts.⁸⁹⁶ Surely this was an easier way protect sovereignty.

V. Getting to the future: 1989-1991

The upheavals in China and across the globe, such as the end of the Cold War and Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait, led Chinese leaders to begin “suggesting that the international situation has become more turbulent and volatile.”⁸⁹⁷ Following the upheaval in Beijing

in the summer of 1989, China had to undertake a major diplomatic campaign to restore its international profile. This may in part explain efforts to be particularly cooperative in international forums, but the prospect of finally restoring Cambodia's autonomy and normalizing relations with the USSR and Vietnam were also powerful motivating factors for China at this time. Vietnam's continued troop withdrawal actually helped ease tensions between Hanoi and Washington, a crucial step towards breaking Vietnam's diplomatic isolation.

Beijing was particularly supportive of the CGDK in the ongoing sessions of the negotiations known as the International Conference on Cambodia, which ultimately resulted in the Paris Peace Accords (PPA). To that end, Beijing ironed out its remaining difficulties with Hanoi. But China, with a better understanding than any of the other states involved of just how deep the hostility between the various factions ran, remained concerned about the long-term future of Cambodia. But once a four-faction Cambodian government had formed, Beijing clearly indicated that it was up to those people to determine Cambodia's future.

Peace...? Shijie zhishi predicted early in 1989 that it would be the "key year" for peace in Cambodia. The Vietnamese government's "attitude was improving," and the four Cambodian factions are engaged in "proper cooperation."⁸⁹⁸ In April the PRK changed its name to the State of Cambodia (SOC), indicating a break with the recent past. In January 1989, the first formal talks between China and Vietnam had taken place. While the two sides had agreed to a withdrawal by September, Hanoi continued to object to the establishment of an interim government, which it thought would create a vacuum the DK would try to fill.⁸⁹⁹ Although the two sides met twice in 1989 and twice in 1990,

this issue, as well as China's rejection of Vietnam's demand to immediately stop arming the resistance, continued to be sticking points.

Shortly after the January 1989 talks, President Li Peng assured Sihanouk that China would continue to support the resistance until the Vietnamese had fully withdrawn. The coalition continued to meet throughout the spring in Beijing and Jakarta, and although they made minimal progress towards settling their differences, Li Peng cautioned Sihanouk, Khieu Samphan, and Son Sann that the "resistance struggle had entered a new phase."⁹⁰⁰ "They were very close to a solution, but we were concerned that they continued to argue with each other. They seemed to have forgotten about their country," said one former Ministry of Foreign Affairs staff member.⁹⁰¹ The coalition's inability to work together may have begun to worry Beijing about their ability to not turn on one another after returning to power. In mid-March, Deng met with Thai Commander-in-Chief Chavalit Yongchaiyudh and reiterated China's stance on Vietnamese withdrawal and the new government. He also added, for the first time, that the "...political solution to the Cambodia problem must eliminate the elements of the Cambodian civil war. China advocates that the four Cambodian factions reduce their military units." And in early July 1989, Li Peng rejected international calls for a Sihanouk-Hun Sen government on the grounds that, "This would be a phony coalition, and would allow Vietnam and Hun Sen sole control."⁹⁰²

Progress continued at the United Nations and with the Soviets. The UN's special coordinator, Rafiuddin Ahmed, traveled to Beijing in January 1989, seeking "Chinese views on the type of interim government to be set up in Cambodia after a Vietnamese withdrawal and the role of an international peace-keeping force."⁹⁰³ Presumably this

discussion went smoothly, because China had already articulated its vision of a four-way government under Sihanouk's leadership and international verification of the process. Beijing had in earlier meetings expressed concerns about the extent to which the UN would be involved in negotiating the actual political arrangements of a future Cambodian regime, a position that was reiterated to Ahmed on his visit.⁹⁰⁴

Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze's and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen signed an agreement in February 1989 on international inspections that codified their consensus on the Vietnamese withdrawal.⁹⁰⁵ The two were also discussing steps toward normalization and made arrangements for Prime Minister Gorbachev to visit in May.⁹⁰⁶ In March, Qian cautioned that the three obstacles to Sino-Soviet normalization had not yet been fully removed, but both sides remained optimistic that solutions would be found.⁹⁰⁷ The two sides proceeded with Gorbachev's historic trip to Beijing in mid-May, during which Sino-Soviet ties were finally and fully restored.

But Gorbachev's visit was marred by the growing unrest in Beijing following Hu Yaobang's death, and a number of his meetings were cancelled due to emergency Central Committee meetings.⁹⁰⁸ China's domestic and foreign policies ground to a halt in May and June 1989 as a result of the demonstrations at Tiananmen Square, which culminated in the declaration of martial law on May 20 and the massacre of protestors on June 4. World reaction was strong as the United States and most western European countries condemned the use of force and imposed sanctions and/or travel bans. Some developing countries made strong statements supporting Beijing's right to handle its internal matters in whatever way it saw fit. But the image of a lone protestor standing in front of a tank

column was unavoidable in the summer of 1989, and suddenly Beijing found itself almost as isolated as it had been in the early 1970s.

China's post-Tiananmen reemergence on the international stage was widely attributed to Foreign Minister Qian's adroit diplomacy. The July 1989 Paris conference on Cambodia was the first major international event China attended in the wake of Tiananmen, and Qian's consistent and measured position helped soothe some of the opposition to China's participation. Qian stated that, following a full and internationally verified troop withdrawal,

China and other interested countries would assume the responsibility of a comprehensive agreement on the Cambodia problem, which would prevent any further military assistance to all Cambodian factions. After Prince Sihanouk assumed the role of head of the four-faction government, China would establish diplomatic relations and would respect the outcome of the national election.⁹⁰⁹

Qian also reiterated China's hope that, "other countries would make an international commitment to Cambodia's independent, autonomous, neutral, non-aligned status."⁹¹⁰ The participants at the Paris talks agreed to form five committees, one of which was to make recommendations about the reestablishment of Cambodian "independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and neutrality...through the cessation and non-recurrence of foreign interference and external arms supplies, and the prevention of the recurrence of genocidal policies or the return and introduction of foreign forces."⁹¹¹ Qian allowed the criticisms of the DK at the Paris talks to be directed to Khieu Samphan, who was already enraged at the inclusion of language referring to "genocidal policies."

Khieu was reportedly furious at Qian, but he and his DK colleagues were by that point clear that were no longer the leaders of an anti-Vietnamese movement. China remained the only actor not to have publicly condemned the KR, but this was not to be confused with endorsement. Beijing was particularly perturbed by KR attacks on villagers thought to have “sympathized” with the withdrawing Vietnamese⁹¹² – behavior that confirmed to Beijing that the KR was incapable of any flexibility, was devoid of any capacity to reform or reconcile with others, and was only interested in continuing the fight on the battlefield. At the same time, to exclude the KR from any solution would virtually guarantee that they would keep fighting. The Vietnamese and American representatives to Paris talks took a diametrically opposing view: that including the KR would again result in their domination, domestic unrest, and possibly another war.

Progress toward resolving the Cambodia issue also provided the Chinese delegation an opportunity to divert attention away from discussions about Tiananmen at the September 1989 UN General Assembly. PRC President Yang Shangkun agreed to support Sihanouk’s latest resolution, which reiterated the need for a political solution⁹¹³, and Sihanouk made an effort to be seen with “as many Chinese as he could find.”⁹¹⁴ And while most western powers refused contact with China in the months following June 4, it was Sihanouk who met Deng at Tiananmen for the National Day festivities on October 1. Deng told him: “Chinese people and Cambodian people have been together for many years, mutually supporting each other. You cannot possibly forget us, and we cannot possibly forget you.”⁹¹⁵

...or war? According to one Chinese source, the last Vietnamese unit withdrew from Phnom Penh on September 26, 1989.⁹¹⁶ Yet on September 27, Yang Shangkun was

prompted to reassure Sihanouk of continuing Chinese support after a Vietnamese withdrawal, implying that such an event had not yet taken place. Of greater concern was the September 28 statement from the Chinese MFA, which claimed that Vietnam “had not yet fully withdrawn and still had not changed its basic goal of maintaining control over Cambodia and Laos as part of the ‘Indochina federation.’”⁹¹⁷ It is unlikely that Beijing was simply seeking an excuse to continue shipping arms to the DK, but rather that it was testing Vietnam’s commitments.

Most worrying, however, was the DK’s October 20-22, 1989 assault on Pailin and Samlaut, two key towns in northwestern Cambodia. It remains unclear what precisely prompted this attack. Although there was not yet a cease-fire in place, the Paris talks in August had certainly encouraged a cessation of battlefield hostilities. Khieu Samphan and his colleagues may have been trying to embarrass China out of frustration at its increasing distance. Three MFA officials who had been involved in Cambodia at the time attested that they were unaware of the attack (implying, among other things, that they had in the past been fully apprised of the KR’s battle plans), and that Beijing was taken aback by this assault.⁹¹⁸ In October, the *Far Eastern Economic Review* reported that, “A Chinese source, knowledgeable on the Khmer Rouge, is reported to have told Western diplomats that the communist faction fully realizes the extent of the international odium, and is aware that it cannot take over the country the way it did before.”⁹¹⁹ The pressure increased again for a solution.

Moving on with or without the CGDK. In November 1989, the UN General Assembly voted to accept a plan for Cambodia that involved an interim coalition government and elections, and by January 1990, the international community firmly took

the reins of solving the Cambodia problem. The Security Council members met in Paris that month and developed the first comprehensive settlement on the Cambodia problem. The agreement entailed ceasing all external aid to the various factions, establishing the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), and respecting Cambodian sovereignty. While much work remained in terms of creating UNTAC, demobilizing and reintegrating the armed forces, it was clear that the rest of the world was ready to move forward.

Some observers suggested that China's participation was merely a by-product of Beijing's desire to shift attention away from Tiananmen, and that Beijing had done little to bring the DK into line.⁹²⁰ Yet this ignored two important facts: that the comprehensive agreement embodied the goals China had been articulating for at least a decade, and that the KR was effectively beyond Beijing's control. China's *Diplomatic Yearbooks* state that Beijing cut off its military aid to the factions as soon as the January 1990 agreement was signed⁹²¹, though some including the US Department of State, disputed this.⁹²²

Further evidence of Beijing's commitment to a political solution was on display when the Perm 5 reconvened again in Paris in March 1990. Immediately before this meeting, the SOC had agreed "in principle" to a role for the UN but refused, for obvious reasons, to being dismantled. Beijing dropped its demand that the SOC be dismantled in advance of the envisioned UN administration taking control.⁹²³ This acquiescence was remarkable in that it virtually ensured a continuation of the very regime it sought to displace. At the same time, China's endorsement of UN stewardship over a country marked an unprecedented compromise with respect to sovereignty, though it is possible that Chinese diplomats saw the UN presence as an important bulwark against KR or Vietnamese

domination. Nevertheless, it had never before agreed to such a prominent role for an external actor.

Beijing's actions towards the CGDK during this period were initially difficult to read. With respect to Sihanouk, Chinese leaders alternated between Li Peng exhorting the Prince in February 1990 to "work hard on behalf of national reconciliation"⁹²⁴ and Yang Shangkun reassuring the Prince in March that, "As long as Cambodia has not recovered its independence and autonomy 100 percent, China will continue to support the Cambodian people's just struggle."⁹²⁵ It is unclear what conversations were taking place with the DK following the October battles, or whether conversations were taking place at all.

But the US dealt the CGDK an abrupt blow on July 18, 1990. Bowing to growing Senate pressure⁹²⁶, Secretary of State James Baker announced that the US would no longer support the CGDK at the UN, that it would only provide aid to Sihanouk and Son Sann, that it was beginning talks with Vietnam, and that it would begin providing humanitarian aid through the SOC.⁹²⁷ Baker pointed to a lack of CGDK progress, an almost-complete withdrawal of Soviet troops from Vietnam, an improved relationship with the USSR, a desire to normalize with Hanoi in order to conduct searches for POW-MIAs, and a clear repulsion with the DK.⁹²⁸ One US official recalled, "watching the blood drain from Son Sann's face as [we] explained what we were about to announce."⁹²⁹ Sihanouk was furious that the Americans were talking to Hanoi. Both he and Son Sann were probably more concerned that this shift might result in their own exclusion from any future government.

Beijing, already smarting over the US' Tiananmen-induced sanctions, was enraged, particularly as Vice Foreign Minister Xu Dunxin was apprised of this reversal a mere two hours before it was announced. A Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson said the next day, "China will not surrender to pressure. The changed Bush policy calls on China, but without first consulting with China...[our] position is fair and responsible, and to ask China to stop its aid [to the DK] is unreasonable."⁹³⁰ Although Deng dismissed the US' post-Tiananmen sanctions as harmful and went so far as to suggest that such actions would only inspire greater self-reliance, the withdrawal of US support for the CGDK must have caused real consternation, as China was now indisputably alone in its support to the DK.

Despite all of the difficulties, including a growing split within the Khmer Rouge over participation in peace agreement⁹³¹, Beijing made its final push with the CGDK toward a political settlement. Li Peng informed Sihanouk, his son Ranariddh (who commanded Sihanouk's resistance forces), Son Sann, and Khieu Samphan in Beijing in late August that the time was "ripe" for a political solution, and that, "China hoped that it and other interested sides could choose a comprehensive, fair and reasonable political solution."⁹³² All four factions were scheduled to meet in Jakarta from September 8-10, and Beijing, which had just had another productive round of talks with Hanoi⁹³³, was hopeful that similarly positive results would emanate from Jakarta. But Sihanouk, despite his 1987 actions, refused to attend talks with the SOC, which "prompted Chinese Premier Li Peng to have what was described as a 'knock down brawl' with the recalcitrant prince."⁹³⁴ Sihanouk attended the meeting.

The time was not just “ripe” because Beijing was weary of the CGDK. Chinese Premier Li Peng and CCP Party Secretary Jiang Zemin held a secret summit with their counterparts, Do Moi and Nguyen Van Linh, respectively, in Chengdu in September 1990.⁹³⁵ Pham Van Dong, now in his fourth decade of dealing with the triangular relationship, was also present. The two sides “drew up a secret memorandum of agreement on Cambodia, and resolved in principle other obstacles to normalization.”⁹³⁶ Obviously this marked a major step forward, though one to which the CGDK objected when they learned of it the following week. It is unclear whether the Chinese hoped this effort to resolve the deep and long-standing complications with Vietnam would have an inspirational effect on the Cambodians, who were now themselves the last obstacle to peace in their country.

Beijing steps back from the SNC. By the end of September 1990, the four-faction Supreme National Council (SNC), which would take charge of Cambodia until elections could be held, met for the first time in Bangkok. Another SNC meeting followed in October, and by late November, the Perm 5, Asean Foreign Ministers, and representatives of the four factions met in Paris and produced a draft of the Paris Peace Accords.⁹³⁷ It would take another year of infighting amongst the Cambodians before the document would be signed, but there was no going back.

Beijing had become noticeably less vocal about the negotiations since the SNC’s establishment in March 1990. Although Chinese representatives regularly attended the discussions, their involvement in and coverage of the meetings diminished. There was no comment from Beijing on the SNC’s December 1990 meeting in Paris, at which the KR and SOC representatives quarreled. When the factions met in Beijing in March 1991 and

agreed upon the Perm 5's framework document, Premier Li Peng merely encouraged them to "work hard on behalf of a peaceful settlement."⁹³⁸

Even the June meeting in Pattaya on troop integration and weapons cantonment, or on a ceasefire agreement⁹³⁹ – all of which were of great interest to Beijing – did not merit much mention from the Chinese leadership, the MFA, or the press. Aside from a brief announcement in *Renmin ribao*, there was not much publicity surrounding the Perm 5's July meeting on the Cambodia problem in Beijing. Even at the September 1990 Security Council meeting in New York, the Chinese stood back and encouraged, "SNC members to...[engage in] active international cooperation, such that, with these two parts working diligently together, and on the basis of the five country framework document, the comprehensive agreement on a political solution to the Cambodia problem developed in Paris could be accomplished."⁹⁴⁰ China's non-participation on behalf of any factions perhaps explains the slow SNC progress.

The July 16-17, 1991 SNC working meeting in Beijing marked another important change. Sihanouk, Ranariddh, Son Sann, and Khieu Samphan were obviously all in attendance. However, "Phnom Penh regime" Prime Minister Hun Sen and Foreign Minister Hor Namhong were making their first-ever visit to China. Although *Beijing Review* had referred to these people just a few months earlier as the "status quo left over from the Vietnamese aggression"⁹⁴¹, and although Hun Sen had published an essay a few years earlier claiming that, "China was the root of all that was evil in Cambodia"⁹⁴², Yang Shangkun made good on China's pledge to "treat all four [SNC] factions as colleagues." Premier Li Peng and other leaders applauded the progress of this working meeting⁹⁴³, despite allegations of cease-fire violations.⁹⁴⁴

Equally important, the Chinese and Vietnamese Vice Foreign Ministers met on August 25, 1991, to discuss the progress towards an agreement on Cambodia. The two agreed that normalization should take place soon after an agreement on Cambodia was signed. Foreign Ministers Qian Qichen and Nguyen Manh Cam⁹⁴⁵ reiterated this commitment in a September meeting, which in turn facilitated a November summit between Party Chairmen Do Muoi and Jiang Zemin.⁹⁴⁶

The four Cambodian factions and nineteen countries finally signed the Paris Peace Accords on October 23, 1991. It had been more than a decade since Vietnam invaded Cambodia and toppled the DK, and the Chinese, whatever their private misgivings, had not wavered publicly in their commitment to the CGDK. Unsurprisingly, the PPA contained language similar to that of the Five Principles, describing itself as an “agreement concerning the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and inviolability, neutrality and national unity of Cambodia.”⁹⁴⁷ At the signing ceremony, Foreign Minister Qian said, “We sincerely wish that Cambodia’s Supreme National Council, under the esteemed leadership of Prince Sihanouk, unites all of the Cambodian people, will be of one heart and one mind (*tongxin tongmeng*), will exert themselves in struggle (*nuli douzheng*) and build Cambodia into a independent, peaceful, neutral, non-aligned, and thriving and prosperous (*fanrong changsheng*) country.”⁹⁴⁸ Qian pointed out that the Accords were noteworthy as the first successful international intervention to bring a regional conflict to a close, as an essential step towards Sino-Vietnamese normalization, and as key to greater peace and prosperity to Asia.⁹⁴⁹ The following day, Fu Xuezhang, one of the diplomats who trekked to Doukoushan, was appointed as China’s new ambassador to the SOC.

The *Diplomatic Yearbooks* give almost all credit for the negotiations and the PPA to the Cambodians. Asean, the Perm Five, and the two chairmen of the Paris conference are mentioned for their “active promotion” of the peace process, but the official position of the Chinese government was that, “Because Cambodia’s four factions had made progress in cooperating under King Sihanouk’s leadership...the historic 13-year Cambodia problem had finally achieved a comprehensive political solution.”⁹⁵⁰ One MFA staff member explained that, “The PPA was really a good example of *qiutong lingqi*. In the end, the four sides ignored their differences and focused on resolving the problem.”⁹⁵¹ Two weeks later, Vietnam’s Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet and Jiang signed a normalization agreement in Beijing, at which Jiang declared, “The past is gone, and the future is beginning.”⁹⁵²

In retrospect, it appears that China shouldered more of the burden achieving a settlement than the CGDK had. Some might construe this as evidence of Chinese domination in the region or attempts to pre-determine Cambodia’s leadership, yet Beijing made noteworthy concessions, particularly with respect to the ongoing role for SOC leaders. That stance, combined with its respectful distance from the SNC, effectively ensured the ongoing dominance of Hanoi-installed Cambodian political actors. Had Beijing opted to forego the CGDK entirely, could a similar result not have been achieved a decade earlier?

VI. Conclusion

China’s behavior during these years was in part driven by economic motivations: achieving the Four Modernizations suggested repairing relations with the USSR and

Vietnam, as well as improving them with the US and Asean. But the fact that China chose to place the Cambodia problem at the center of those relationships is a telling statement about the price it was willing to pay. Quicker and more efficient ways of settling the conflict were presented; China rejected them all at a time when it stood to gain considerably from a more expedient solution. It soldiered on with the hapless CGDK and the hopeless Khmer Rouge, exhorting them to reform and, even when that failed, never abandoning its fight for their legitimacy. Beijing continued to express its faith in Sihanouk and in negotiations by encouraging his discussions with the PRK, hopeful that the Cambodians could identify a solution amongst themselves. That approach was reinforced by China's intentional distance from the SNC.

Once assured that the Vietnamese occupation was not part of a Soviet effort to encircle China – an idea introduced in 1978 and made quite plausible by 1985 – Beijing could have dropped its objection to the PRK leadership now more independent of Hanoi. Alternatively, Beijing could have simply accepted that its support to GRUNK and the DK regime had failed, such that after the Vietnamese invasion the most practical solution included quiet exile for Sihanouk and a cessation of ties with the Khmer Rouge. This strategy would have made relations with the USSR and Vietnam considerably easier, and it is unlikely it would have made relations with Asean or the US any more difficult. Obviously China had not pursued the most aggressive options available, such as launching another assault on Vietnam or providing a higher degree of military assistance to the CGDK.

Three deviations from principled policies can be seen during this period. First, the attempt to “teach Vietnam a lesson” resulted from a fury in Beijing that not only rendered

principles but also common sense irrelevant. Beijing perceived Vietnam's invasion as a deep betrayal and the new lease on life given to the Khmer Rouge best account for the degree of outrage, and the willingness to sacrifice 25,000 troops and efforts to improve relations in Southeast Asia. Second, Beijing did soften its perception of the PRK, implying that its leadership might too have some degree of legitimacy. There is insufficient evidence to determine whether that changing view stemmed from the PRK's increasing distance from Hanoi, from a recognition that the PRK's leaders deserved some of the same credit given to KR leaders in having liberated Cambodia, or from other factors. Third, the Chengdu Summit between Chinese and Vietnamese leaders does appear quite interventionist, particularly in light of the exclusion of any Cambodians. Such discussions indicate that after China would not indefinitely pursue a purely principled approach after another decade of an exiled Cambodian government that showed no inclination for a resolution. As Zhou Enlai had suggested years earlier, China's patience was not unlimited.

Despite these anomalies, there is no evidence of Chinese efforts to dominate Cambodia or of attempts to return the Khmer Rouge to power, and ample evidence of the opportunity costs incurred by China as a result of its support to the CGDK. Foreign policy principles had survived the leadership transition intact. But as it became increasingly clear that the Cambodians' greatest political challenge had not been the Vietnamese, it remained to see how the principles would apply to Cambodian governments that could not keep themselves intact.

CHAPTER FOUR: 1991-2002

I. Introduction

By the late 1990s, China was a decade into its experiment of eschewing extremist political campaigns and concentrating its energies on economic development – a strategy that was rewarded by unprecedented growth and relative political stability. This newfound strength, alongside the evaporation of Cold War threats and steadily improving relations across the globe, vindicated a belief that self-reliant development could bring a high degree of security. Beijing’s vision of comprehensive security now placed equal emphasis on economic development and territorial integrity. Where Beijing had once seen the American and Soviet militaries as the primary threat to world peace; in the contemporary era, “Poverty is what causes instability and violence.”⁹⁵³ Getting rich was not just glorious, as Deng Xiaoping suggested in his historic 1992 Southern Tour, but it was also a key to peace.

But the economic successes created something of a paradox for China, as its development had entailed unprecedented interaction other states and international organizations and financial institutions (IFIs). That China perceived the US, now China’s most important trading partner, and its efforts to structure the international economic architecture in maximally self-beneficial was the “new form of imperialism”⁹⁵⁴ was not especially surprising, nor was the post-Tiananmen surge of anti-intervention rhetoric.⁹⁵⁵ But Beijing was also wary of what it saw as inappropriately interventionist and potentially damaging aid conditionality from IFIs, and to the growing trend of multinational military and/or political interventions across the globe. As the boundaries

between domestic and international blurred, Beijing was increasingly concerned about new challenges to sovereignty and autonomy, the two bedrock beliefs of more equitable state-state relations. Centralized decision-making, particularly with respect to foreign involvement, meant that China itself was capable of enforcing “self reliance,” but how would such practices affect less cohesive, developed states?

According to a 2002 interview with a member of the CCP Central Committee on External Affairs, “China’s foreign policy strategy is according to our own epistemology, in terms of our historical experience...China is a developing country, so it will proceed according to those norms.”⁹⁵⁶ Throughout the 1990s, China increasingly used its growing international profile and/or economic power to protect developing countries’ sovereignty when that status was challenged by international economic, political, or military intervention. Deng Xiaoping had begun calling in 1974 for a more “just and reasonable” international political and economic order, an idea Jiang Zemin often pointed out was “in conformity with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter.”⁹⁵⁷ Armed with a highly skilled diplomatic corps, ample financial resources, and a firm belief in the relationship between economic development and global security, China continued in its half-century old campaign for individual states’ sovereignty and “more democratic international relations”⁹⁵⁸ in bilateral relations and multilateral organizations.

How did these factors shape Chinese policy toward Cambodia? Rather than stepping back from Phnom Penh, Beijing instead seemed to be recreating the “golden era” of the early 1960s. All of Southeast Asia’s security was improved by a peaceful Cambodia, but it was difficult to see how that required high levels of diplomatic efforts and resources from China. Ideological underpinnings for the relationship are unlikely – while there

may have been a common affinity for authoritarianism, the ties by this point clearly had nothing to do with communism. And while Cambodia stood to benefit economically from a closer relationship with China, the reverse was not necessarily true; if anything, Beijing would continue to lose money. Rather, as the transition back to Cambodian rule began and faltered repeatedly throughout the 1990s, Beijing continued to see Phnom Penh as highly vulnerable to foreign economic and political encroachment as a result of its poverty and its chronic partisan disputes. Having emerged from its own period of domestic turmoil and rejuvenation, Beijing was convinced that the formula for Cambodia's recovery lay in a closing of political ranks to promote economic development and genuine national reconciliation. As a result, China treated a regime dominated by its former enemies as it would any other: with respect.

While other states ostensibly agreed with these goals, their respective methods of achieving them differed considerably – and consequentially – from Beijing's. For each action that other states took that Beijing perceived as minimizing Cambodian “self reliance,” China's actions ameliorated that constraint. In 1991, international involvement was seen as crucial to ensuring the peace, but by 1993 Beijing cautioned that excessive foreign influence was a threat to national reconciliation. As western countries and IFIs increasingly conditioned aid, China provided more unconditional assistance. As western countries pushed to form an international tribunal for surviving Khmer Rouge leaders on the grounds that Cambodia would remain unstable until such proceedings were held, China insisted that such an event, particularly without the widespread support of Cambodians, would itself be destabilizing. Unlike most of the international community, China refused to take sides as the ruling Cambodian party sought to politically

exterminate its rivals, and Beijing did not enter into the debate between the US, France, Japan, the European Union, and Australia about whether Cambodia would benefit more from electoral democracy or soft authoritarianism. China wanted a sovereign state with a “mass regarding”⁹⁵⁹ regime that would focus on economic development and thus ensure Cambodia’s security. If the formula worked for China, surely it could work elsewhere?

II. November 1991 – September 1993: Restoring sovereignty

The immediate post-Peace Accords period was a difficult one of reestablishing sovereignty, attempting to channel battlefield animosities into reconstruction, and managing a massive influx of refugees and aid workers. Cambodia remained desperately poor, devoid of a literate class, and paralyzed after decades of repression. Although the agreed-upon path to reestablishing Cambodian sovereignty was almost immediately challenged by Khmer Rouge (KR), Kampuchean People’s Revolutionary Party (KPRP), and Supreme National Council (SNC) intransigence, UN failures, and, ultimately, negotiated election results, Beijing did not disengage. It fully discharged its obligations under the Accords, stopped its aid to the Khmer Rouge, and accepted the entrenchment of the KPRP, its former enemies. At the same time, it sought to minimize foreign involvement in domestic politics even though that might have better protected the peace, and it continued its efforts to bring the factions together. Beijing neither put former CGDK interests at the center of its diplomacy nor sought to rein in the Khmer Rouge.

Following the Paris Agreement. Beijing immediately complied with two PPA provisions that demonstrated its commitment to a unified Cambodia: it ceased its support

to the resistance in general and the KR in particular⁹⁶⁰, and it began recognizing a state dominated by its former enemies. The KPRP had abandoned communism, expressed support for multi-party democracy and a free-market system, and changed its name to the Cambodian People's Party (CPP) in October 1991⁹⁶¹, but it retained its leadership and its near-total control over the country. Despite this lack of significant change, China quickly set about mending the diplomatic sleeve⁹⁶² and worked hard to eradicate any perception of an affiliation to a particular party or position, and generally only spoke in support of adherence to the PPA. Beijing expected similar adherence to the PPA from the Cambodians, a stance reflected in its response to the returns of prominent Cambodians to Phnom Penh in late 1991.

Sihanouk returned to a jubilant welcome Phnom Penh on November 14, 1991, almost twelve years after his departure. Fu Xuezhong, who had worked closely with the CGDK throughout the 1980s, accompanied him. At a press conference upon his arrival, Sihanouk proclaimed that he wanted to work closely with Hun Sen and the CPP, and opined that he thought Pol Pot, Ieng Sary, and Ta Mok should be charged with war crimes. This led some journalists to believe that, "China probably also gave Sihanouk a tacit understanding that he could criticize the Khmer Rouge."⁹⁶³ The Chinese Foreign Ministry gave no official reply, indicating that Sihanouk's new tolerance for Hun Sen and interest in prosecuting the Khmer Rouge – positions with which Beijing itself disagreed but were not in any way prohibited by the PPA – were clearly "internal affairs."

But Beijing did speak out when the SNC failed to live up to PPA obligations. Khieu Samphan's return to Phnom Penh on December 3 "raised the world's attention" when an enraged mob surrounded his car as it tried to make its way into Phnom Penh, effectively

forcing him to flee. The following day, China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson pointed out that allowing such treatment would jeopardize the peace process, and that "The international community has reason to demand that the Phnom Penh side abandon these tactics, to protect the normalization of work of the SNC in Phnom Penh."⁹⁶⁴ Some dismissed the statement as an automatic Chinese defense of the Khmer Rouge, or as an opportunity to criticize the government in Phnom Penh. But given Beijing's efforts at distancing itself from the Khmer Rouge, and its efforts to treat Cambodia as a normal state, it is hard to read this pair of responses as anything other than China's own – and its effort to encourage others' – respect for the PPA.

The task of encouraging the Cambodians to work together as the PPA mandated was a familiar one to the Chinese. An early 1992 article in *Dongnanya* placed Cambodians' factionalism as the most serious threat to stability in Southeast Asia – ahead of Vietnam's and Burma's domestic problems, the difficult elections ahead for Thailand and the Philippines, and disputes over the South China Sea.⁹⁶⁵ But Beijing did not follow the US and some other countries' suit by engaging slowly or deferring full diplomatic recognition until after the election. Rather, Beijing returned to the full-fledged diplomacy of the late 1950s and early 1960s in what appears to have been an effort to engender a sense of sovereignty, legitimacy, and responsibility.

A delegation led by Fu Xuezhong and comprised of CCPSC, NPC, and MFA members from Beijing arrived in Phnom Penh in early December 1991. Five days later, in what one diplomat recalled as a highly emotional ceremony, Fu presented his credentials from Jiang Zemin to Sihanouk, the first Chinese ambassador to do so since Kang Maozhao in June 1969. In February 1992, Qian Qichen visited Phnom Penh, the

first head of state to make such a visit since the establishment of the SNC. He encouraged the factions to “remain on a peaceful road,” and that “no matter what difficulties arise” the international community expected the Cambodians to abide by the “workable” PPA.⁹⁶⁶ Qian presented Sihanouk with a special book of calligraphy inscribed with the phrase “*he wei gui*” (peace is precious) on the cover⁹⁶⁷, and reiterated his hope that bilateral relations would be based on the Five Principles.⁹⁶⁸

As if to assure Beijing, Sihanouk led a four-faction delegation on a return visit to Beijing in April 1992. The final joint communiqué recommitted both sides to the Five Principles, and made the first post-Paris mention of Cambodian support to the one-China policy.⁹⁶⁹ Vice Foreign Minister Xu Dunxin visited Phnom Penh in September 1992 to reiterate “full realization” of the PPA, and the importance of following Sihanouk’s leadership, working hard for national reconciliation, and making the election a success.⁹⁷⁰ In January 1993, Sihanouk returned to Beijing and met with Jiang Zemin, who once again reiterated the importance of the PPA.⁹⁷¹

Beijing clearly viewed Sihanouk as a key national, non-partisan⁹⁷² figure who could help ensure peace, and it sought to bolster his leadership at every opportunity. Throughout 1992, the Prince made five visits to Beijing, all of which are recounted in the *Diplomatic Yearbooks* with affection and respect, indicating that he had earned a position of historical and moral authority similar to that of older members of the CCP. He remained in close contact with senior Chinese leaders effectively at all times. Kang Maozhao, the Chinese ambassador to Cambodia in the late 1960s and early 1970s, recounted a particularly emotional meeting with Sihanouk when they were both patients at the Beijing First Hospital in August 1992.⁹⁷³ In late 1991, Beijing had begun the

practice of giving Sihanouk an annual allowance of about \$300,000⁹⁷⁴, funds described by Chinese sources as intended to enable the Prince to support humanitarian projects.

Arguably the most important evidence of Beijing's support for the PPA was its effort to extend a hand to the CPP. Although the SNC had numerically balanced membership, the CPP effectively retained full control of the country and the governing apparatus. Relations were far from cozy, and Chinese sources occasionally still referred to the CPP as "puppets of Hanoi." But Beijing seemed to be relying again on the practice of *qiutong cunyi*. The February and September 1992 high-level visits were early and important gestures of respect and an acknowledgement of legitimacy. Although he was still referred to as the "Phnom Penh faction leader," Chea Sim's July 1992 visit – the first meeting exclusively between the Chinese leadership and a CPP member – to Beijing to meet Li Peng and Qian was an equally important step towards diplomatic normalcy. It was a tentative overture, given that Hun Sen, Khieu Samphan, Norodom Ranariddh, and Son Sann arrived a few days later to "participate in informal consultations related to the Cambodia issue."⁹⁷⁵ But it was an overture nonetheless. "We could not ignore them," said one former diplomat, "And it was important to become acquainted."⁹⁷⁶

Beijing also answered the PPA's call to financially assist Cambodia's reconstruction. Qian had announced US\$1.25 million of aid during his February 1992 visit. In June of that year, China pledged US\$125 million⁹⁷⁷ to reconstruct Phnom Penh's agricultural college and a pharmaceutical factory, to build 500 wells, and to help provide medical training. It also promised another unconditional US\$125 million of rice, medicines, and cloth to the SNC.⁹⁷⁸ Of the US\$880 million pledged at that meeting, approximately one-

quarter came from Beijing, and much of it was devoted to projects China had begun in the 1960s. China's aid during this year totaled at least US\$250 million.⁹⁷⁹

Why should Beijing have bothered to make such an effort, particularly with a regime dominated by its former enemies? It would not have been hard for Beijing to hold the CPP, if not the entire country, at arm's length. But positive involvement comported not only with the Five Principles but also efforts to restore China's post-Tiananmen image of a peaceful and cooperative country, particularly to its Southeast Asian neighbors. Beijing might have been trying to encourage the CPP to become more independent of Hanoi, though there was no reason to believe that Vietnam, far more interested in its own domestic problems, harbored any aspirations to regain control of Cambodia. China stressed that the future of Cambodia had to be up to Cambodians by setting aside its own significant concerns about the CPP and the KR in support of the PPA. Diplomatic recognition and aid, bolstering the Prince, and even engaging with its former enemy were thus logical choices. But would the Cambodians respond accordingly?

China and UNTAC: another invasion of Cambodia? In February 1992, the Security Council formally approved the massive United Nations-led operation outlined by the PPA. The United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) would provide and coordinate peacekeeping troops, police, and civilian officers to repatriate refugees, disarm the factions, and oversee the conduct of elections.⁹⁸⁰ Its mandate remained in effect through such time as an UN-certified election yielded a new assembly that approved a constitution and formally became a legislative body. UNTAC's 22,000 staff members began to arrive that month and begin their work in seven areas: human rights, elections, military affairs, civil administration, civilian police, repatriation, and

rehabilitation. The entire operation would eventually cost approximately US\$2.8 billion, and became widely regarded as a model for intervention in failed states.

UNTAC's authority never ceased to be an issue between the various political factions, particularly the CPP, and among PPA signatories. The PPA stipulated that UNTAC would "act with full respect for the national sovereignty of Cambodia." UNTAC was to respond to the SNC and its decisions, and the process included numerous steps to ensure the primacy of Cambodian, rather than UN, imperatives. At the same time, UNTAC's very presence was required due to a lack of neutrality, such that it was necessary to place "all administrative agencies, bodies and offices acting in the field of foreign affairs, national defense, finance, public security and information" and "administrative agencies, bodies and offices which could directly influence the outcome of the elections" under UNTAC control in order to ensure strict neutrality.⁹⁸¹ Yielding such control to an international organization was unprecedented and made those already concerned about sovereignty and encouraging the Cambodians to take responsibility uneasy. Some felt that UNTAC was all that kept the country from plunging back into war, but as one Chinese diplomat pointed out, "If civil war was going to start again, UNTAC was only delaying that [eventuality]."⁹⁸²

In the 1980s, China had not endorsed international peacekeeping efforts, but this opposition had done little to curtail the trend.⁹⁸³ China's involvement in UNTAC reflected not only the importance of Cambodian peace, but also a recognition that Chinese participation might help keep such operations from becoming excessively interventionist. This was China's first peacekeeping operation⁹⁸⁴, and the importance and pride Beijing attached to it can be seen in the dozens of photos, articles, books, speeches,

and ceremonies commemorating the participants' work. China ultimately contributed "47 military observers, an engineering battalion of 400 men...more than 3 million *yuan*...and 100-odd vehicles of 14 types."⁹⁸⁵ In April 1992, Beijing sent a PLA engineering contingent commanded to repair four highways and two airports, including Phnom Penh's international airport.⁹⁸⁶ In early 1993, it also sent a team of technicians and disaster relief workers.⁹⁸⁷

Despite this enthusiasm, China had mixed feelings about UNTAC and its consequences for Cambodian sovereignty. Beijing obviously did not oppose international involvement⁹⁸⁸, but it was clearly concerned about the extent to which foreigners were becoming involved in Cambodia. "How can you be self-reliant if foreigners make all the decisions? And how did foreigners know better than the Cambodians what to do?" said one former Chinese diplomat.⁹⁸⁹ There were several statements from Beijing about UNTAC encroachment on Cambodian sovereignty and diplomats expressed concerns about the UN "interfering in internal affairs."⁹⁹⁰ A few Chinese diplomats explained that they had been concerned that UNTAC would either impede the Cambodians' efforts to resolve issues amongst themselves or would itself become a point of divisiveness. As one of them later said, "We wanted international support – UNTAC – to help push the Cambodians together. We did not want UNTAC to become another political force in Cambodia."⁹⁹¹ Chinese foreign policy officials privately expressed discomfort with UNTAC's involvement in drafting laws, organizing campaign rallies, and helping determine whether political parties had met eligibility requirements to run in the elections, among others.⁹⁹² Of equal concern was the growing dependency of various Cambodian political actors on UNTAC, one underscored by a *Shijie zhishi* (the

MFA journal) article in April 1993 on Sihanouk's worries about what might happen after UNTAC withdrew. "Too much is being done for the benefit of individual parties, and not enough attention to strengthen the system [as a whole]," wrote *Dongnanya*.⁹⁹³

Was Beijing forgetting the reality of early 1990s Cambodia, virtually devoid of literate, skilled people, and where political involvement was to be feared and avoided? "We were aware of these problems," said one former diplomat, who argued that unless the Cambodians surmounted their factional rivalries without external assistance, those problems would only persist.⁹⁹⁴ Beijing was simply not convinced that UNTAC could execute its mandate with the required neutrality⁹⁹⁵, and it was right. As Peter Bartu later wrote, UNTAC became "a faction in its own right," one that "altered the [domestic] balance of power."⁹⁹⁶ When the choice of Cambodian leadership had been the Vietnamese or the UN, China chose the latter; when the choice was between Cambodian parties or the UN, China supported the former. But Chinese diplomats seem to not have appreciated that their position was precisely what many Cambodians feared: zealous self-reliance was reminiscent of KR rule, and the international community's presence was the bulwark against that regime returning to power. Beijing also realized, perhaps too late, that some members of the Cambodian political elite, particularly amongst Funcinpec and other former resistance parties, wanted the international community to remain involved as a means of constraining the CPP.

More than a decade later, a senior Chinese foreign policy maker expressed regret that clearer parameters of involvement had not been established: "I think that if we had known [the extent to which] UNTAC would become a model to be used elsewhere, we would have been more careful in Cambodia. We were uncomfortable with the decisions

being made by foreigners, because Cambodia was not their home.”⁹⁹⁷ Once again, *Shijie zhishi* made Beijing’s position clear: “Cambodia is truly at a crossroads. But no matter what, from now on, the Cambodians must make their own decisions, and many foreigners forget that they cannot help.”⁹⁹⁸

The KR withdraws from the PPA. The PPA appeared likely to weaken the Khmer Rouge in at least two important ways: by cutting off its lifeline of Chinese aid, and by forcing it to work within the confines of first the SNC and then an elected government. Few thought that the KR would opt out of the peace process and find means of sustaining itself. Privately, a few Chinese diplomats admitted that they had hoped that the KR would simply fade away for lack of interest or support.⁹⁹⁹ But publicly Beijing had repeatedly insisted that the Khmer Rouge be a part of the PPA on the grounds that it was no less legitimate than the CPP. Many assumed that Beijing was merely trying to protect the KR, but a more careful analysis suggests that Chinese concerns focused on what might happen if *any* party was not sufficiently vested in the Peace process.

Within six months of signing the PPA, however, the Khmer Rouge decided that UNTAC would continue to subordinate its interest to the CPP’s, and the KR subsequently set about trying to disrupt the PPA and the elections any way it could. In the spring of 1992, it refused to comply with the second phase of UNTAC’s military mandate, in which 70 percent of each faction’s troops were to be demobilized, disarmed, and their weapons cantoned.¹⁰⁰⁰ Instead, the KR launched a series of attacks throughout the northwest. Following the cessation of Chinese aid¹⁰⁰¹, the KR embraced capitalism and began selling timber and gems through Thai military contacts on the border, earning a reported US\$1 million per month.¹⁰⁰² Although such practices were in contravention with

Thailand's obligations under the PPA, Bangkok could not or would not assert control over the trade. One Chinese diplomat, with no apparent irony, was frustrated that the KR was again being given an external lifeline, "just like the Vietnamese did [in 1979]."¹⁰⁰³

Beijing's responses over the summer of 1992 were reminiscent of the early 1980s: it strongly encouraged the KR to reconsider its approach while simultaneously insisting internationally that its participation was essential. In June 1992, Cambodia's donors, including China, adopted a resolution that "expressed 'serious concern' over the difficulties UNTAC has encountered in implementing the agreement and especially over the 'refusal of one party' to allow the necessary deployment of UNTAC in the area under its control."¹⁰⁰⁴ In July, the Security Council began encouraging the international community to provide assistance only to the parties complying with the PPA and discussing the possibility of sanctions against the KR. In August, Vice Foreign Minister Xu Dunxin met with Khieu Samphan in Bangkok to encourage the KR to work with the SNC and comply with UNTAC. Khieu refused, apparently "because [the KR] believed... their line was basically strategically correct."¹⁰⁰⁵

Even after the Khmer Rouge formally announced its withdrawal from the PPA in September 1992¹⁰⁰⁶, a step that Chinese analysts described as "unreasonable"¹⁰⁰⁷, China pursued a similar course of action. That month, Foreign Minister Qian Qichen stated that the responsibility for enforcing sanctions – should such measures come to pass – against the Khmer Rouge lay with Bangkok, not Beijing.¹⁰⁰⁸ Qian could have pointed to a public admission a month earlier by the Thai Foreign Minister, Arsa Sarasin, that Thais were deeply involved in trade relations with the KR and that official discouragement had yielded no results.¹⁰⁰⁹ Talks between the Chinese and KR allegedly continued in Beijing

through November¹⁰¹⁰, though there was no discussion of them in the official press.

China continued to publicly call on Thailand to cut off trade with the Khmer Rouge¹⁰¹¹, and it rejected Australia's proposal to exclude the DK from elections, arguing that such a step "would precipitate war."¹⁰¹² One Chinese diplomat involved in the discussions about whether and how to continue election preparations later explained that Beijing was anxious to "do everything it could to keep the Khmer Rouge involved" because "we were concerned what they would do if they did not compete in the elections."¹⁰¹³

Beijing's position regarding participation in the PPA and the elections was utilitarian rather than partisan: both efforts were of dubious value unless *all* parties participated. But its international efforts were consistently misconstrued as support for a genocidal insurgency, rather than as a conviction that disallowing KR participation might actually yield a worse outcome. At the same time, whatever messages Qian and others conveyed that summer clearly had no effect on the KR. To Beijing, excluding the KR was not an option. If Beijing had tried to keep the KR within the PPA for fear that it would become more aggressive if outside the PPA, it was right. By April 1993, the KR closed its office in Phnom Penh and returned to the northwest, a gesture that must have seemed like *déjà vu* to some. Its assaults in the coming months even happened to include Chinese peacekeepers. One Chinese commander had expressed hope that "the presence of Chinese troops would prevent a KR return and secure Phnom Penh"¹⁰¹⁴, in May 1993 a rocket attack in Kompong Cham province killed two and wounded four Chinese engineers.¹⁰¹⁵

Some Chinese policymakers retrospectively indicated that the Agreement had been irrevocably compromised by the KR's withdrawal.¹⁰¹⁶ This sense was further

compounded by UNTAC's inability or unwillingness to enforce the PPA, particularly in military terms. Thailand's unwillingness to enforce the UN sanctions and UNTAC staff members overstepping their bounds only augmented Beijing's perception that, "We were among the only ones to abide by the agreement."¹⁰¹⁷ China remained convinced that, failing all four factions being vested in the new Cambodian government, armed conflict would continue. Although this view was increasingly at odds with the other PPA signatories and would be extraordinarily difficult to make manifest, given KR intransigence, there was now no turning away from the May 1993 elections.

The May 1993 elections: choosing new leaders? The elections were expected to resolve that which years of protracted negotiations could not: who would rule Cambodia following Vietnam's withdrawal. But the CPP's ongoing control of the military and all local-level offices across the country and its immediate refutation of the results made it an election of dubious merit, and the exercise did not yield new leaders. Instead, it ultimately gave a gloss of legitimacy to a regime still dominated by the party installed 15 years earlier by Hanoi.

The elections were a massive logistical and profoundly political undertaking, entailing such difficult tasks as the need for a complete voter registry that included 350,000 repatriated refugees, proper vetting of political parties, and efforts to make an understandably wary population enthusiastic about political competition. The administration of the election was difficult and the campaign violent. UNTAC's failure to disarm the factions was partly responsible for bitter complaints from Sihanouk, Son Sann, and other parties about UNTAC's inability to protect them. It was widely expected that the CPP would win.

Having first endorsed the idea of elections in 1980, Beijing continued to express support for the elections throughout the spring of 1993. Premier Li Peng cautioned Sihanouk in March against internal “antagonisms,” and stressed that realizing the PPA was primarily the Cambodians’ responsibility.¹⁰¹⁸ This was an unusually blunt message to have delivered and recorded, yet it indicated Beijing’s non-tolerance for any other transgressions from the PPA. Days before the election began in May, the UN adopted Resolution 826 in support of peaceful elections, and the following day Sihanouk met with Qiao Shi, who reiterated China’s expectation that all parties would abide by the rules governing the election, and that, providing the elections were certified by the UN, the PPA’s requirement that the results be accepted.¹⁰¹⁹

Polling was conducted from May 23-28, 1993, and it became clear a few days later that the majority of Cambodians had not voted for the CPP. Funcinpec garnered 45 percent of the vote, followed by the CPP with 38 percent, and Son Sann’s Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party with 4 percent. The CPP immediately refused to accept the results, charging that the UN had defrauded it at the ballot box. This was obviously in contravention with at least the spirit of the PPA. Privately, some at the Chinese Embassy in Phnom Penh and at the MFA in Beijing thought these claims were absurd¹⁰²⁰, and “some of us wondered if Vietnam was trying to keep control of Cambodia.”¹⁰²¹ Ambassador Fu was sufficiently concerned about post-election violence that he insisted the PLA contingent remain in Cambodia.¹⁰²² It was not until June 10 – a tense ten days later – that Sihanouk chaired an SNC meeting endorsing UNTAC’s view that the elections had been properly conducted and that the results should thus be honored. Having thought the Khmer Rouge would be the election’s main spoiler, Hun Sen

increased the pressure two days later by announcing that he would lead a secession of the east of the Mekong River if the CPP was not given a share of power in the new government.

With UNTAC's encouragement, Sihanouk quickly reversed his position in light of Hun Sen's threat. On June 16, Sihanouk announced that the new government would be a coalition headed by co-Prime Ministers, though it was not until the next day that Funcinpec and the CPP agreed to this arrangement. Beijing issued a statement on June 17 warmly welcoming the establishment of a new government, noting that it fulfilled the goals of the PPA by including several parties. Yet the same statement called on the Cambodians to take their new responsibilities seriously and reminded them that the future was theirs and could be bright if they "continued to strive for national reconciliation."¹⁰²³

None of the individuals interviewed for this project disagreed that the CPP lost the election, and all were astonished and disappointed that UNTAC and the international community – which had spent considerable resources on Cambodia – was now backing down.¹⁰²⁴ Some clearly thought less of the UN, elections, and particularly of PKOs as a result of the failed military component and negotiated results.¹⁰²⁵ "Why hold an election if you allow the losers to win," asked one former Embassy staff member.¹⁰²⁶ But they had different reactions about what should be done in response to the CPP's refusal to yield power. Most were in favor of deferring to whatever arrangement Sihanouk approved, though a few who were concerned that a government not in conformity with the election results would be unstable argued for forcing Hun Sen to accept the results.¹⁰²⁷

A new beginning? On June 30, 1993, the Cambodian National Assembly met for the first time. Sihanouk was officially reinstated as King, while Son Sann became Chair of

the Assembly.¹⁰²⁸ Norodom Ranariddh became Cambodia's First Prime Minister, and Hun Sen became its Second Prime Minister. On July 8, the National Assembly proposed making membership in the Khmer Rouge illegal¹⁰²⁹, though it took more than another month until a draft constitution was presented for scrutiny. The new constitution was promulgated on September 24, at which point UNTAC's mandate expired. Cambodia was once again in the hands of Cambodians – though not the ones for whom most had voted.

With its mandate fulfilled, the time had come for UNTAC to withdraw from Cambodia. Some, including the US, Funcinpec, and BLDP, argued for an extension of its mission on the grounds that the country was still not militarily stabilized and faced serious domestic security threats. China insisted that the UN's role had been fulfilled, that the future of Cambodia had to be put unequivocally in the hands of Cambodians, and that for the UN to remain involved would be interfering with domestic affairs. By this point, the Beijing's rhetoric had gone from referring to UNTAC as “an international solution to a domestic problem” to “an intervention,”¹⁰³⁰ a term that had no positive connotations. Beijing also began using the same term for withdrawal with respect to UNTAC that it had used with respect to the Vietnamese. As the *Diplomatic Yearbooks* noted, “The ultimate solution to the Cambodian problem depended on the Cambodians themselves...The international community had completed its effective intervention for the purpose of helping to realize independence, peace, unity, and territorial sovereignty.”¹⁰³¹ In August, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution to withdraw all of UNTAC by mid-November.

This left the new, fragile government and its deeply divided military forces to face the ongoing KR problems on its own. A July attack on villages and UN helicopters in Kompong Thom indicated that the KR intended to fight on after the election. A late July Security Council resolution demanding compliance with the PPA went essentially unnoticed; a Cambodian government offensive from August 18-20 in northwestern Cambodia did not. One former diplomat noted the concern amongst his colleagues in Beijing at this time: “It seemed as if nothing had changed. The two communist factions were still fighting hard with each other.”¹⁰³² Nor were the portents for a functioning coalition government much better. Even before the National Assembly had formed, Chinese journals were publishing articles noting that Ranariddh had been warned that he would have to work to win over the support of Hun Sen’s troops, while Hun Sen was cautioned that he must remember Funcinpec’s popularity at the ballot box.¹⁰³³

At the end of August, China’s liaison office in Phnom Penh officially became an embassy again. In September, China’s long-time Ambassador to the SNC, Fu Xuezhong, returned to Beijing, and was replaced by Xie Yue’e, who had been a KR liaison officer at the Chinese Embassy in Bangkok.¹⁰³⁴ Zhang Qing, who served as Ambassador to Singapore and also had two decades of involvement in Cambodia, became the Ambassador to Vietnam.¹⁰³⁵ The choice of individuals with such depth of experience, combined with the ongoing involvement in Cambodia policy of senior leaders like Jiang Zemin and Li Peng, suggested a high degree of continuity in Chinese policy.

Why did Beijing continue to support the PPA process and UNTAC despite the problems with the CPP, the KR, and excessive intervention of foreigners? Did Beijing have other motivations? Some, such as Fravel, insist that China only participated

because it sought to improve its post-Tiananmen profile in the international community and amongst its Southeast Asian neighbors.¹⁰³⁶ It is clear that China felt compelled to make good faith efforts in the early 1990s, though it is difficult to accept Fravel's suggestion that this was the only motivating factor for Chinese involvement. Participating in UNTAC was equally about China's gaining experience in multilateral efforts with a hope of modulating them. As one analyst wrote, "China increasingly recognizes the importance of participating responsibly in international affairs and trying not to pick sides...learning how to agree to disagree, how to make progress without creating instability."¹⁰³⁷

Perhaps Beijing had been trying to signal to Vietnam that it should check any lingering aspirations to re-occupy Cambodia, but Vietnam was expressing no such interests. Moreover, had Beijing wanted to continue its partisan stance of the 1980s, it ought to have objected to any sort of compromise with Hun Sen, or should have amplified the KR's accusations of an ongoing Vietnamese presence. It is not wrong to suggest that China was seeking another ally in Southeast Asia, as any efforts to block regional integration in the reform era would have been anachronistic. It is more likely that, as China's relationship with Vietnam continued to thaw during these years, a good relationship between Beijing and Phnom Penh – also former enemies – served as a positive example to Hanoi and to the rest of Southeast Asia. Even if this was Beijing's primary motivation in Cambodia, it was a peaceful one.

What Beijing wanted was a Cambodian-chosen government, one that in China's view constituted a crucial first step towards establishing a viable, independent, secure state. Chinese policymakers had hoped that, once empowered by an election and freed of

UNTAC, Cambodians would seize the opportunity to rule and develop the country in the way the CCP had done at home.¹⁰³⁸ Such developments required external restraint, not international backing of domestic partisan agendas. After reminiscing about the early 1980s in China and its moves towards economic development, one former Chinese ambassador said of immediate post-election, post-UNTAC Cambodian political leaders: “They did not seem to care or understand that the hardest part was only just beginning.”¹⁰³⁹ Between the withdrawals from the PPA, the contested election results, the secession threats, and the hostilities between the parties, the capacity to work together seemed little more than a fantasy.

III. October 1993 – 1997: From cooperation to a coup

China was vindicated on a number of important foreign policy issues during these years: the return on Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty, resisting pressure to devalue the *renminbi* during the Asian Financial Crisis, improving relations with Asean, progress with Vietnam, and exponentially increasing involvement with international organizations. Concerns about Taiwan persisted. Although foreign policy involved some minor tactical shifts during this time – making less use of “lines” and more use of party-party ties – the dominant themes of “firmly rejecting hegemonism” and promoting self reliance by “not using others’ vehicles to get where you want to go” remained consistent even after Deng’s death in 1997. Foreign policy would continue to be “more realistic, but still based on principles and formulated independently, at our own initiative, according to national conditions, and supporting self-reliance.”¹⁰⁴⁰

But while China moved ahead, Cambodia slipped behind. It was now nominally the sovereign and multi-party state China had wanted, and China responded by treating it with the same enthusiasm of the early 1960s. But rather than ruling jointly, CPP and Funcinpec effectively created two *separate* governments based on party affiliation.¹⁰⁴¹ In addition, the CPP refused to implement a key part of the power-sharing agreement granting Funcinpec a percentage of local-level positions, all of which had been occupied by CPP loyalists for a decade. If Beijing was looking for an opportunity to dominate in Southeast Asia, it should have moved quickly to support the CPP and encourage the marginalization of other parties. Did China continue to press for a coalition to obscure its past ties to the Khmer Rouge? Did it become more engaged with Cambodia out of an affinity for authoritarian regimes? Beijing had been right to question the Cambodian political elite's capacity for national reconciliation or peace and development – so why did it continue to work for that goal?

All due diplomatic respect. With the reestablishment of a sovereign government, Beijing moved quickly to accord Phnom Penh considerable diplomatic attention. Over this period, there were at least 32 high-level visits in Beijing, Phnom Penh, or New York, about once every five to six weeks, and countless phone calls on occasions ranging from independence days to national catastrophes.¹⁰⁴²

Some of the more noteworthy meetings between the leadership stressed familiar themes.¹⁰⁴³ In January 1994, Hun Sen, Ranariddh, and Sirivudh met Li Peng, Jiang Zemin, and Li Lanqing, who stressed stability and self-reliance as the two sides signed a new agreement on political, economic and technical cooperation.¹⁰⁴⁴ Vice Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxun spoke about the importance of “taking control of national matters”

on a February 1995 visit to Phnom Penh.¹⁰⁴⁵ One senior Cambodian politician recalled that the April 1995 ceremonies commemorating Sino-Cambodian relations focused on China's self-reliant development.¹⁰⁴⁶ Chinese leaders reiterated the message over the coming months.¹⁰⁴⁷ On Second Prime Minister Hun Sen's first solo visit to Beijing in July 1996, Jiang Zemin and Li Peng stressed the importance of political stability but recommitted themselves to non-interference, while Hun Sen expressed his support for Beijing's positions on Taiwan and Tibet.¹⁰⁴⁸

In addition to visits between the leadership, relations between the CCP and the Cambodian political parties began to grow. This was standard procedure with a new post-election regime, and it was also consistent with the CCP's practices at the time around the world.¹⁰⁴⁹ These ties were not particularly ideologically motivated but rather served as another conduit for maintaining relations with other countries. But as the Cambodian state itself became increasingly partisan, what were supposed to be party exchanges became increasingly difficult to distinguish from state visits.

In an effort to smooth over any lingering hostilities stemming from their recent past as enemies, the CPP opted to mimic Sihanouk's tactics from the 1960s. The CPP began to visit China as early and as often as possible, established party ties early, and spoke on every possible occasion in support of the one-China policy. Chea Sim, who had first visited Beijing in 1992, returned in March 1995 and made the first highly public statement in support of the one-China policy.¹⁰⁵⁰ In February 1996, a CPP Standing Committee member led a delegation to China, met with Central Party Political Chair Li Tieying, and formally established ties between the CCP and the CPP. In September

1996, CPP Standing Committee member Chea Sim led a party inspection delegation to China.¹⁰⁵¹

Some western and Southeast Asian analysts were beginning to suggest that Beijing had now switched its preference in Cambodia from Funcinpec, which they assumed Beijing preferred because of its relationship to Sihanouk, to the CPP. But little conclusive evidence was given. Of Hun Sen's July 1996 state visit, the *Far Eastern Economic Review* wrote, "Beijing and Phnom Penh have taken the final step to normal relations with the state visit to China of Cambodia's second prime minister, Hun Sen."¹⁰⁵² The article failed to note that Hun Sen was by this point no stranger to Beijing, and did not articulate how relations prior to this visit were abnormal. Much was made of the fact that Hun Sen traveled to Beijing on a Chinese state aircraft for this visit¹⁰⁵³, though no effort was made to ascertain for purposes of comparison how often that service was offered to others. One of the only public appraisals of the Cambodian parties appeared in an early 1996 *Dongnanya congheng* article, which suggested that the CPP was more popular for its focus on rural people's needs and more powerful as a result of its knack for exploiting its opponents' faults.¹⁰⁵⁴

Funcinpec, which had perhaps rested too much on Sihanouk's laurels, was slower off the mark. Although it only established formal party-party ties to the CCP about six months after the CPP, in June 1996¹⁰⁵⁵, there were fewer visits, calls, and public statements from Funcinpec that were helpful to Beijing. Prince Ranariddh's announcement in 1996 that Eva Air, a Taiwanese carrier, would begin direct service between Phnom Penh and Taipei displeased Beijing – not because China objected to Taiwanese investment or trade ties, but because the agreement carried a degree of

formality that bore too close a resemblance to official recognition of Taipei. During these years, as one of Sihanouk's former assistants noted, Beijing increasingly saw differences between the King and Funcinpec that were not particularly flattering to the latter. He recalled MFA officials asking him why Funcinpec members seemed to spend more time in the US and France than they did in Cambodia.¹⁰⁵⁶

The Chinese Communist Party's visits to Cambodia, on the other hand, remained strictly multipartisan. One of the officials who participated in several of these visits suggested that such choices were quite deliberate. He described them as a means of demonstrating the importance of political parties in general, but also as a way of showing respect for both Cambodian parties, their role in their government, and solidarity for the sake of developing the country.¹⁰⁵⁷ The first formal CCP visit to Cambodia took place in late October 1995, when CCP Central Party Liaison Vice Chief Zheng Guocai headed an inspection delegation to Cambodia and met both parties.¹⁰⁵⁸ It is unclear whether the decision to send the CCP United Front Department Vice Chair Dai Xunguo to Cambodia in October 1996 to meet with both the parties was an effort to underscore the importance of working together.¹⁰⁵⁹

King Sihanouk – now effectively the only figure of Cambodian unity – continued to be an important recipient of Beijing's attention. He spent about a third of his time in China, and the meetings, banquets, hospital visits, phone calls, and birthday parties are uncountable. Some of the meetings were highly nostalgic: in February 1994, Foreign Minister Tang visited Sihanouk in the hospital and the two reminisced about Zhou Enlai. In characteristic dramatic fashion, Sihanouk declared, "During my darkest times, it was ultimately only China that supported me, because China recognized that my leadership of

the Cambodian people was in support of a just cause.”¹⁰⁶⁰ In a February 1996 between Sihanouk and CCPCC Chair Li Ruihuan, the latter noted that the older generation of Chinese and Cambodian leaders “constructed this relationship with their own hands.” The former reiterated that the two countries were “like brothers.”¹⁰⁶¹ Beijing continued to provide Sihanouk with annual stipends of about US\$300,000.¹⁰⁶² But there was also an immediate and practical purpose to these interactions, given that Sihanouk shared Beijing’s concern about trying to bring the parties together and encourage national reconciliation.

Military ties between China and Cambodia also deepened. The initial aid was not great: US\$16,000 worth of military materials¹⁰⁶³; 40,000 doses of anti-malarial drugs¹⁰⁶⁴; US\$1 million in non-lethal aid.¹⁰⁶⁵ Both sides set about developing relations through increasingly high-level visits, culminating in an April 1996 visit by PLA General Zhang Wannian to meet Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) Co-Defense Minister Tea Banh and Chief of Staff Ke Kim Yan.¹⁰⁶⁶ Nayan Chanda understood Tea Banh’s comments that the PLA aid would “foster national reconciliation in Cambodia” to mean reconciliation between “Hun Sen’s CPP and the other group that has enjoyed Chinese support – the Khmer Rouge.”¹⁰⁶⁷ But an article a few months earlier in *Dongnanya congheng* suggested that the purpose of Beijing’s military aid was actually rather the reverse: “The weakness of RCAF allows the KR to live on and remain a threat.”¹⁰⁶⁸ A former PLA attaché in Phnom Penh expressed deep concern in early 1996 that RCAF unity was of pressing importance with respect to national security, but that neither party wanted to make the first move towards troop integration and compromise its power base.¹⁰⁶⁹

Beijing also reverted to providing aid to projects similar to those of the 1960s. In January 1994, Beijing extended a long-term, interest free loan to Cambodia totaling US\$8.6 million for planes, vehicles, and repairing roads.¹⁰⁷⁰ By the end of 1995, China agreed to provide textiles, emergency food aid, agricultural equipment, and another unconditional loan of US\$6.25 million.¹⁰⁷¹ Throughout 1996, Chinese engineers refurbished Mao Tse Tung Boulevard in Phnom Penh and launched a national well-drilling project that would eventually bring potable water to millions of Cambodians.¹⁰⁷² The Chinese Red Cross donated about US\$130,000 by 1996.¹⁰⁷³ Aid since 1991 now totaled about US\$350 million.¹⁰⁷⁴

Critics, who presumably believed that western aid's conditionality prevented corruption and support to abusive regimes, pointed to China's refusal to condition its aid as a kind of *carte blanche* for the resources to be used for non-transparent, nefarious purposes.¹⁰⁷⁵ This failed to acknowledge that Beijing had never conditioned aid anywhere, believing such practices are at best ineffective and worst counterproductive. If a surge in unconditional aid was a response to any particular factors, it was equally in response to Cambodia's dire poverty and its rapidly increasing dependence on heavily conditioned aid from the US, European Union (EU), and the international financial institutions.¹⁰⁷⁶ Unlike that aid, which focused on civil service reform, debt servicing, and basic social services, the bulk of Chinese aid was geared toward infrastructure development and other technical upgrades. Not only was this designed to make Cambodia more attractive to foreign capital, it was an attempt to increase productive, income-generating enterprises that would make Cambodia less economically vulnerable.

By 1996 about 60 Chinese firms had also invested approximately US\$40 million in Cambodian engineering projects, import-export firms, restaurants, and markets.

In several important respects, Beijing appeared to have returned to the uber-diplomacy of the late 1950s and early 1960s – the high-level visits, the attention to Sihanouk, the aid, the efforts to deepen relations with a variety of Cambodian political actors. But why bother? What did Cambodia have to offer China, particularly in its state of post-election fragility? Was Beijing trying to find ways to influence Phnom Penh? To the contrary: it repeatedly sought to bolster collective Cambodian decision-making by treating it as a normal sovereign state and by helping it minimize the vulnerabilities endured by all developing countries.

It is possible that Beijing was making an effort to demonstrate to other Southeast Asian countries, which were perpetually in need of such reassurance, that it could establish a positive relationship with a state governed by its former enemies. This could have been particularly helpful with respect to mending ties to Vietnam, though there is no indication that Hanoi saw Beijing's assistance to Phnom Penh in the same threatening way it had perceived Chinese aid to the DK between 1975-1978. Perhaps Beijing was trying to "mark" Cambodia as its ally and its territory, but it is highly difficult to identify what Cambodia had that Beijing would have wanted, given Cambodia's political, economic, and military weaknesses – having lifted tens of millions of Chinese out of poverty, it is unlikely Beijing wanted the responsibility for ten million poor Cambodians. Most important, there were no signs that China was trying to shape Cambodia's relations with other states, with the idiosyncratic exception of Taiwan.

Others suggested that, “Beijing [was] keen to dissuade Phnom Penh from embracing Taipei’s overtures and offers of aid. China also appreciate[d] Cambodia’s increasingly hard line in its territorial dispute with Vietnam.”¹⁰⁷⁷ While it is true that Beijing wanted to ensure support for one-China and guarantee that Taiwan would not get official recognition, it was already assured of both without having to make much of an effort – one will recall Sihanouk’s “one-China” efforts dating back to the 1960s. Moreover, Beijing was not concerned about Taiwanese trade ties to Cambodia, a position consistent across Southeast Asia and beyond. It is unlikely that Beijing hoped its relationship with Phnom Penh could help pressure Hanoi into giving up territory, given that Cambodia had minimal influence on Vietnam at the time. Cambodia had little to offer China.

At the same time, the costs to Beijing of this diplomacy were relatively low. By now it was well accustomed to accusations of an ongoing relationship with the Khmer Rouge or efforts to obscure the past, and to a newer application of the “China threat theory.” But it also would have been quite easy for Beijing to have put some distance between itself and Cambodia while still maintaining a relationship. The great power rivalries had subsided in Southeast Asia, and China’s involvement in the region seemed to only exacerbate suspicions rather than ease them. Cambodia was, after all, now an independent country. Or was Beijing seeing threats to that status that others were not?

The repeated exhortations to work together indicated Beijing’s conviction that the only way Cambodia would retain its newly restored independence was to work together. Beijing still considered Phnom Penh to be unstable, partly because of its negotiated regime, the level of external intervention, and its shaky economy. Post-UNTAC, Beijing

was particularly eager to see Cambodians – rather than the UN, the IFIs, or major donors – making decisions about the country and taking responsibility for them.¹⁰⁷⁸ But that became increasingly unlikely due to the partisan splits, the divisions of ministries, the failure to integrate the military, and the choice to declare the KR illegal. The diplomatic exercises carry connotations from Beijing of the legitimacy of the new Cambodian government, but also on its responsibility to its people. “The international community helped them have a chance to work together, but the failure to do so was [the Cambodians’] choice,” said one former diplomat.¹⁰⁷⁹ If China could learn how to make progress without instability and achieve such spectacular results, why could the Cambodians not do the same?

Threats to autonomy, threats to sovereignty. It was not that other states or analysts failed to see the potential consequences of a fragmented government, the overwhelming challenges posed by late development, and a still-dangerous rebel movement. Yet Beijing perceived these problems and the relationship between them in a critically different way. Its subsequent responses to the Cambodians’ succumbing to these “contradictions” were equally distinct. As prospects for trials of surviving Khmer Rouge leaders improved, and as the relationship between the CPP and Funcinpec spiraled downward, Beijing simply but consistently took the position that these were matters only for the Cambodians to resolve, and, unlike several other countries, it refused to alter its policies toward the Cambodia based on the outcome of those domestic disputes. As a result, many assumed that China rejected a KR tribunal in order to obscure its own history and that it would automatically lend support to the more authoritarian of the two Cambodian parties.

Beijing shared Sihanouk's concern that the CPP-Funcinpec infighting was again giving the Khmer Rouge a new lease on life, "especially as the country is weak and poor, and as educated people might gravitate towards [the Khmer Rouge]." ¹⁰⁸⁰ In early 1995, *Dongnanaya congheng* wrote that the KR was emphasizing concerns similar to those expressed by a number of PPA signatories: "government corruption, a weak economy, and party divisions – all the issues that cause conflict in Cambodia." ¹⁰⁸¹ A failure to set aside political differences and deliver some modicum of better living standards – precisely the difficulties Beijing felt it had surmounted at home a decade earlier – would create an opportunity for the KR to regain strength and popularity, which could pose a threat to the country's existence. As the CPP and Funcinpec began to explicitly compete over vanquishing the Khmer Rouge, Beijing's concern deepened.

In the years following the election, the Khmer Rouge continued their assaults throughout Cambodia's northern and western provinces. A still-open arms pipeline from Thailand ¹⁰⁸² made it possible for the Khmer Rouge to hold territory and take more. By the end of 1993, the KR had control over Anlong Veng and Pailin, towns near Cambodia's northwest border with Thailand. Throughout the first half of 1994, the KR engaged in sporadic fighting with government troops as they struggled to regain control of those areas. ¹⁰⁸³ In May, the Khmer Rouge launched an assault on Battambang, also in the northwest and Cambodia's second-largest city. The subsequent battle with government troops prompted approximately 50,000 civilians to begin trekking towards the Thai border again.

There were attempts at political solutions, though they were half-hearted. Yang Mu, a *Xinhua* journalist, wrote that Khieu Samphan had agreed to meet with Sihanouk in

Beijing in April 1994, presumably to discuss some kind of cease-fire agreement. It is plausible that Chinese officials had encouraged such a meeting in the hopes that Khieu would be more amenable to a discussion with Sihanouk than one with Hun Sen. Yang did not explain why the meeting failed to take place¹⁰⁸⁴, though Khieu may have been put off by one of the other attempted political solutions. In early July 1994, the National Assembly passed legislation outlawing membership in the Khmer Rouge. It provided an option to current members: if they defected to the government, they would not be charged for their participation.

Rather than inspire a mass defection, some Khmer Rouge took advantage of this option to commit atrocities and then defect in order to avoid prosecution.¹⁰⁸⁵ Other Khmer Rouge units ignored the defection option and continued to fight throughout 1994 from Preah Vihear, in northwestern Cambodia, to Kompong Speu, the province just west of Phnom Penh. Others remained in the north, where they established their own “interim government” in November 1994.¹⁰⁸⁶

It was not until August 1996 that rumors of a split within the KR – the kind Beijing had long awaited and hoped would mark the final demise of the movement – began to emerge. Steven Heder argued that such a split between the hardliners, such as Ta Mok, who continued to oppose private property, and the intellectuals, including Ieng Sary, Khieu Samphan, and Son Sen, who had been willing to consider cooperating with the outside world, had been inevitable. The proximate indication was the August 8, 1996 KR radio report that Ieng Sary and two other senior commanders were to be arrested for embezzlement. Ieng was singled out for “siphoning off \$10 million from Chinese aid money” to buy luxuries between 1985 and 1991.¹⁰⁸⁷ Ieng promptly announced his

intention to defect and reintegrate his troops from the Pailin and Malai areas¹⁰⁸⁸ of the northwest, which included about 450 officers and 4000 regulars.¹⁰⁸⁹

Although the faction led by the intellectuals, who renamed themselves the Democratic National United Movement, had not all agreed to join the RCG, Hun Sen swiftly made the two KR commanders RCAF generals in an effort to ensure their loyalty to the CPP. In addition, the Second Prime Minister announced that the “defectors” could keep control of the areas they occupied in the north and northwest so long as they agreed not to oppose the government. Some, such as Chanda, suggested that Ieng Sary would go into exile, and that the break was a Chinese-engineered effort at reconciling the KR and the CPP.¹⁰⁹⁰ Yet there was no need for Ieng to contemplate exile, as the RCG offered him amnesty on September 15, 1996 – a gesture that deeply offended many Cambodians.

Hun Sen’s strategy vis-à-vis the KR irritated some other states, such as the US, which was increasingly interested in a trial for the surviving leadership. Beijing said little publicly, but given its emphasis on national reconciliation it was unlikely that Beijing opposed Ieng Sary’s defection or the general practice of amnesty. However, diplomats recalled discussions at the MFA in Beijing about whether the Cambodians’ approach was really designed to support national reconciliation and military integration, or whether it was a way of bolstering one party’s ability to dominate the other. As one diplomat suggested, “Competing was no way to solve these [national] problems”¹⁰⁹¹, suggesting that such an approach only further polarized an already difficult issue. Two retired MFA staff members echoed similar sentiments, noting that their concern had begun with the 1993 declaration of the KR as illegal and implying that such notoriety might gain the KR support.¹⁰⁹² Perhaps worst of all, the KR’s actions were creating more international

attention, best illustrated by renewed British and American calls to create an international tribunal and suggestions that aid might depend on pursuit of that strategy.¹⁰⁹³

It was certainly true that a Cambodian refusal to hold a tribunal helped China avoid public discussion of its past with the Khmer Rouge, but there is little evidence that that particular concern was dictating Beijing's approach.

Meanwhile, the relationship between the CPP and Funcinpec had already begun to deteriorate. The CPP's infrastructure of power had remained largely intact throughout the UNTAC period and the election, and the nominal power-sharing agreement was already more of a concession than many of its leaders had wanted to make. For Funcinpec, there was no real way to claim the power it was supposed to have been accorded by virtue of the election results, and despite the party's traditional association with the King, the Cambodian public was quickly recognizing the party's weaknesses.

China focused quite early on the parties' apparent inability to work together. Early in 1994, *Dongnanya yanjiu* wrote that the most significant problems facing Cambodia were "internal contradictions and the interference of western/border countries." It suggested that the problems with the KR had worsened since the election. Internal contradictions, particularly Funcinpec's frustrations at the CPP, and growing western pressure about a KR tribunal, were also complicating matters. This article concluded by saying that, "Once the Sihanouk era is over, the troubles could begin again."¹⁰⁹⁴ Another article, drafted about the same time, described the post-election coalition as "one party in control, two parties in power, and three rival powers confronting one another like the legs of a tripod."¹⁰⁹⁵ Yet Beijing did not respond to the domestic divisiveness in the same

way as other countries. There were no critical public statements and no threats to withdraw aid, nor were there ultimatums about a tribunal.

The honeymoon had been brutally short. Within a year of the May 1993 election, Hun Sen and Ranariddh were already at odds over how to improve Cambodia's security situation and military integration. There had been another unsuccessful coup attempt, and the Funcinpec Minister of Economy and Finance, Sam Rainsy, and the Funcinpec Foreign Minister, Prince Norodom Sirivudh had resigned, the former blaming the government's failure to stamp out rampant official corruption. Within the next year, Sam Rainsy had been expelled from Funcinpec and started his own party, while Prince Sirivudh, who had been widely considered as one of Funcinpec's only adept MPs and therefore a threat to Hun Sen, was arrested on trumped up charges of plotting to assassinate Hun Sen. Local elections, which might have eroded the CPP's national hold on power, should have been held in 1995 but were indefinitely postponed. By early 1996, Ranariddh was desperate for a way to assert some control over the situation. In March, he delivered a blistering speech to Funcinpec's annual congress demanding that Funcinpec be given an equal share of political powers and criticizing Hun Sen.¹⁰⁹⁶ The first coalition government looked like it might have a shorter lifespan than the DK.

The Chinese foreign policy community was clearly aware of the imbalances between the parties' strength, particularly their military capabilities. One diplomat later commented that CPP's "tendencies toward fighting" were not conducive towards working together, but, at the same time, the divisions within Funcinpec did little to bolster the party's strength.¹⁰⁹⁷ Beijing was never especially sympathetic to Funcinpec's concerns, despite the abuse its members were suffering or that it had been cheated by

UNTAC. Privately some Chinese officials expressed that they were concerned about the effects of CPP violence, but they were also put off by Funcinpec's reputation for elitist, inattentive, royalist rule.¹⁰⁹⁸ Another former diplomat suggested that Funcinpec's and Sam Rainsy's¹⁰⁹⁹ tendencies to seek support outside the country, particularly from the US, was not helpful, nor were western donors' involvement in domestic politics, though both tendencies were seen as stemming from UNTAC's excessive involvement.¹¹⁰⁰ It was not that Beijing was endorsing the CPP, but rather that Funcinpec's performance had not inspired confidence.

Sihanouk's lengthy stay in Beijing – from late February to late August 1997 – signaled to the Cambodian and Chinese leadership his dissatisfaction with the course of events. A now-unusual two-month lag between Chinese ambassadors might have been meant to indicate that Beijing shared the King's view. At a minimum, it left Beijing without its top emissary to intervene with the Cambodians from March 25, when Xie Yue'e returned to China, and May 29, when Yan Ting'ai who, like Xie, had a background in Southeast Asia, presented his credentials.¹¹⁰¹ There was no Chinese ambassador in Phnom Penh when still-unidentified assailants tossed hand grenades into an opposition party rally in downtown Phnom Penh on March 30, killing at least 16 people. An early 1997 Chinese journal article cataloged Cambodia's problems, including the "questionable legality" of the power-sharing arrangement, poor efforts at economic development, a failure to gain admission to Asean, Hun Sen's lack of popularity, splits in the CPP, and the CPP's use of anti-Vietnamese sentiment to generate support.¹¹⁰² Another suggested that, "Multiparty government isn't working due to 'special characteristics,' contradictions, and the Khmer Rouge...[but] the 1993 elections were the

start of the CPP-Funcinpec problems – the altered results, which the UN allowed, became a problem for all parties – a real ‘snake in the grass.’”¹¹⁰³

Nevertheless, high-level exchanges continued through the first half of the year, including a visit by NPC and Standing Committee members to Phnom Penh, and participation of CPP and Funcinpec members in Hong Kong-related festivities in Phnom Penh on July 1. On July 4, Ambassador Yan signed an agreement outlining the details of China’s new US\$8.6 million loan with Chief of Cabinet Sok An.¹¹⁰⁴ It is unlikely Ambassador Yan was aware that Sok An spent the rest of the day finalizing plans for Hun Sen’s coup d’etat to oust Ranariddh¹¹⁰⁵, an action that would again jeopardize Cambodia’s independence.

The coup. As had 1996 worn on, the problems between the parties and the difficulties with the Khmer Rouge – each sufficiently explosive on its own – began to intersect. Each side couched its actions in terms of “national reconciliation,” but “national domination” would have been more accurate as the CPP and Funcinpec competed for KR troops and weapons, and for the historical legacy of being the party that finally vanquished the movement. In principle, both parties were violating the law by negotiating with the KR.

Beijing saw this as precisely the wrong response: the best way to eliminate the KR was simply to leave it alone, believing that the movement would fade away if it was isolated and ignored.¹¹⁰⁶ There is little written in the Chinese press at this time about the KR, which some read as an attempt by Beijing to cover up its past relationship. But it is equally likely that not giving it attention was part of a larger strategy to kill the movement by ignoring it, or that the Chinese press had simply lost interest in the

movement. If the parties in power wanted to fully integrate the Khmer Rouge into a national army, Beijing had no problem with this. “But it is important to know that at that time, the parties could not even agree on integrating their own troops,” pointed out one diplomat.¹¹⁰⁷

Although Hun Sen had personally traveled to Malai, a KR stronghold, in February 1997, it was Funcinpec generals and eventually Ranariddh who met with senior KR military leaders and Khieu Samphan throughout the spring of that year. In early June, Funcinpec General Nhek Bun Chhay announced that he had brokered a deal for Pol Pot, Ta Mok, and Son Sen to go into exile in order to enable others to defect. Sihanouk stated from Beijing on June 9 that he would never grant amnesty to Pol Pot or Ta Mok, but that he would consider such status for Khieu Samphan, Son Sen, and Nuon Chea if the co-Prime Ministers requested it. The Chinese Foreign Ministry categorically denied on June 12 that it had offered political asylum to any members of the Khmer Rouge, a plausible statement given Beijing’s clear desire for the movement to either fade away or stay within Cambodia. By the end of the month, Hun Sen was charging Ranariddh with illegally negotiating with the outlawed movement.

The movement was a shadow of its former self. Ieng Sary’s split and other defections had reduced the KR’s military capability by 80 percent, according to *Xinhua* journalist Ying Ming.¹¹⁰⁸ Sihanouk did not have to worry about whether to grant amnesty to Son Sen, given that he and ten members of his family were brutally murdered the day after Sihanouk’s announcement on the grounds that they were spies.¹¹⁰⁹ A week later, KR radio reported Pol Pot’s “surrender” to the remaining hardliners for a trial.¹¹¹⁰ According to one retired diplomat, these steps confirmed the MFA’s belief that the Khmer Rouge

would finish itself off.¹¹¹¹ Others appeared to be more concerned that the movement's slow demise made it increasingly hard for the Cambodians to avoid an international tribunal – precisely the kind of foreign involvement that Beijing disliked.¹¹¹² Such concerns deepened when on June 21, Hun Sen and Ranariddh together requested UN assistance in holding such a tribunal.

It was the last joint gesture for quite some time. By late June, Hun Sen was accusing Ranariddh of bringing demobilized KR to Phnom Penh without permission, and of illegally importing weapons. Perhaps sensing the deterioration, Ranariddh left abruptly for France on July 4, and from July 5-6, CPP troops roamed through Phnom Penh. They killed over one hundred Funcinpec military officials, many of them veterans of the resistance and the last consequential challenge to total CPP control of the country. There were no CPP casualties. Dozens of Funcinpec and Sam Rainsy-affiliated politicians fled the country again. In a maneuver of dubious constitutionality, Ung Huot replaced Ranariddh as First Prime Minister on August 6, and a warrant for Ranariddh's arrest was issued a week later. One Chinese diplomat somewhat bitterly pointed out that UNTAC fulfilled its military mandate, the coup would not have been possible¹¹¹³; another said the coup marked the official failure of the PPA.¹¹¹⁴

International responses were mixed. France waited less than a week to publicly support Hun Sen's argument that Ranariddh had started the fighting and therefore the coup had been a "self-defense" action.¹¹¹⁵ Australia, Japan, and the EU merely expressed concern at the violence.¹¹¹⁶ The US, which publicly blamed Hun Sen and the CPP for the coup, suspended the bulk of its \$25 million aid program and conditioned its resumption on "a democratically-elected government is reconstituted" and new elections.¹¹¹⁷ The US

also redirected at least US\$5 million to support a group of Funcinpec and Sam Rainsy politicians who had fled to Bangkok, and it was Americans who successfully lobbied at the UN in September for Cambodia's seat to remain vacant. Asean did not take a position with respect to culpability for the coup, though it was critical of Hun Sen for responding with such overwhelming force. Asean met on July 10 and decided to postpone indefinitely discussion of the application Cambodia had submitted in April 1996.¹¹¹⁸ Breaking with its past practice of non-interference, Asean formed a three-country team comprised of representatives from Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand to try to intervene with Hun Sen. He immediately and publicly rebuffed their efforts. By late 1997, there was a consensus amongst these donors that the exiles had to return and participate in the 1998 elections as a means of re-legitimizing the leadership.

Beijing's response to the coup was different from these other states', and it is important to carefully examine the distinctions. Statements released in the days after the fighting effectively indicate that Beijing did not have a position on culpability one way or the other. Publicly, the MFA reiterated that, "China firmly upholds the policy of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other countries."¹¹¹⁹ At a July 27, 1997, Asean Regional Forum (ARF) meeting that devoted a day to discussing Cambodia, "China... agreed that [it] wanted Hun Sen to maintain a coalition government. They believe this should include a role for Ranariddh's royalist Funcinpec party until elections scheduled for May 1998 could create a new government in Phnom Penh."¹¹²⁰ China refused to take a position on issues it considered appropriate only for the Cambodians to determine, such as whether Ung Huot was a legitimate replacement for Ranariddh. Beijing's concerns revolved around the consequences of the unnecessary violence: the "terrible blow" to

economic development¹¹²¹, the failure to reconcile and overcome differences between the parties, and the renewed prospect for interference from abroad.

Beijing's position cannot have been a result of ignorance about what had happened or a preference for the CPP's version of the events. On July 25, Ranariddh traveled to Beijing "in his private capacity" to see Sihanouk, and to discuss the situation in Cambodia with Vice Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxun.¹¹²² Tang reportedly expressed condolences for the deaths of Funcinpec officials and supporters, but also chastised Ranariddh for being excessively interested in competing with Hun Sen and insufficiently focused on domestic development.¹¹²³ Hun Sen, Chea Sim, and Ung Huot made a similar visit a few weeks later.¹¹²⁴ They had two meetings with Chinese leaders: one with Li Peng and Qian Qichen at Zhongnanhai on August 12, in which they were bluntly reminded that stability and economic development – not infighting – should be their top priority.¹¹²⁵ On August 13, Li Peng and Jiang Zemin met separately with the three Cambodians at Beidaihe. Although the Cambodians were reassured that bilateral ties would not be affected by the July fighting¹¹²⁶, Jiang Zemin apparently openly displayed his anger at the CPP's military actions.¹¹²⁷

A series of articles clarified Chinese analysts' perceptions of the coup. The causes of the coup included "party contradictions," the coalition government's failure to grasp that Asean would treat a military regime differently, compounding the tensions by involving the "Pol Pot clique," and "the deep influence of decisions taken by the international community," particularly about a tribunal, all of which contributed to the tensions between the two parties and over the Khmer Rouge.¹¹²⁸ To the extent that any of these accounts sought to place blame, it was shared across the parties. Xing held the CPP to

blame for its use of “illegal weapons” and Funcinpec for its “illegal use of the King”¹¹²⁹, while others implied that Funcinpec had indeed started the fighting, but that it was justified in doing so because it had never been given its share of power.¹¹³⁰ Several referred back to the “snake in the grass”: “The post-election agreement in 1993 became a source of conflict later on – it caused the 1997 crisis.”¹¹³¹ Implicit in all of these was the conviction that international involvement had done little to help soothe the parties’ hostility toward one another. Had the Cambodian leadership focused on that which Beijing had repeatedly stressed – reconciliation, self-reliance, working for development, sharing power – the coup would not have happened.

Yet Beijing clearly saw little purpose in punishing the Cambodia by suspending aid or diplomatically isolating the country. China accepted Ung Huot as the new First Prime Minister, something several other countries refused to do.¹¹³² It participated in some but not all multilateral meetings on Cambodia, and it said little at those it did attend. Beyond support for a coalition and elections, Beijing saved all other matters for direct discussion with the Cambodians. Unlike its efforts with GRUNK or the CGDK, Beijing did not reach out to the Cambodian politicians in Bangkok, partly because they had not been ousted by foreigners¹¹³³, and perhaps partly because their reliance on American support. Beijing was clearly alarmed by the CPP’s violence and crude refusal of Asean assistance, but China had already done what its principles dictated as the problems emerged. That that advice had not been followed did not in turn make it acceptable or even productive from China’s perspective to cut Cambodia off or take a position in what it saw as a domestic dispute. At a time when other major countries were curtailing or cutting aid, China actually increased its commitments. From August through December, Beijing

announced approximately \$20 million of new aid projects.¹¹³⁴ Most observers misconstrued these actions as Chinese support for Hun Sen and the CPP, overlooking the precedents for suspension of Chinese aid, and treating Chinese rhetoric about respect for internal affairs as typically empty propaganda.

Despite Beijing's and other countries' intentions and efforts, the multi-party state envisioned in the PPA was no more stable than what had preceded it. Even Beijing's attempts to provide legitimacy, aid, and freedom from excessive donor influence had not been enough to persuade the two Cambodian parties – implicitly or explicitly – to emulate China's experience of the 1980s. Yet Beijing did not attempt to punish or ignore the Cambodians, further devoting resources and incurring the suspicions of the west and Southeast Asia. Beijing's insistence on coalitions – from GRUNK to the CGDK, and from Paris onward – reflected a continuing belief that such efforts were a crucial step in building a viable regime. Beijing did not insist that the Cambodian parties hold identical views but simply that they make a concerted effort to work together. With legitimacy came responsibility, and Beijing felt the focus should be on economic development, not on competing for the Khmer Rouge or on staging coups. After all, said one MFA official, “Self-reliance required self-discipline.”¹¹³⁵

That Beijing maintained such a close relationship with Cambodia at a time when others were taking a considerable step back was reminiscent of the late 1960s, the DK period, and the early 1980s. Some suggested that Chinese involvement was consistent with an obvious preference for authoritarian regimes and that Beijing was unconcerned by the coup, or that China was so eager to develop another ally in Southeast Asia that it was willing to overlook all of the apparently insurmountable problems in Cambodia. Yet

these interpretations fail to acknowledge some of Beijing's most obvious positions. It was clearly frustrated with *both* Cambodian parties for failing to embrace important opportunities, but, at the same time, it saw no good reason to suspend assistance to the country. China simply did not share the assumption that externally-imposed financial or diplomatic isolation would promote national reconciliation.

IV. 1998 – 2002: Coming full circle – or moving in a straight line?

By the late 1990s, China was more than a decade into its highly successful experiment with economic reform. Its diplomatic ties were more diverse and professionalized than ever before, and it was joining international organizations at a rapid rate. At the same time, it was increasingly hostile to what it saw as the “new interventionism”¹¹³⁶, particularly following the beginning of the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia in March 1999, which Jiang Zemin labeled an “interference.”¹¹³⁷ It was equally uncomfortable with the new twist of aid conditionality – debt forgiveness requiring structural adjustment – and with increasing barriers to trade for developing countries. The US was now the “world’s sole superpower”¹¹³⁸, strong enough to influence not just European allies but to wholly dominate the IMF, World Bank, G8, NATO, and other increasingly important international organizations.¹¹³⁹

The western and international financial institutions’ efforts to grant recognition, condition aid, and allow access to international forums to Cambodia based on its political reforms, military alliances, tribunals, and elections were to Beijing quite reminiscent of the situation of the 1950s and 1960s.¹¹⁴⁰ As it had done at that time, Beijing saw others’ actions in Cambodia as merely latter-day forms of predictably hegemonic, interventionist

behavior. Beijing did not deviate from the principles it had staked out almost a half-century earlier, insisting that peaceful coexistence was a means of “avoiding war and strengthening oneself...[and of] realizing ‘common prosperity’ for ‘one world.’”¹¹⁴¹ As a result, Chinese policy did not change. Its generous aid and debt forgiveness continued to be construed as a means of avoiding a Khmer Rouge tribunal and extending influence throughout Southeast Asia. But there is little evidence to suggest the financial choices would have been different had the KR not been an issue, and it remained difficult to tell what Chinese “interests” Cambodia could fulfill.

The 1998 elections. As a result of the coup, the 1998 elections, like the 1993 contest, were as much about reestablishing a legitimate government and returning Cambodia to the international fold. Some, like the US, placed great emphasis on a democratic process, while China’s concerns revolved around whether ostensibly organized and regulated competition in the current circumstances between the parties was any less likely to produce violent results.¹¹⁴² Although Beijing was publicly supportive of the election once the Cambodian parties had agreed to it, few in Beijing thought this was an effective means of solving the country’s problems, and even fewer thought that international involvement would be any more beneficial now than it had been in 1993. One former diplomat saw the election as pointless: “You have the same people that were in power before the coup, between the coup and the election, and after the election. So how did the election matter?”¹¹⁴³

China did, however, get moderately involved in the election, though not to the same extent as other countries. In late March 1998, Ung Huot and Hun Sen extended an invitation to Standing Committee President Zhu Rongji to send a delegation of Chinese

election observers.¹¹⁴⁴ China accepted the invitation six weeks later, agreeing to send twenty observers to a UN-coordinated effort.¹¹⁴⁵ Also in May, Beijing agreed to provide US\$250,000 for trucks and other election-related equipment.¹¹⁴⁶

The July 28, 1998 election yielded different results from those in 1993: 37 percent for the CPP, 31 percent for Funcinpec, and 14 percent for the Sam Rainsy Party (SRP). Forming a government would again require a coalition, and that took another six months of politicians leaving the country, haggling over ministries, and violent riots. When the government finally formed in December through another CPP-Funcinpec coalition, Funcinpec and the SRP had virtually no power. After the elections, Beijing issued a statement that, “there is hope that national reconciliation can finally be achieved, particularly [by] ‘setting aside differences and focusing on commonalities.’”¹¹⁴⁷ Given that CPP-instigated violence against the other parties and their supporters likely contributed to the election results, the list of commonalities was short.

At a minimum, however, China believed that the situation was conducive for developmental purposes: Funcinpec was too weak to challenge the CPP, the CPP had no excuses not to focus on development, foreigners had fewer opportunities to intervene, and donors would resume aid with the successful formation of a new government. The more disciplined leadership Beijing thought would improve the situation in Cambodia was now in power, and the electoral process itself had been sufficiently democratic to pacify even American critics. Thus Cambodia was able to regain its UN seat, join Asean in September 1999, and begin applying for membership in the WTO. One Chinese analyst commented that, “For CPP, the lesson is that it can’t just do what it wants; for Funcinpec, the lesson is that it’s just not as strong as CPP.”¹¹⁴⁸

Beijing and the CPP. The ruling CPP was no more enamored of aid conditionality than Beijing was. China was clearly the best source of aid and diplomatic resources for the new CPP-dominated government, but Beijing's history with Sihanouk, the Khmer Rouge, and the CGDK made forging this relationship difficult for the CPP.¹¹⁴⁹ Several of its members resisted improving ties with Beijing, but one Chinese article made Hun Sen's calculations abundantly clear: "...[he] is 'wary' of China for its support to the KR, but is also aware that China is big and strong, peaceful and cooperative, does not interfere and can help Cambodia out of its poverty, so the past must be forgotten to win China's support."¹¹⁵⁰ Beijing may have had its hesitations about Hun Sen, but the reverse was not true.

The CPP tried to improve its profile with China by mimicking Sihanouk's tactics. In 1996, Ranariddh had badly bungled a potential Taiwanese investment by appearing to grant some degree of official political recognition of Taiwan, a gesture that irked Beijing. A few weeks after the coup, Hun Sen attempted to make own offering to Beijing by announcing that Cambodia no longer welcomed a Taipei liaison office in Phnom Penh.¹¹⁵¹ Given Beijing's past practice of tolerating such offices worldwide, there was not much of a response to this gesture. Several of the official communiqués from Phnom Penh to Beijing in July 1997 were not about the coup but about celebrating the return of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty. Deputy Prime Minister Sar Kheng visited Beijing in August 1997, Chief of Cabinet Sok An followed suit in September, and the CPP sent a delegation in December.¹¹⁵²

Over the coming years, Hun Sen continued to reiterate Cambodia's support for the one-China policy and played down the presence of Taiwanese investment.¹¹⁵³ Even after

Beijing and Phnom Penh signed and disseminated a report detailing Cambodia's adherence to the one-China policy in July 1999, Hun Sen sought to prevent the reestablished Taipei liaison office from holding a "double ten" ceremony, and issued a government decree prohibiting anyone in Cambodia from participating in anti-China activities.¹¹⁵⁴ Cambodian officials visiting China also expressed support for Beijing's position on Tibet¹¹⁵⁵, human rights issues¹¹⁵⁶, the choice not to devalue the Chinese renminbi after the Asian Financial Crisis¹¹⁵⁷, and the Falun Gong.¹¹⁵⁸ In a remarkable about-face from the 1980s, Hun Sen even went out of his way to play down the connection between China and the Khmer Rouge, telling a *Dongnanya congheng* correspondent that, "although Pol Pot had been influenced by extreme rightist trends in international communism, most of his methods and strategies came from North Korea."¹¹⁵⁹

Although these messages were obviously appealing to Beijing, China proceeded more cautiously with the CPP. On the occasion of 40 years of Sino-Cambodian relations in July 1998, there were only telephone calls between the leaders.¹¹⁶⁰ China did not send a high-level visit to Cambodia until early 1999, after the new government had finally formed. The CPP had helped facilitate Chinese investment in Cambodia, but Chinese exports to and imports from totaled only 0.02 percent of trade between China and Cambodia, Burma, Thailand, and Vietnam combined.¹¹⁶¹ Policymakers in Beijing remained concerned about the CPP leadership's volatility and its national profile. As a result, said one diplomat, "We encouraged them to think about the way the King ruled and why he had been so popular."¹¹⁶² Was Beijing trying to encourage the CPP to

moderate its profile – as it had with the Khmer Rouge – particularly as Sihanouk became increasingly frail?¹¹⁶³

Chinese leaders often referred to Sihanouk, their fellow traveler of four decades, as a positive model for the CPP. In December 1998, Hun Sen met in Beijing with NPC Chair Li Peng, who told him, “Since I saw you last August, Cambodia has improved considerably. Under King Sihanouk’s leadership, you should continue to strengthen unity and cooperation to bring Cambodia into the 21st century.”¹¹⁶⁴ When Hun Sen returned three months later, Jiang Zemin, Zhu Rongji, and Li Peng attributed the new political stability to “the leadership of King Sihanouk and a new coalition government.”¹¹⁶⁵ Most of the rest of the meeting was devoted to discussing Sihanouk’s role as one of the “old generation of leaders who nurtured the relationship through three generations of Chinese leaders.”¹¹⁶⁶ The same theme prevailed at meetings between PLA and RCAF leaders. When co-Defense Minister Sisowath Sirirath visited General Chi Haotian in November 2001 discussed the “*lao yibei lingdaoren*” (the “first generation leadership”) and their “long historical experience” together.¹¹⁶⁷

The messages were sometimes more blunt. Jiang reminded Hun Sen in Beijing in February 1999 that he could not afford to ignore others: “A country’s internal stability is the essential basis and precondition for economic growth, and the people’s cohesion is the important framework for a country’s whole capacity.”¹¹⁶⁸ In May 2001, Li Peng became the first NPC Chair to visit Cambodia since 1978. Hun Sen requested that China provide more investment, and Li Peng responded that more visits by Chinese members of parliament would be more useful.¹¹⁶⁹ In December 2001, Wei Jianxing, a Standing Committee member of the CCP, met with Chea Sim and praised the CPP’s efforts at

domestic stability but encouraged the party to redouble its efforts in “*hezuo*” (cooperation) with others.¹¹⁷⁰ It is still not uncommon to see Hun Sen referred to as a “strongman,” and one March 2002 article noted that the Prime Minister “has never been as powerful as he is now,” and noted his past involvement with the Khmer Rouge.¹¹⁷¹

If Beijing was hesitant about the CPP, why did it not take a step back? First, to do so would be a complete reversal of its approach to foreign affairs. Second, interviewees gave the impression that the CPP was more focused on domestic matters than the other parties. Even the CPP’s harshest critics acknowledged the frequency with which CPP members visited home districts, delivered goods and services, and stayed in contact with the local level. Chinese officials seemed unconcerned that those maintained through patronage, corruption, and/or repression. It now seemed to matter that CPP members generally did not, as one diplomat put it, “run off to California or Paris or Brussels” whenever problems arose.¹¹⁷² One Chinese official was even willing to overlook the CPP’s past connection to Hanoi in praising the stalwart CPP members who had not left the country in the 1980s.¹¹⁷³ In many respects this perspective was not only unfair, as dozens of members of other parties had been systematically murdered by the CPP, it was also inaccurate, as many senior CPP members had obtained dual citizenship in the event they ever became the target of “problems.” But if Beijing was primarily concerned with Cambodia’s economic development, the CPP appeared more serious than most of the alternatives.

Movement toward a tribunal. If there appeared to be a post-election truce between the political parties, similar progress was not to be found with respect to the Khmer Rouge. At a July 1997 “trial” in northwestern Cambodia, the aging Pol Pot was

denounced by dozens of his former supporters.¹¹⁷⁴ In October, he gave his first interview in almost two decades to a western journalist, and he laid blame for the two million Cambodian deaths on Vietnam. Although Khmer Rouge radio reported on April 10, 1998, that Pol Pot would be sent to an international tribunal¹¹⁷⁵, his death – some suspect murder – five days later obviously prevented such an outcome.¹¹⁷⁶ Many Cambodians lamented the opportunity to see justice done, or at least extract an explanation for, the KR's barbarous rule. A man once given a state welcome in Beijing was not even properly cremated; he was burned atop a pile of gasoline-soaked tires, "like old rubbish."¹¹⁷⁷

By April 1998 the government had finally asserted control over the last KR military stronghold of Anlong Veng. In June, former DK Cabinet members Chuan Choen, Chan Youran, Mok Ben, Im Sopheap, and Kor Bun Heng decided to join the government¹¹⁷⁸, and others followed suit in December. Ta Mok and Khieu Samphan had unsuccessfully tried to gain political asylum in Thailand for themselves and 3,000 supporters, and in December Khieu Samphan and Nuon Chea also agreed to defect. Throughout the first half of 1999, one of the last remaining groups of Khmer Rouge troops were integrated into RCAF¹¹⁷⁹, hard-line holdout Ta Mok was captured and flown to Phnom Penh¹¹⁸⁰, and Duch, the former chief executioner of S21, was found working for evangelical Christians in northwestern Cambodia.¹¹⁸¹ By September, both Ta Mok and Duch had been charged with genocide. With many former KR members in its ranks – including Hun Sen – the CPP wanted to conquer and co-opt the KR through amnesties, defections, and defeats, not a potentially embarrassing tribunal.

But now that a core group of KR leaders was accessible and the military threat they once posed had disappeared, it was increasingly difficult to stave off international pressure for a tribunal. The United Nations' Special Representative for Human Rights in Cambodia, Thomas Hammarberg, had begun discussing a tribunal in a 1996 report, and by April 1997 the UNGA adopted a resolution to "examine any requests by Cambodia for assistance" with respect to legal proceedings for surviving KR leaders.¹¹⁸² Hun Sen's and Ranariddh's June 1997 letter to Kofi Annan answered that call, though the coup suspended the discussions. In late April 1998, the US State Department again called for a tribunal, partly out of its dislike for Hun Sen (in October 1998, a House and Senate resolution called for investigating Hun Sen for war crimes). In late July 1998, the UN Secretary General created a "group of experts" to explore the prospects for a tribunal.¹¹⁸³ In March 1999, the chief UN war crimes prosecutor announced the UN's view that an international tribunal would be most appropriate. That month, China vetoed a proposed UN plan for a tribunal at the Security Council.

Many analysts simply assumed that China was trying to prevent a process that might implicate its involvement with the KR. For example, much had been made of the December 18, 1997 visit of Tep Kunnal and Ta Mok to the Chinese embassy in Bangkok, where the two argued that Beijing should cut its ties to Hun Sen because he maintained a close relationship to Vietnam. Less was made of the fact that China in no way responded to such overtures, the generally acknowledged veracity of Beijing's statements that it had had no contact with Pol Pot since the late 1980s¹¹⁸⁴, or its even-handed conduct during UNTAC. In another instance, the US Ambassador to Cambodia, Kent Weidemann, complained in 2001 that, "Chinese diplomats had been literally following in American

footsteps to prevent” the discussion of the legislation necessary to establish a tribunal.¹¹⁸⁵ Newspapers regularly ran articles accusing China of blocking the tribunal but they rarely offered evidence, explanations, or mention of other states’ support to the DK and CGDK.¹¹⁸⁶ One Cambodian newspaper later insisted that China had pledged \$1 billion to the government as an explicit incentive not to conduct a tribunal.¹¹⁸⁷ Few tried to solicit or understand Beijing’s position, an admittedly complex one entailing its opposition to international involvement in such an event, its skepticism regarding a tribunal’s influence on national reconciliation, its view of Cambodia’s struggle in the 1970s as one of national liberation, and its unease at having its past exposed.

First, although Beijing continued to believe with respect to the Khmer Rouge that, “Until the source of trouble is removed, there will always be trouble”¹¹⁸⁸, it also continued to believe that the fate of the Khmer Rouge should be solely determined by *Cambodians*, not by foreigners. In November 1997, Beijing allegedly rejected a recommendation submitted by the Secretary General’s Special Representative for Human Rights in Cambodia supporting an international tribunal. One retired diplomat clarified that Beijing’s objection was to the Special Representatives opposition to amnesties that blocked judicial proceedings.¹¹⁸⁹ In the Special Representative’s discussions with the diplomatic corps throughout 1998 and 1999, Chinese diplomats reiterated their position that “the Khmer Rouge question was an internal matter.”¹¹⁹⁰ In March 1999, Beijing issued a statement saying that it “opposed an international tribunal.”¹¹⁹¹

Chinese policy makers clearly thought that if it was Cambodians who had made the mistakes, it should be Cambodians who decided how to resolve them. In January 1999, Ambassador Yan Ting’ai insisted to Thomas Hammarberg that the tribunal was an

“internal issue for the Cambodians,” and was unmoved by Hammarberg’s reference to the Hun Sen-Ranariddh request for UN assistance.¹¹⁹² As Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxun said at a February 1999 press conference in Bangkok, “I believe the people of Cambodia and the government of the people of Cambodia are capable of solving this issue independently.”¹¹⁹³ Privately, one diplomat equated the Cambodians’ situation with China’s in the early 1980s: “We had trials [after the Cultural Revolution], and it helped us [determine] how to understand our history. But no foreigner could have told us how to do that.”¹¹⁹⁴

Beijing repeatedly stated that on this matter, “The Cambodian government and people should make their own judgment and decisions independent of any external pressure or interference.”¹¹⁹⁵ China never denied the Hun Sen-Ranariddh request, but it clearly felt that the Cambodians would not be allowed to conduct the tribunal on their terms. “[The UN] had offered to ‘help,’ but it was like UNTAC – they were trying again to force their approach on Cambodia,” said one former Chinese Embassy official in Phnom Penh.¹¹⁹⁶ Had the Cambodian judiciary not been so hopelessly corrupt, Beijing’s position might have gained traction. As the US increasingly threatened tie aid to progress toward a tribunal, and as Japan provided more aid to establish the judicial structure needed for the envisioned tribunal¹¹⁹⁷, Beijing was convinced that this process would not be left to the direction of the Cambodians. China also regarded efforts to induce a tribunal through conditioned aid or other means as a serious violation of the Five Principles: “The international community should respect the state sovereignty and judicial independence of Cambodia, instead of imposing the will of an individual country.”¹¹⁹⁸

Second, Beijing remains unconvinced of the utility of a tribunal. It is important to understand that China does not necessarily object to tribunals *per se*.¹¹⁹⁹ But Beijing finds plausible one of Hun Sen's most frequently used reasons not to have a tribunal: that such an event could be destabilizing, a prospect to be avoided at almost all costs.¹²⁰⁰ Although most Cambodia experts reject the idea that fighting might result from those recently defected from the KR, at least three former Chinese diplomats expressed the view that the CPP could go to violent lengths to avoid such proceedings in order to obscure its past involvement with the KR. Moreover, the same diplomats three also questioned whether information obtained from a tribunal – as distinct from that gained through scholarship, public dialogues, or even a South African-style “truth commission” – was worth the risks.¹²⁰¹ One of the more sophisticated Chinese analyses of a tribunal suggests that the proceedings will not be able to prevent Khieu Samphan and others from simply blaming Pol Pot.¹²⁰² But other more powerful actors – the US and UN – have made their diametrically opposing view prevail: that Cambodia cannot be stable *until* the KR legacy is properly addressed, and that a tribunal is the most appropriate way to do that.

Whether other countries' involvement with the Khmer Rouge will be addressed in a tribunal is another important element of China's hesitations.¹²⁰³ Beijing denies that it bears any blame for the DK's atrocities: “Policies were made by the Khmer Rouge leadership and we never supported the wrong policies.”¹²⁰⁴ Consistent with its beliefs about the state sovereignty, it was and is China's position that those receiving its aid are entitled to do with it what they see fit. In their view, the aid provider is not responsible.

Chinese policymakers also reject the idea that their failure to cut aid to the DK or invite it on state visits implicates China in the DK's atrocities.¹²⁰⁵ Obviously Beijing finds the prospect of a tribunal that would inquire only into its past involvement with the Khmer Rouge objectionable. Yet China has consistently and openly supported investigations into "the massive gross violations of human rights resulting from foreign aggression and occupation"¹²⁰⁶, which suggests that it might be supportive of a process that equally scrutinized the involvement of Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, the United Nations, the United States, the USSR, Vietnam and others. But given the reality in which all Chinese behavior in Cambodia is treated with suspicion and hostility, Beijing's hesitations are not unreasonable.¹²⁰⁷

Fourth, it is worth considering how China now looks back on this episode in history and speculate whether its behavior would have been different. Did China see the Khmer Rouge primarily as zealous fellow communists or as militant nationalists bent on liberating their country? China has no difficulties justifying its support to the Khmer Rouge as one the core of anti-Lon Nol resistance through 1975, as a sovereign state from 1975-1979, or as an integral part of the anti-Vietnamese forces in the 1980s. The historical record suggests that, while different outcomes would have been preferable, it is difficult to separate the KR's role in opposing external intervention from its genocidal rule. Many continued to believe that participating in the anti-Lon Nol resistance in the early 1970s was not only defensible but had been essential to prevent Cambodia's obliteration. In March 2002, Sihanouk himself stated that,

I did not appeal to anyone to participate in the Democratic Kampuchea [regime], I only asked those Cambodians who loved their country, wanted independence, wanted

neutrality and territorial integrity, and who wanted to protect themselves that, in order to prevent Lon Nol from taking over, they must take up arms, go into the forests and deal with their enemies.¹²⁰⁸

The *Xinhua* piece went on to point out that, “Many western writers and newspapers at that time published accounts and made statements all saying that this was true.” A few months later, Sihanouk also noted that China’s assistance had been given “in accordance with the noble ideas of the much respected Chinese Communist Party which had led its own titanic struggle...for the liberation of its homeland.”¹²⁰⁹ If Sihanouk himself found it difficult to articulate the difference between supporting the resistance and creating the Khmer Rouge, it was unlikely in Beijing’s estimation that a process dominated by foreign judges could properly evaluate the morality and circumstances of participation in the Khmer Rouge. Even if Chinese policymakers know that a tribunal held under CPP control cannot be fair, such proceedings would be preferable because they are *Cambodian*.

Finally, there is a degree of embarrassment and discomfort amongst Chinese foreign policymakers about the Khmer Rouge. More recent writings imply a sense of relief that, “China has already cast off the heavy foreign relations burden of the Khmer Rouge.”¹²¹⁰ No one interviewed for this project thought that DK rule had turned out well, but very few thought that other choices had been viable at the time.¹²¹¹ There were those who would prefer not to discuss this particular episode in Chinese foreign policy history, and these are generally the same people who were uncomfortable with China’s failure to employ more extreme tactics to discipline the Khmer Rouge, but this was a minority view. Almost all interviewees made some connection between the Khmer Rouge and the

Cultural Revolution, linking the zeal of the Gang of Four and, occasionally, Mao, to Khmer Rouge extremism. It is the encouragement of the Khmer Rouge's gestational – and then genocidal – stages that force Beijing to contemplate its own unsuccessful experiment in creating a radical, utopian, anti-intellectual agrarian society – an idea decidedly not in concert with China's late 1990s perception of itself.¹²¹² At the same time, most interviewees were convinced of the restorative power of China's having recovered from that turmoil on its own.

Chinese writers have acknowledged that “the Pol Pot clique caused the deaths of more than two million Cambodians”¹²¹³, and Chinese leaders are aware that 100,000 of those deaths were ethnic Chinese Cambodians.¹²¹⁴ Yet Beijing remains unconvinced that it should have made different choices in the past or that an international tribunal would contribute to national reconciliation. Consequently, China continues to be portrayed internationally as a patron of genocidal regimes and an obstacle to justice.

The aid. Despite its concerns about Hun Sen and Cambodia post-Sihanouk, China has provided considerable support to Cambodia's economic independence. As China's economy has grown in the 1990s, its aid levels have once again risen, and throughout the decade Chinese aid budgets were regularly about 0.6 percent of GDP – six times the American percentage.¹²¹⁵

Since 1992, the international community has provided Cambodia with roughly half a billion dollars a year in aid, while China has itself provided about that amount in the same time frame via unconditional aid and interest-free loans. Following the formation of a new government in late 1998, China provided a US\$200 million loan for agriculture and infrastructure and an outright grant of US\$15 million for military equipment¹²¹⁶, and

another US\$18 million of foreign assistance and \$200 million in interest-free loans for infrastructure followed in February 1999. Since that time, China has given Cambodia at least US\$300 million in unconditional grant aid, US\$32.7 million in military aid, US\$206 million in new loans, and US\$1 million to Sihanouk.

Even more important, Zhu Rongji, the first Chinese premier to visit in more than 35 years, announced at the 2002 Asean summit in Phnom Penh that China would forgive all loans to Cambodia that had matured, most of which had been issued during the DK period. Although “[n]o official total estimate of the debt was available, and estimates from sources at the Chinese embassy in Phnom Penh varied from \$60 million to as high as \$1 billion”¹²¹⁷, this gesture generated more attention than any other in recent memory. An MFA statement explained that, “due to Cambodia’s public finance difficulties it is a way of providing timely and precious help.”¹²¹⁸ Aid during these years alone totaled about US\$577 million, while aid from 1991-2002 was at least US\$870 million and at most US\$1.8 billion.

This wave of aid has been widely regarded as evidence of resurgent Chinese efforts to dominate Southeast Asia. Most western journalists immediately attributed the loan forgiveness to “an attempt by China to deepen its influence over Cambodia”¹²¹⁹ without bothering to explain the purpose of the influence, while a Japanese embassy official in Phnom Penh described Beijing’s economic might as “frightening.”¹²²⁰ Others were convinced that Beijing was again attempting to erase its past relationship with the Khmer Rouge, while some analysts insisted that Beijing was trying to purchase support for the one-China policy¹²²¹, apparently unaware that such support was forthcoming free of charge. A few journalists suggested, and one official in Beijing confirmed, that China had

also intended to set an example in the face of increasing US pressure for repayment of Lon Nol-era loans.¹²²²

Why has Beijing given away such a massive amount of money to a country that could not return it? First, although per capita income in China had risen steadily for almost two decades, China continued to identify strongly with the developing world. Li Peng had exhorted a United Nations Development Program meeting in Copenhagen that “wealthy countries should assume more of the burden to move the world to similar levels of affluence”¹²²³, and China did its part to close the gap. Second, despite its own successes, Beijing remains convinced that world markets were structured to maximally benefit developed countries. Now that China is in a better financial position to do so, it has revived its practice of devoted considerable aid to offsetting these constraints. This explains why most of China’s aid to Cambodia has been designed to improve its ability to begin industrializing. Third, not only did developed countries and international financial institutions provide insufficient aid, they also “increasingly place[d] restrictions on foreign aid (the human rights situation, democracy, public administration)...aid is increasingly becoming an instrument of some donor countries’ political, military, and diplomatic plans.”¹²²⁴ Given the number of constraints on the desperately needed western aid to Cambodia, it was an obvious target for Chinese assistance.

There were strategic reasons for China to devote resources to Cambodia, but those do not comport with the domination Ross predicts. First, while the magnitude of aid may have been an unnerving reminder to Asean of China’s economic power, it also reflected the potential benefits of China’s regional developmental agenda. Asean could not help but “appreciate China’s reduction of debt obligations of the less-developed Asean

members.”¹²²⁵ At the same summit, China and Asean also signed a new free trade agreement that would focus on “agriculture, the information technology industry, human resources, future investment, and development in the Mekong river basin.”¹²²⁶ Many of these issues were also ones China considered important in the divide between the industrialized north and the developing south, but, more important, they were undoubtedly also ones in concert with China’s peaceful, developmental, pro-economic integration agenda for the region.

Some argued that China was trying to cultivate a new trading partner, and while such a view is generally true across the world, it fails to acknowledge the realities of the trade statistics. For Cambodia, the trade relationship is crucial, as about a quarter of all Cambodian exports are sent to China. The value to China of trade with Cambodia, however, is less than 0.02 percent of its trade just with Burma, Cambodia, Thailand, and Vietnam. Moreover, the volume of aid and degree of diplomatic involvement were not absolutely necessary for a trade relationship. Others argue that a better relationship is a way for China to effectively “purchase” support for the one-China policy and/or its territorial disputes in the South China Sea. The former point is made by those who remain deaf to the fact that such support has been voluntarily forthcoming from Cambodian leaders for four decades, while the latter would require that Cambodia have some leverage over these issues, which it certainly does not.

Was China cultivating a good relationship to strengthen Cambodia as a buffer against Vietnam? Was it trying to gain access to a deep-water port on the Gulf of Thailand, as suggested by a US military official?¹²²⁷ With respect to the first point, Vietnam has in no way threatened Cambodian sovereignty since its troops withdrew, so it is difficult to

identify a need for such a buffer. In the long, slow process of improving its ties to Hanoi, Beijing may want to use its relationship with its former enemies in Phnom Penh as evidence of its ability to reconcile. But, as noted above, such a “demonstration effect” would not necessarily require billions of dollars in aid or complex diplomatic interactions. While it is in theory true that closer Sino-Cambodian defense ties would give China greater access to the Gulf of Thailand and the Straits of Malacca, it is in reality difficult to envision China upgrading the port of Sihanoukville to accommodate naval exchanges without careful discussions with Cambodia’s neighbors, especially Vietnam, and its donors. It remains difficult to accept security-based explanations for China’s aid to Cambodia.

One MFA official suggested in 2002 that Beijing had felt compelled to “make it up to Cambodia” for its suffering during the Vietnam War and under the Khmer Rouge. If that is true, then assuaging guilt was highly costly to China.¹²²⁸ In addition to providing aid, Beijing paid another price for its actions: the more money it has given, the more alarmist rhetoric emanated from Washington, Canberra, and some Southeast Asian capitals. Yet Beijing remained unaffected by the innuendos regarding its motivations. It clearly did not feel compelled to publish any more details regarding its aid, insisting that it was fully transparent about the work it supported in Cambodia. Chinese representatives participated in donors’ meetings and forums organized by the international financial institutions, but it did not discuss its own aid. According to Cambodian politicians from both major parties, Chinese officials demanded no quid pro quos for the aid and never asked that they alter or cut their ties to the US, Australia, France, Japan, or any other countries.¹²²⁹

The aid has to be seen in the context of Chinese foreign policy principles and China's economic strength to effect different styles of state-state relations. Its domestic political upheavals regularly jeopardized its ability to attract investment, establish fiscal predictability, or maintain its lucrative tourism industry¹²³⁰, and, as a result, it remained vulnerable to economic shocks and therefore external intervention.¹²³¹ Even companies from the PRC, which were considered quite accustomed to the difficulties of investing in countries like Cambodia, reported an inability to make a profit on investments in Cambodia due to a poor legal system and rampant government corruption. Having become the single largest investor in Cambodia, Chinese companies were by the late 1990s beginning to consider moving to Laos and Vietnam for greater predictability.¹²³² As long as Cambodia remained poor and dependent on increasingly conditioned aid – if its autonomy was threatened – China sought to alleviate these threats to its autonomy. China's aid was designed not to support a particular party or ensure loyalty for Beijing's policies, but rather to free Cambodia from the constraints of others' conditioned aid, to help develop a broader base of light industries, to attract investment and to try to engender some sense of a developmental agenda in the Cambodian leadership. To Beijing in the 1990s, such efforts are a crucial part of protecting and promoting sovereignty.

V. Conclusion

Several explanations have been offered for the resumption of close relations between China and Cambodia in the 1990s, all of which presume more aggressive or instrumental motivations on China's part. Yet these systematically fail to provide compelling

evidence that Cambodia was ever in a position – with its neighbors or Asean, with the US or UN, militarily, strategically, or economically – to assist China. Beijing did not ask for assistance with Taiwan, the South China Sea, a port on the Gulf of Thailand, or Vietnam, as Zhou had asked of Sihanouk in the 1960s. Even if Beijing had pursued such an approach, it is hard to see how Cambodia could have exercised much influence on these matters.

Could Beijing's actions over these years simply be considered a form of balancing? After all, other countries' and organizations' actions in Cambodia clearly influenced China's thinking. But Beijing's policies consistently created a *variety* of options for Phnom Penh; they did not require the Cambodians to cut ties with certain actors, adopt particular policies, or even support China. On some important matters, Cambodian political leaders have made decisions that were in tension with what Beijing would prefer, most notably the pursuit of a tribunal for the Khmer Rouge with substantial international involvement. Ensuring another state's ability to make truly independent decisions – including ones that might not be in the enabling state's interests – does not fit neatly into the standard interpretation of balancing behavior, or of domination.

Moreover, there is no evidence to suggest that China's choices with respect to Cambodia were made out of apprehension of these other states and organizations; if anything, China's apprehensions were *for* the Cambodians if they were left solely to these actors' interventionist policies. It is again helpful to employ Womack's hypothetical approach: if the US, IMF or any of the other major actors vanished from Cambodia in the 1990s, would China have behaved differently? Aid might have been reduced somewhat, but given that the overarching goals of promoting national reconciliation and economic

development were most regularly challenged by the Cambodians themselves, it is unlikely Beijing would have diverged significantly from its course.

Beijing's choices to support UNTAC, develop a relationship with the CPP, maintain its policies following the 1997 coup, give away considerable aid, and repeatedly stress self-reliance cannot be considered a simple vote for authoritarianism. China is not supporting a party or a person in Cambodia – it is behaving according to a set of principles. China's own experience in closing political ranks for economic development have helped ensure its sovereignty and autonomy, and thus its and others' security. Contemporary statements such as, “Chinese people deeply understand that the victory of China's revolution and construction and so support world peace and development”¹²³³ cannot be dismissed as empty rhetoric. Beijing has wanted similar outcomes for other vulnerable states, and in Cambodia's case, it has been willing to pay a considerable cost. It has provided almost US\$2 billion in aid, it has granted political, economic, and military legitimacy and longevity to its former enemies, and it has engendered a reputation as a backer of repressive and genocidal regimes. All of these contribute to a resurgence of the “China threat theory,” something Beijing has worked long and hard to defeat. But as long as Cambodia remains vulnerable – to donor demands, to Sihanouk's increasing frailty, and to its own self-destructive politics – China is unlikely to change course.

The consistency of behavior during this period to that of the 1950s and 1960s is reminiscent of one definition of rational choice theory: systematic patterns of incentives lead to systematic patterns of outcomes.¹²³⁴ But rational choice theory typically expects a strategic motivation, and that is clearly lacking in this case – unless one accepts China's quest to maximize its own experience with self-reliant development to promote security

and thus a more equitable international system as strategic. Conversely, China has systematically failed to respond to traditional security, ideology, or economic motivations. Policy towards Cambodia might look as if it has come full circle– but its principles have in fact now kept it moving in a straight line for half a century.

CHAPTER FIVE: COMPARISONS TO INDIA, ALBANIA, AND AFGHANISTAN

I. Introduction

The previous chapters have argued that principles drove China's policy choices towards Cambodia. Some may argue that this behavior was idiosyncratic and a result of Cambodia's profile as a small, deferential state. Generalizing a claim about principles requires examining other cases for evidence of that relationship's consistency or divergence. Brief inquiries into China's bilateral relationships with three countries with different outcomes may reveal the circumstances in which a fuller spectrum of policy choices was considered. What explains China's choices to launch a military assault, break ties to an old friend, and fail to assist a resistance movement? What, in the larger sense, does this suggest about the relative importance of principles to other variables, such as wealth, ideology, or security, in Chinese foreign policy choices?

Case studies are essential to showing concrete instantiations or variations of the hypothesized relationship between principles and policies. They allow for some characteristics, including state size, proximity to China, and regime type, to vary while others, such as similarities to the Cambodian case, remain constant. This strategy creates the degree of control necessary to determine whether the posited relationship holds. Process tracing continues to be the preferred method of operationalization, as it allows for the closest examination of the links between cause and effect.¹²³⁵ Specifically, this chapter seeks to explore the relative salience of four variables in China's foreign policy choices. Security considerations include efforts to either prevent attacks on China or to expand Chinese power, while ideological concerns entail promoting or protecting

socialism in general and Marxism-Leninism in particular. Constraints on resources or opportunities for monetary gain comprise the variable wealth, while principles are defined in terms of the Five Principles.¹²³⁶

The Sino-Indian border war of 1962, the demise of Sino-Albanian ties throughout the 1970s, and the muted Chinese response to the Afghan resistance in the 1980s will be considered. These cases have been chosen for several reasons. First, they range across three of the four periods considered in the Cambodia chapters, and can therefore illustrate continuity or lack thereof across time. Second, each of the cases shares at least one common attribute, that of a good initial relationship with China, with the Cambodian case. By choosing cases with some, but not all, common attributes, and with varying outcomes, it will become easier to demonstrate the larger argument's validity. Also, there is little if any linkage between the cases and Cambodia, thus avoiding the case equivalent of collinearity. Finally, considering at least one case where the hypothesized effect does not appear will help clarify the argument's generalizability.¹²³⁷

The cases are admittedly simplified. The information derives from different source bases, and the amount of reliable data from Chinese or English sources varies considerably across the cases. In-depth interviews with Chinese policy-makers like those used to clarify some issues on Cambodia were generally not possible. Yet even an examination of the similar or differing contexts can provide some insight into determining which variables help drive China's foreign policy choices and whether its principled choices toward Cambodia were idiosyncratic.

II. The Sino-Indian Border War, 1962

Introduction. If the Five Principles dictated China's relatively peaceful behavior towards Cambodia, how are we to understand instances of more aggressive Chinese foreign policy, such as the Sino-Indian border war? Most accounts suggest that China's attack derived from an expansionist agenda or from a domestic power struggle. A closer examination, however, illustrates the persistence with which China pursued a principled relationship with an equally powerful state and demonstrated generally unacknowledged restraint before and after the war. Rather than occupy Indian territory or demand new concessions from a position of strength, China voluntarily withdrew its troops and merely asked for what it had asked for all along – equitable negotiations on the demarcation of the border.

The border war and the origins of the conflict. On October 20, 1962, approximately 20,000 People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops launched coordinated assaults along the western end of the Sino-Indian border from Tibet and Xinjiang into Assam and Kashmir, and at the eastern end at the intersection of China, India, and Burma. The former end included the disputed territory of Aksai Chin and the latter the similarly disputed North Eastern Frontier Agency (NEFA).¹²³⁸ The PLA beat back the Indian Army, which had minimal provisions and little facility for high-altitude warfare, with embarrassing swiftness. On October 24, Beijing offered to pull back to the de facto border, or line of control, and withdraw its troops if India would agree to border talks without any preconditions.¹²³⁹ India's Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, flatly rejected the proposal, and a second Chinese assault beginning on November 8 concentrated even more troops on the western end of the border. Within a week, China had driven India back behind China's claim line, and by November 21, Chinese troops were within 300 miles of New

Delhi. Casualty figures for China were not reported, but approximately 1,400 Indian troops were killed, 1,600 went missing, and almost 4,000 were captured in the course of the month-long war.¹²⁴⁰

Rather than dealing a bigger blow by holding what it had taken or pushing further into Indian territory, Beijing announced on November 21 that it was declaring a ceasefire and beginning to pull its troops back to positions 20 kilometers behind the line of actual control.¹²⁴¹ China did not insist on keeping the disputed NEFA, on an Indian withdrawal of hundreds of kilometers, or on a more beneficial redrawing of the border. Rather, Mao and Zhou chose to reiterate only the demands that they had been making for the past several years: that India halt its forward movements into disputed territory, withdraw 20 kilometers from the border, and engage in border talks. Even *Pravda* – mere months after the Sino-Soviet split – declared the proposal “constructive” and “acceptable.”¹²⁴² As Maxwell observed, “at the point of a smoking gun, a victorious China imposed not a victor’s terms but what she had proposed all along.”¹²⁴³ One British diplomat later observed that, “The Chinese withdrawal to their original lines after a victory was the first time in recorded history that a great power had not exploited military success by demanding something more.”¹²⁴⁴

But how had a relationship that had been so close gone so wrong? Nehru, like Sihanouk, had initially been wary of India’s communist neighbor, and Beijing was reportedly “surprised” at India’s early recognition in April 1950.¹²⁴⁵ But like China and Cambodia, newly independent India reveled in the prospect of equalized, anti-imperialist international relations, and Nehru shared Zhou’s enthusiasm for the global project of remaking the conduct of inter-state relations. Upon initiating formal bilateral ties, the

two sides emphasized their commitment to opposing hegemonism, imperialism, and American domination of the United Nations. India offered support to China's positions regarding the Korean War and the status of Taiwan.¹²⁴⁶ The two sides signed a treaty in 1954 committing them to relations based on the Five Principles¹²⁴⁷, and Zhou and Nehru were among the five co-chairs of the 1955 Bandung Conference at which the Non-Aligned Movement was founded. On his 1956 visits to New Delhi, Zhou was greeted by hundreds of thousands of cheering Indians as the campaign of *Hindi Chini bhai bhai*, or Sino-Indian brotherhood, swept the country. With such strong ties between the world's two most populated countries, it seemed that the possibilities for change were virtually endless.

But solidarity on an international level required resolving outstanding bilateral problems, particularly the zero-sum, sovereignty-challenging issue of border disputes. Demarcating China's borders was a political and symbolic priority for the Chinese leadership. Even if borders were not to be changed, agreements had to be reached by the Chinese Communist Party leaders in order to exorcise the legacy of imperial and Nationalist rule. According to this logic, Mao and Zhou believed that the Sino-Indian border had not been properly demarcated. The western end of the border had never been properly discussed by anyone; Britain and Tibet had secretly drawn the McMahon Line at the eastern end of the border separating China, India, and Tibet in 1914, and had deliberately excluded Chinese and Indian representatives. As important, India tried to continue recognizing British control over Tibet following India's independence in 1947.¹²⁴⁸ The issue became more important to Beijing-New Delhi ties following China's January 1950 invasion of Tibet, which brought Chinese troops close to India. In an effort

to begin the discussions with India, and assuming that their strong affinity would help cushion any difficulties in the border talks, Zhou wrote to Nehru in September 1951 and clarified that China did not accept the McMahon Line.¹²⁴⁹ Beijing had pursued a similar strategy of clarifying its position on pre-PRC borders and initiating negotiations with Burma and Nepal.

Knowing that India only stood to lose territory as a result of any negotiations, Nehru effectively dodged the issue for the next three years. Under increasing domestic pressure as the Indian economy stagnated, Nehru opted to deflect criticism by adopting a quiet policy of expansion into China: “India should fill out to what she considered her proper boundaries, and then decline to discuss them with China. Having agreed in the [Five Principles] preamble to respect India’s territorial integrity and sovereignty, China would have no course but to accept the *fait accompli*.”¹²⁵⁰ At the same time Nehru and Zhou were in close communication on matters such as the Non-Aligned Movement, Nehru was beginning to encourage anti-Chinese sentiment amongst Indian politicians and to encourage small encroachments into disputed territory. Zhou visited New Delhi in 1956 and made clear to Nehru that while China did not agree to the McMahon Line, Beijing was willing to use that as the point from which talks should begin, and that it was not China’s intention to cross the line.¹²⁵¹ Nehru declined to discuss the issue.

The situation became more acute in 1958 and 1959. In July 1958, Beijing complained to New Delhi that “subversive and disruptive activities against China’s Tibet region” were being directed from Indian border towns and implied that Indian agents were aiding these efforts¹²⁵², and that India was beginning to send small military units into Chinese territory.¹²⁵³ Partly in an effort to better control Tibet, China completed the

Xinjiang-Tibet Highway across the Aksai Chin in March 1958. Unnerved by a road across what it considered its own territory and which could facilitate Chinese invasion, India responded in October 1958 with an official diplomatic note claiming – for the first time ever – that the 12,000 square miles of that region belonged to India. Nehru insisted in a December letter to Zhou that, “there could be ‘no question of these large parts of India being anything but India.’” This letter also marked the beginning of a pattern in which India offered to participate in talks only if China agreed to preconditions both sides knew Beijing would not accept.¹²⁵⁴

In March 1959, the PLA was dispatched to quell a far larger anti-Chinese rebellion in Tibet, and the Dalai Lama and thousands of his followers fled to India. The PLA’s brutality prompted the International Committee of Jurists to question whether Beijing had engaged in genocide. New Delhi had promised China that it would prevent the Tibetans from engaging in any anti-Chinese political activity¹²⁵⁵, but in reality the Indians did nothing to restrain the Dalai Lama’s followers as they set up an exile government. This did little to soothe China’s growing frustrations about the border, particularly after the first skirmish between Chinese and Indian troops erupted in August. Nevertheless, Zhou’s May and September 1959 letters to Nehru stressed the need to resolve the border but strongly emphasized that China did not wish to go to war with India¹²⁵⁶, and that the Chinese troops on the border were there to control the Tibetan situation, not to threaten India.¹²⁵⁷ Nehru’s September response suggested that the border was already established in treaties.

Despite the growing tension, Zhou continued his diplomatic effort and made two noteworthy conciliatory gestures to New Delhi. First, in November 1959, China

withdrew all of its personnel 20 kilometers from the line of control in the hopes that such a goodwill gesture would get India to the negotiating table and might inspire them to take similar steps.¹²⁵⁸ Nehru agreed to host a summit in New Delhi in April 1960, where Zhou made a second generous proposal: China would drop claims to the NEFA in exchange for India's doing the same with Aksai Chin. Despite widespread acknowledgement, including from some Indian politicians, that India had no defensible claim to the NEFA, Nehru rejected the proposal on the grounds that all the territory in question belonged to India. Although over the coming years China would continue to request talks, the failed summit talks marked the overall failure of diplomacy.

In November 1961, India's informal strategy of piecemeal encroachments by border police into disputed territory became official policy. After claiming that China had refused to negotiate and left him no other options, Nehru instructed the Indian Army to implement the "forward policy." By the end of the year it had established more than fifty posts in and claimed 200 square miles of disputed territories.¹²⁵⁹ Most Chinese sources consider this policy change a natural result of India's increasing dependence on American aid.¹²⁶⁰ Even worse, New Delhi seemed to read the lack of a response from Beijing to these encroachments as a sign of weakness and so continued to press ahead throughout 1962 with the forward policy. As India continued to reject talks and move troops into the disputed territories in June and July 1962, Nehru also instructed the army to prepare for a large-scale war.¹²⁶¹ By August, any Indian efforts at subtlety were abandoned, as Indian military planes stepped up their reconnaissance and delivery flights, "sometimes even airdropping military supplies on Chinese posts."¹²⁶²

At this point India posed a real threat to China. It had been receiving a steady supply of military aid from the USSR for four years, and, in the wake of the Sino-Soviet split, it was assumed that in the event of a Sino-Indian war Moscow would do all it could to help New Delhi. India was certainly in a position to take territory, help “encircle” China, and encourage rebellion in Tibet. In addition, international public opinion was decidedly on India’s side, despite compelling evidence to suggest that it was at least partly to blame for the escalating crisis, and New Delhi did not hesitate to trumpet China’s alleged betrayal of the NAM agenda.¹²⁶³ China, weakened by the domestic fallout from the Great Leap Forward and the abrupt withdrawal of Soviet aid, distracted by the Taiwan Straits crisis and the growing US presence in South and Southeast Asia, and demonized internationally, felt its options were limited.

As Vice-Premier Chen Yi later admitted, China began to prepare for war in the summer of 1962. At the same time, Beijing went to considerable lengths to amplify its preference for a peaceful solution. To date, statements made by Chinese officials contained two components: a cautionary note to India about the potential consequences of its actions and also a reiteration of China’s desire to maintain a good relationship with India. But beginning in July, the language emphasized the need for Indian restraint to match Chinese restraint. For example, *Peking Review* cautioned that China would never “give up the right of self-defense when subjected to unwarranted attacks...It is still not too late for India to rein in on the brink of the precipice. The Indian authorities had better think twice on this matter.”¹²⁶⁴

But Nehru’s October 12 statement, in which he instructed Indian forces to “free Indian territory in the North-eastern Frontier Agency of Chinese intruders”¹²⁶⁵, was from

Beijing's perspective the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back.¹²⁶⁶ China had tolerated diplomatic intransigence and even piecemeal encroachments, but the idea of Indian troops forcibly driving Chinese out of a disputed territory was not acceptable. After another week of statements urging talks, China went to war.

Even in the face of resounding defeat, and even in the face of extraordinarily restrained proposals by the victors, Nehru could not extricate himself from the constraints of the rampant anti-Chinese sentiments he had helped create and agree to border talks. Although he quietly abandoned the forward policy in December 1962, the "fundamental position of the Indian Government had only been confirmed by the defeat on the borders. *No negotiations* remained the basic Indian stand."¹²⁶⁷ Zhou's final letter to Nehru (who died in May 1964) in March 1963 stated that, "...if the Indian government, owing to the needs of its internal and external policies, was not yet ready for negotiation, the Chinese government was willing to wait with patience."¹²⁶⁸ Beijing waited for two decades for talks to begin and the negotiations are still going on.

In most respects there are few useful parallels between China's relationship with India and its relationship with Cambodia. Sihanouk was certainly fortunate that Cambodia and China did not share a border, particularly given the difficulties he faced with Vietnamese regimes on that matter. Cambodia was never in a position to claim disputed territory, nor were there concerted efforts at betraying the anti-imperialist agenda or advancing anti-Chinese sentiment. However, that relationship was sustained through difficult periods by ongoing and high-level diplomatic contacts.

There were, however, similarities in China's responses to India and Vietnam in the late 1970s. Vietnam obviously lacked the land mass and population of India, but it

remained a constant source of concern for Beijing, particularly once it gained greater Soviet backing. Upon embarking on ties with China, both India and Vietnam had shared at least one of Beijing's defining ideologies, socialism and the Five Principles. The hallmarks of deteriorating relations were from Beijing's perspective quite similar: encroachment or expansion into disputed territory (in Vietnam's case, this included not only the land border but also maritime claims in the South China Sea), anti-Chinese rhetoric and actions against ethnic Chinese in Vietnam and India, failed diplomacy, assumptions that China would not attack, and steps toward national mobilization. Beijing must have used its attack on India as a model for its 1979 assault on Vietnam, given that the two were almost identical in duration, scope, and purpose.¹²⁶⁹ Both efforts sought to force through military means a political point that was otherwise being resisted, and both were intended to return discussions to the negotiating table rather than resolve them on the battlefield. Sadly, neither effort succeeded.

Factors contributing to the border war. What factors appear to have been most crucial in China's decision to abandon the Five Principles with a close ally and go to war? India's intransigence with respect to negotiations and its rejection of the Five Principles alone were not enough to trigger more aggressive behavior; otherwise, an attack should have come earlier. These had to be augmented by India's decision to try to force China out of the disputed territories.

Security. Was China's attack on India driven by security concerns? This region was undoubtedly a sensitive one for China, primarily because of the concerns about Tibet as well as other regions on the periphery, and there was no indication where and when the Indian incursions might stop. At the same time, there was no threat of a full-fledged

Indian invasion, and China had for several years tolerated Indian encroachments.

Although China began to mobilize for war in the summer of 1962, it was not until Nehru's October 12 command to Indian troops to expel Chinese from the disputed territories that China abandoned all hope of a diplomatic solution. What had to that point been a political threat became a military one, an overt act of aggression.

But given India's behavior, and China's obvious success in the two attacks across the border, why did the PLA opt not to advance further? After all, Indian troops had deserted in droves, and, according to Maxwell, by mid-November there was no organized Indian resistance in the occupied territories. One could argue that, had China tried to continue its advance into India, it might have faced a far stronger response. Although an initial Indian call for national mobilization had raised concerns in Beijing about a prolonged campaign, it was the prospect of augmented Soviet military aid and/or British and American aid that in part dissuaded China from pressing ahead. Although the USSR had actually described the Chinese proposal of October 24 as reasonable, it had also "not said no" to Indian requests for emergency military aid in November 1962.¹²⁷⁰

But if it was Nehru's October 12 command that tipped the balance for Beijing, why did China not at least hold the disputed territory after the war? After all, that would have achieved several of China's key goals: preventing another Indian advance, stopping the forward policy, rebutting the allegations of weakness, and hopefully forcing India to the negotiating table. Yet this was never Beijing's means-ends calculation. Beijing never believed that the border issue could be solved militarily. In fact, it considered India's forward policy an unacceptable military solution to a political problem.¹²⁷¹ China believed that real security was to be found through diplomatic means – and so it had

never aspired to a lengthy campaign. On October 18, 1962, Mao told the Politburo that, “Our counterattack is only meant to serve as a warning to Nehru and the government of India that the boundary question cannot be resolved by military means.”¹²⁷² Given that principled diplomacy had failed, as principled a war as China could manage – short and sharp – was the next best option in the quest for a political solution. The war was undertaken in part to prevent further attacks, but it was clearly not pursued as a strategy to expand China’s power.

It was clear from China’s statements from mid-1961 to mid-1962 that part of its purpose in attacking India was to demonstrate to the rest of the world that China’s restraint should not be mistaken for weakness. At the same time, China tried to dispel a perception of impulsive military responses by consistently communicating the number of occasions on which it had attempted to resolve the problems diplomatically. Reiterating this message could help improve China’s security status by reassuring others that it would first seek diplomatic solutions to any outstanding problems. Despite Beijing’s efforts, these messages went unacknowledged.

Despite its victory, political goals, patient efforts to negotiate, and highly circumscribed military campaign, China’s security was in the long run actually compromised. The successful campaign no doubt allowed China to reassert control over Aksai Chin, but the failure to accomplish a political solution has meant a continuous Chinese commitment of troops to patrolling and defending the region. As important, it also turned some international opinion against China. Maxwell noted, “The border war, almost universally reported as an unprovoked Chinese invasion of India, had only confirmed the general impression that Peking pursued a reckless, chauvinistic and

belligerent foreign policy. Explanations for the unilateral Chinese ceasefire and withdrawal were sought outside the Sino-Indian context.⁹⁹¹²⁷³ Few states acknowledged Beijing's diplomatic efforts, and most, like the United States, construed China's abrupt withdrawal as an attempt to further ensnare Indian troops. Moreover, this perception only made New Delhi's relationships with Moscow and Washington closer.

China's limited military action, designed to illustrate its desire for a political solution, decreased its security. The failure to achieve a solution has resulted in an ongoing, low-grade, high-altitude border war and a fragile relationship that has complicated China's relations with other major powers and states in the region. Moreover, in the same way China's invasion of Vietnam was misconstrued as resurgent regional hegemonism, China's invasion of India was incorrectly perceived as communist expansionism. Even worse, China's victorious assault on India was no more helpful in advancing a political solution than its disastrous foray into Vietnam had been.

Wealth. It is difficult to find a compelling explanation for China's behavior towards India based on a desire for greater wealth. If anything, the attack on India cost resources at a time when China had little to spare. This crisis erupted as China struggled in the wake of massive Soviet aid withdrawals and the disastrous Great Leap Forward, yet Beijing's goal with respect to the border was clearly worth the outlay of resources. Maintaining the border war is not especially expensive, but it is nonetheless an ongoing commitment. Perhaps more important are the costs associated with any dysfunctional bilateral relationship, particularly the curtailing of trade, which could have been substantial between two large countries.

Ideology. Was China's attack on India motivated by differences over political ideologies? As noted above, Nehru and other Indian leaders had been wary of pursuing a relationship with a communist country, but those concerns remained in the background for the first decade of the relationship. Beginning in 1960, however, Nehru actively encouraged fears of a Chinese communist threat, a campaign that eventually made it impossible for him to reach an accord even in the face of obvious defeat. He encouraged debates in parliament to stir up Indian nationalist sentiment, and chose themes – most notably communist Chinese expansion and Mao's megalomania – that would also resonate in Moscow and Washington.

Beijing was aware of these statements and initially seemed willing to ignore them, understanding that they were a diversionary tactic for Nehru. But as those sentiments became more widespread in India, and as Indian politicians felt more comfortable articulating them on an international stage, Beijing's tolerance began to fade. On the two or three occasions that China publicly criticized India between 1961 and 1962, it did highlight India's growing relationship with the capitalist world and particularly its growing dependence on American aid, implying that India was not the vanguard NAM nation it claimed to be.

Yet China did not attack India because it was capitalist any more than India tried to claim pieces of territory because China was communist, or because either was trying to convert the other to a different socioeconomic system. Differences in political ideology may have served as another stage for tensions to play out, but they were not a motivation for war. Nor did differences over Marxism-Leninism drive China's attack on Vietnam. Beijing was similarly irked at Vietnam's anti-ethnic Chinese campaign, which had far

more serious human consequences than India's. Beijing's assault on Vietnam was less a question of its adherence to socialism than its betrayal of an anti-imperialist agenda.

Principles. Did Beijing resort to decidedly unprincipled behavior because it perceived India to have done so? In China's view, "The ink was not yet dry on the 1954 treaty of Sino-Indian friendship when India began violating the Five Principles..."¹²⁷⁴ India's rejection of the doctrine contributed measurably to China's decision to launch the assault.

First, in Beijing's view, India had betrayed the *principle of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity*. That India failed to acknowledge China's concerns about the McMahon Line in the early 1950s did not bode well. The Line embodied everything the early PRC leadership had fought for decades to overcome: the weakness of the fading imperial system and Nationalist rule, the incursions into China by westerners, efforts in the turmoil of the 1940s for groups on the periphery to secede from the "motherland," and ongoing external efforts to prevent internal unification. China regularly referred to the McMahon Line as "a product of the British policy of aggression."¹²⁷⁵

That India – a fellow NAM state, an adherent of the Five Principles, and a leader in the anti-imperialism campaign – would refuse to help China right this past wrong had a profoundly negative influence on the Chinese leadership. Zhou's writings reflected despair at his inability to persuade Nehru that this problem stemmed from their mutually distasteful experiences with British imperialism. To have worked together to overcome that legacy held considerable symbolic value. Nehru's refusal to discuss this seemed as

bad in Beijing's view as the October 12 announcement. "Nehru himself did exactly as his former master, Lord Curzon, had done,"¹²⁷⁶ wrote Zhou, but this was inevitable given "Nehru's British nurturing."¹²⁷⁷ Nehru's *fait accompli* – taking advantage of the Five Principles to extend India's territory – motivated the Chinese leadership to dramatically reformulate their view of the Indian leadership.

That India gave the exiled Tibetans free rein – to the point of encouraging collaboration between Tibetan rebels and the United States Central Intelligence Agency in anti-China activities – constituted a direct challenge to the *principle of noninterference in internal affairs*. The early PRC leadership placed a high priority after liberation on quickly reincorporating territories it deemed to be part of China. This included places then formally under others' control, like Hong Kong, places that had declared themselves to be independent, such as Taiwan and parts of Xinjiang, and places with somewhat ambiguous status, such as Tibet. By the late 1950s it was already concerned that India had been supporting Tibetan separatists. Following the massive revolt in March 1959, Tibetans had no hope of asserting independence by driving the Chinese out of Tibet, but the establishment of a large exile community in northern India at Dharamsala posed an important political challenge to Beijing. China had repeatedly explained – however unpersuasively – that its efforts in the west were to liberate Tibet from feudalism, not to threaten India. India's public comments regarding the Tibetans "facing a communist threat"¹²⁷⁸ was unacceptable to Beijing. Yet, as Maxwell pointed out, China did not respond in kind by channeling support to Indian separatists, such as the Nagas.¹²⁷⁹

Neither of these failures of principle seems to have constituted a security threat to Beijing. Rather, they indicated a profound Indian disrespect for China's recent

experience and a betrayal of the beliefs on which their relationship was purportedly based. Ultimately it was India's unwillingness to participate in the practical manifestation of principled relations – diplomacy – that forced China to consider other options.

Between 1956 and October 1962, China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs proposed talks formal bilateral talks 16 times, and only once did India respond without such restrictive preconditions that talks were actually possible. Those were the talks at which Nehru rejected the NEFA-Aksai Chin proposal. One Chinese source noted 47 attempts by the embassy in New Delhi to talk to the Indian government at a lower level in a single year. Most of these requests were simply ignored by the Indians. While China's embassy in New Delhi remained its largest in Asia until the war, and Beijing did not recall its ambassador until 1963, former Chinese diplomats recalled that India began decreasing its Beijing embassy staff after China's 1958 protest over Tibet.¹²⁸⁰

Most Indian authors lay the blame for diplomatic failure at China's doorstep. Some argue that China should not have entered into diplomatic relations without resolving the border issue, because doing so led Indian officials to believe that establishing relations entailed tacit Chinese acceptance of the McMahon Line. Others suggest that Zhou waited too long before raising the issue, citing the 1956 summit as the first time the McMahon Line was raised, and contributing to an Indian perception that there were no border problems. While it would have been preferable even from the Chinese perspective to resolve this issue earlier, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs had barely been established prior to the normalization of Sino-Indian relations. Moreover, it was extraordinarily difficult for both countries to develop precise maps of extraordinarily

remote territory. These authors' view gives no credit to the early and persistent willingness on China's part to begin border talks immediately upon establishing relations with other countries in the region. By 1960 China had worked out its border concerns with Burma and Nepal, and it did the same with Afghanistan and Pakistan by 1963.¹²⁸¹ Finally, these authors consistently fail to acknowledge Zhou's 1951 effort at initiating border talks.

Astonishingly enough, even though it was clear to Beijing in early 1962 that India intended to keep advancing into disputed territories regardless of Beijing's efforts, China did not stop proposing negotiations until the week before the war.¹²⁸² On the eve of the war, the MFA stated, "The Chinese Government and people are firmly convinced that there is no reason whatever for China and India to cross swords but there is every reason for them to be friends throughout the ages. Such friendship, even if disturbed temporarily, will eventually be restored and continue to develop."¹²⁸³ Four days into the war, *Renmin ribao* insisted that, "Sino-Indian friendship, which dates back to the immemorial past, though beclouded for the time being, will tower for ever like the Himalaya and the Karakoram."¹²⁸⁴

That Beijing tolerated two and a half years of Indian advances into territory China considered its own, all the while offering diplomatic solutions, demonstrates remarkable forbearance. Yet India's refusal to negotiate narrowed China's options considerably. It could either allow India to continue its advance, which obviously constituted a violation of the Five Principles, or it could try to force matters by military means. The latter became acceptable because India's behavior had so clearly rejected the most basic

practices of a principled relationship, best evidenced by Nehru's October 12 announcement.

The downward spiral in relations between Beijing and Hanoi had followed a similar pattern in the years immediately preceding China's February 1979 invasion, though China had been considerably less optimistic about the prospect of salvaging Sino-Vietnamese friendship. A summit meeting in June 1978 failed to elicit acknowledgement of either side's most basic propositions. Hanoi, infuriated at the cessation of Chinese aid to Vietnam but an increase of Chinese aid to Democratic Kampuchea, refused to consider China's new economic priorities, while China remained convinced of Vietnam's ingratitude and expansionist aspirations. From that point until the invasion, only a few diplomatic notes were exchanged regarding about border encroachments in China and Cambodia. But, as noted above, it was Vietnam's violation of the principles regarding sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non-interference in Cambodia that drove China to military options.

III. The demise of Sino-Albanian relations, 1972-1978

Introduction. Even at the lowest points in China's relationship with Cambodia under Sihanouk or the Khmer Rouge – including the Cultural Revolution, Sihanouk's occasional public criticisms of Beijing, and the Democratic Kampuchea regime – ties were never broken and aid was never suspended. China's relationship with Albania, formally established a month after the PRC's founding, had arguably been much closer than the relationship with Cambodia. Albania's decision to side with China during the Sino-Soviet split left Tirana as dependent on Beijing as the Khmer Rouge had been, and that dependency lasted for fifteen years. But in the early 1970s the ties began to fray, and in July 1978 China effectively cut them, a step it rarely took after the Cultural Revolution.

Given the length and depth of the relationship, and given the similar regime types, what explains the different outcome of Sino-Albanian relations? Under what conditions would China suspend aid and diplomatic relations with one of its oldest friends, rendering that country destitute and defenseless?

The split and its origins. On July 7, 1978, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs delivered a note to the Albanian Embassy in Beijing stating that China had “no choice” but to halt its economic and military aid program and repatriate its technicians.¹²⁸⁵ According to the note, Albania had failed to acknowledge China's considerable sacrifices to provide the aid, wasted a large portion of the aid, rejected technical advice, reneged on commitments to pay back Chinese loans, and refused to resolve the differences through negotiations. It also noted that China had continued to provide aid while Albania had been publicly critical of Beijing, its leaders, and their ideas. During the same period in

which China normalized relations with 40 other countries, one of its most durable bilateral relationships crumbled. What had gone wrong?

For the past fifteen years, Albania had been almost exclusively dependent on China. Albania had been one of the first states to recognize the PRC, and it had taken the highly unusual and dangerous step for an eastern bloc country of deepening that relationship as Beijing and Moscow's relationship deteriorated. By the time the Sino-Soviet split became a reality in late 1961, Prime Minister Enver Hoxha had publicly defended China against the Soviet Union at the June 1960 gathering of communist parties in Bucharest¹²⁸⁶, the November 1960 CPSU meeting in Moscow¹²⁸⁷, and the November 1961 conference of communist parties in Moscow.¹²⁸⁸ Hoxha's choice did not just irritate Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev; it made Albania far more vulnerable to Soviet hostility. China began providing aid to Albania almost a full year before Moscow and Tirana suspended ties in December 1961. The January 1961 interest-free loan of US\$125 million was reportedly China's largest to date¹²⁸⁹, and most of the money subsidized food aid and goods, equipment, and technicians to continue Soviet-initiated industrialization projects.

Throughout the 1960s, Albania mimicked China's political, economic, and social experiments, ranging from reproducing Chinese-style people's communes to undertaking a cultural revolution. On the economic front, Albania eschewed relations with capitalist countries and emphasized industrialization and collective agriculture. Hoxha also concentrated on remaking Albanian society and paid particular attention to rejecting intellectuals, promoting women, and placing far higher value on ties to the Albanian Labor Party (APL) than to family. Political power was highly personalized and purges of

the APL were common. Hoxha's 1967 Cultural and Ideological Revolution was not a thorough replication of Mao's efforts, as it was designed primarily to eliminate religion¹²⁹⁰ and never turned against the APL leadership.¹²⁹¹ But important elements of China's GPCR were included: intellectuals were sent to the countryside¹²⁹², military ranks were abolished, and the APL – like the KR – adopted the slogan “pickaxe in one hand and rifle in the other.”¹²⁹³ During this period, Chinese leaders and publications mentioned Albania at every opportunity and described it as “China's most intimate friend,” a “deeply fraternal nation,” a “blood brother,” and a “friend through weal and woe.” The relationship was regularly characterized as “unbreakable.”

But by the late 1960s, a different attitude began to emanate from Tirana, and it indicated that Albania would not adjust well to the changes China was beginning to undertake. Hoxha thought Mao's response to the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia was tepid; moreover, the idea that Mao would even consider, let alone preside over, China's normalization with common mortal enemies Yugoslavia in 1970 and the United States in 1972 was an anathema. Beijing would have been aware that the thousands of Chinese technicians in Albania were not treated particularly well.¹²⁹⁴ The Albania economy, which was heavily subsidized by China, continued to stagnate, and China's initial steps toward paring back its massive aid program in 1972 only exacerbated that condition. Albania grudgingly took steps towards establishing economic ties with non-communist states, but Hoxha also continued to try to hound Hua Guofeng and Deng Xiaoping into reinstating Maoist policies following Mao's death in 1976. Criticism of China and the Chairman began at the 7th ALP Congress in November 1976.¹²⁹⁵

Throughout this period, China did not respond publicly to Hoxha's criticisms, and privately tried to put a good face on the differences. This may in part have been a result of the dramatic changes underway in Beijing and resulting bureaucratic uncertainty, though the lines of communication between the two countries remained open through low-level visits and the presence of thousands of Chinese advisors in Albania. In July 1977, Deng told the third plenum of the CCPCC that, "Tirana's criticism of the most cherished principles of Beijing's foreign policies did not mean that the two allies were 'estranged' or that there were 'basic divergencies' [sic] between them."¹²⁹⁶ Later that month, Huang Hua characterized the relationship as being "split" only "over ideological differences. 'Although there are some problems in the relationship between the two Parties and the two states,' he said, 'they are not serious.'"¹²⁹⁷ But in the very same month, Albanian editorials described Chinese aid and technicians as "useless."¹²⁹⁸

The most visible Chinese response to Albania came in a lengthy November 1977 *Peking Review* article asserting that the Three Worlds Theory was indeed an important contribution to Marxist thought. Yet even it did not specifically mention Albania. Up until one month before the suspension of relations, Beijing continued to seek discussions with the Albanian Ambassador to China.¹²⁹⁹ A former Ministry of Foreign Affairs official who had worked in the Tirana embassy in the mid-1960s described Hoxha as "eccentric" and "likely to change his mind often."¹³⁰⁰ Despite six years of increasingly public criticism, Beijing waited to see if Hoxha would turn down his rhetoric and send his diplomats back to the negotiating table. But in July 1978, Deng made it clear that his patience had been exhausted.

Given some of the similarities between Albania's and Cambodia's relationships with China, the different outcome is striking. First, strong personal ties were created between members of the leadership. Like Sihanouk and other members of the Cambodian political elite, Hoxha and other Albanian leaders, such as Premier Mehmet Shehu and military officials, regularly visited China throughout the 1960s. Zhou himself made visits in 1963, 1965, and 1966. Bilateral aid became an important dimension of both relationships, as Albania received at least as much if not more unconditional aid and loans than Cambodia did. In both cases the aid was on more favorable terms than that of other major donors such as the USSR or the US.

Moreover, both Hoxha and Sihanouk actively challenged the conventional wisdom that small states had a limited role in world affairs, and both spoke frequently in support of the Five Principles and against hegemony. Hoxha's criticism of Khrushchev and rejection of the Soviet Union was comparable to Sihanouk's loathing of Kennedy and rejection of the United States. Like Sihanouk, Hoxha attempted to help China at the UN and with its profile in Europe and other parts of the world not hostile to communism, and at least through the early 1970s, Hoxha also offered rhetorical support internationally for Mao and his policies. That both Sihanouk and Hoxha chose to do so while grappling with real security threats – for the Albanians, the USSR and Yugoslavia; for the Cambodians, the US and Vietnam – would have made both paragons of China's preferred new international order.

Factors driving the Sino-Albanian split. Given some of the similarities between Sino-Albanian and Sino-Cambodian relations, what factors explain the different outcomes? How did such a strong relationship fall apart? It appears that China took the opportunity

of diminishing threats to Albanian security to make a point about the importance of principled bilateral relations.

Security. As noted above, Albania's rejection of the Soviet Union dramatically worsened its security environment. As Albania left the Soviet fold, relations between Moscow and Yugoslavia improved slightly, leaving Albania bordered by states either formally allied to the Soviet Union or that were unlikely to come to Albania's defense in the event of a Soviet invasion. The 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia renewed anxieties in Tirana about the prospects of Soviet expansionism, and these concerns did not fade. Although Albania's security situation improved marginally in the 1970s, this was more a result of improved ties within the region rather than a diminishing Soviet threat.

Beijing responded to Tirana's concerns through regular military exchanges, provision of equipment such as tanks and artillery, and training. While Beijing might have seen Albania as an opportunity to project diplomatic or political strength through eastern Europe, it never intended to use Albania as a military outpost. Albania repeatedly sought to reach an actual defense agreement with China, one that would commit China to coming to its defense in the event of a Soviet invasion. Beijing resisted, largely as a result of the geographical distance. Asked in August 1971 about the failure of another round of talks to conclude an agreement, Zhou Enlai equivocated: "We will never betray our friends... We sympathize with them and we shall extend as much support to them as we can. However, we are very far away from Europe and, as you know, one of our popular proverbs says 'distant waters cannot quench fire.'"¹³⁰¹

As often as Tirana raised the subject of a defense agreement, Beijing responded with encouragement to pursue other strategies to minimize threats from within the region. In the late 1960s and into the early 1970s, Beijing helped Albania forge new relationships with Italy, Greece, Romania and Yugoslavia.¹³⁰² Although these relations revolved around economic and trade issues, their responses to an invasion would have to at least nominally be factored into Soviet calculations, though it remains unclear whether this alone would have constituted a sufficient deterrent to Moscow. China thus fulfilled its responsibilities to protect Albania with equal doses of military and diplomatic assistance, both of which decreased Albania's isolation and dependence on China, and improved its security status.

It is difficult to see how security concerns could account for the Sino-Albanian split. China was never concerned about its own security – it was concerns about Albania's security that had played a strong role in driving the two states together. A loss of China's limited aid would not have markedly worsened Albania's security environment, particularly as the threats in the region continued to recede throughout the later 1970s. Had Albania's very existence been threatened by the Soviets¹³⁰³, and had Albania had no opportunities to minimize those threats, it is possible Beijing would have been less inclined to suspend ties.

By contrast, the chronic threats to Cambodia's security helped keep its relationship with China alive throughout some otherwise difficult times. Had ties been cut during the Cultural Revolution, Cambodia would have been quite vulnerable to the United States; had they been cut under Khmer Rouge rule, Vietnam would have had the perfect opportunity to engage in China's long-feared expansion across Indochina. That Albania

was distant and the threats to it were slowly fading appears to have made it easier for Beijing to cut ties.

Wealth. To what extent did Chinese concerns about resources influence the Sino-Albanian split? Beijing had clearly never expected its ties to Tirana to be particularly lucrative. However, it had also not anticipated that its extensive aid would be wasted and unappreciated. Perhaps more important, it had not anticipated that Albania would actively seek ways to prevent China from recouping some of its expenditures.

Aid had been an important dimension of China's relationships with Albania and Cambodia. By the time aid was suspended in 1978, China had given Albania half a billion dollars in aid and another half-billion in loans. Chinese publications rarely mentioned their country's role in Albania's occasional economic successes, even ones that would not have happened without Chinese assistance. Even after a decade of extremely difficult work clearing and cultivating 200,000 hectares to help Albania achieve self-sufficiency in wheat production, China took no public credit, attributing the accomplishment to the "revolutionary vigor demonstrated by the peasants and their meticulous care to the crops."¹³⁰⁴

But the Albanians' attitude toward and management of Chinese aid was crucially different from the Cambodians'. Tirana's criticisms of Chinese aid began in 1966, a mere five years after the pipeline had opened. Initially such criticisms were politely couched in terms of Tirana's ongoing commitment to "self-reliance"¹³⁰⁵, but they quickly devolved into unflattering comparisons of Chinese aid to Soviet aid, and neither of these would have been well received in Beijing. The APL's 1971 report was the last to make any effort to express gratitude for Chinese aid. China's 1972 aid cutbacks sparked

outrage in Tirana, and when further cutbacks came in 1975, Tirana, like Hanoi, responded with hostility and a clear sense of betrayal, not with resignation or fortitude. In the late summer of 1975, Hoxha accused China of trying to sabotage the Albanian economy by “postponing the construction of important projects, withholding promised credits and failing to implement economic agreements signed between the two countries.”¹³⁰⁶

Moreover, in mid-1976, Albania adopted a new constitution that, “forbade the undertaking of loans, credits or joint ventures with any capitalist, imperialist or revisionist government”¹³⁰⁷, which indicated that it was unlikely Tirana would pay back China’s half-billion dollar loan.¹³⁰⁸ By November 1976, the APL’s Seventh Party Congress report contained “no mention of the ‘unbreakable friendship with China,’ and no expression of gratitude to Peking for aid given to Albania”; moreover, the report implicitly suggested that Beijing had knowingly misinformed Albania’s economic advisors.¹³⁰⁹ Shortly before aid was suspended, the Albanian foreign ministry made an official complaint that “Chinese experts ‘had the deliberate intention of harming Albania’s economy.’ Tirana reportedly accused Beijing of violating bilateral agreements, ‘placing obstacles’ in its aid to the PSRA, and ‘causing serious damage’ to the Albanian economy.”¹³¹⁰

China’s July 1978 note explaining the aid suspension provides some clues as to how Beijing perceived this situation. It detailed past efforts to resolve differences and suggested that Albanian technicians and managers had deliberately sabotaged Chinese-funded projects. More important, though, it conveyed a strong sense that Albania had been extraordinarily ungrateful for the aid and unaware of the lengths to which China had

gone to provide it. The use of “we” and “you” – rarely seen in official statements – was indicative of Beijing’s sense of betrayal:

China has been aiding Albania while facing many difficulties itself. We delivered 1.8 million tons of food grain to you when our own food supplies were inadequate. We provided you with more than a million tons of steel products when there was not enough steel to meet our own needs. We supplied you with more than 10,000 tractors when the level of mechanization of our agriculture is still quite low, relying as we do mainly on manpower and draught animals. Though we have insufficient power generating capacity, we helped you complete...six power stations...thus enabling Albania to be more than self-sufficient in electricity. We provided your armed forces with new China-made tanks and interceptors even before our own armed forces were equipped with them. We bought from abroad and re-exported to you the set of equipment, which we could not produce at the time...with our much-needed foreign currency. We conducted for you special experiments and trial production over a period of more than dozen years, spending more than 100 million yuan Renminbi...when we had no practical experience in this regard and when the technology and equipment required were not available on the international market...¹³¹¹

This litany bears a striking resemblance to the Chinese statement issued in response to Vietnam’s joining COMECON in July 1978; one wonders if the same people were involved in drafting both statements. Both statements were designed to illustrate the depth and breadth of Beijing’s commitment to aiding Albania and Vietnam, as well as to shed light on their weaknesses by discussing what they were unable to do without Chinese assistance. They were also clearly indicative of Deng Xiaoping’s priorities. Where Mao might have kept the aid pipeline wide open, Deng sought to direct more resources into domestic economic development. In his view, China had already

contributed a great deal to both countries, such that the public criticisms of the aid and the lack of even quiet gratitude or acknowledgement were intolerable.

To some extent wealth did drive this outcome, but not in the sense that China had hoped to profit from the relationship. With no indication that Albania sought to wean itself from aid, would resume discussions on the outstanding aid issues, or make even symbolic gestures towards repaying its loans, the decision to give Tirana a chance at genuine economic self-reliance – virtual autarky – became considerably easier for Beijing.

The Cambodians' attitude towards and management of Chinese aid differed considerably from the Albanians'. First, Sihanouk probably made at least a few poor choices in the 1960s with respect to using Chinese aid, and there is no doubt that the DK wasted plenty of Beijing's assistance. But both Sihanouk and the DK were quite careful to at least appear publicly grateful for Chinese aid and acknowledge China's sacrifices, and neither ever suggested that they would take steps to avoid repaying loans. It was actually Zhou who had to talk Ieng Sary out of his plans to generate enough revenue to repay China, however disingenuous that offer may have been. Second, the Cambodians were equally careful never to make invidious comparisons between China's and other countries' aid.

Ideology. Given the importance of ideological similarities in forging Sino-Albanian ties and given China's tolerance for relations with nations of different economic and political systems, it is surprising that the relationship's demise was driven in part by ideological differences. China and Albania's common commitment to socialism should have helped them negotiate whatever difficulties emerged in their relationship, but when

Tirana's campaign of domestic mimicking turned to international mocking, the ties could no longer bind.

Hoxha saw himself as an important standard-bearer of the world socialist movement, a perception reinforced by the Soviet-Albanian split. Although Albania and China had initially reveled in their common anti-revisionist, anti-destalinization views, Hoxha increasingly availed himself of every opportunity to criticize what he saw as China's deviations from the socialist line. When China abandoned collective agriculture, Hoxha accused Beijing of coming dangerously close to joining the "revisionist" camp. On the occasion of Nixon's visit, Hoxha wrote of, "The scandalous and disgraceful propaganda and demagogy which Peking is making about the rabid fascist...Peking, which claims to be the center of Marxism-Leninism."¹³¹²

Similarly critical statements were made by the Albanians regarding the Three Worlds Theory, which was in tension with Hoxha's view that the world was divided exclusively into socialist and capitalist camps. In July 1977, a particularly low point in the effort to normalize Sino-American relations, *Zeri I Popullit*, the APL newspaper, published a lengthy editorial denouncing China's relationships with the US and developing countries. It also "accused China of 'opportunism,' 'a flagrant departure from the teachings of Marxism-Leninism,' and attempts to 'sabotage the revolution.'" As Beijing began the process of rehabilitating cadres arrested during the GPCR following the shift to Hua's leadership, the Albanians continued to complain that the Chinese were undertaking, "de-ideologization and even de-Maoization"...that the principles and goals of the Cultural Revolution had been officially abandoned by the country's new leaders."¹³¹³

Moreover, these criticisms were not kept within the confines of the bilateral relationship. Initially Hoxha's and Shehu's complaints were found only in domestic Albanian sources, such as APL reports and articles in *Zeri I Popullit*, then Albania's most widely read newspaper. But increasingly Hoxha sought to broadcast his anti-China sentiments beyond the communist parties in the region to others in Central America, Italy, Portugal West Germany¹³¹⁴, Spain, Sweden, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, and Ceylon. And in September 1977, Albania's Foreign Minister "acrimoniously belittled the importance of China's assistance" to the UN General Assembly.¹³¹⁵ Shortly thereafter, Tirana was plastered with posters depicting a large hand dropping Deng Xiaoping into "the dustbin of history."¹³¹⁶

Beijing refuted some of these criticisms, but not with any particular vigor. China did not avail itself of the opportunity to point out that, by the time China had hosted "the rabid fascist," Tirana had itself established trade relations with France, Greece, Italy, and other newly independent, capitalist states in Africa and Asia. When it defended itself, it did so without attacking Albania, and it did not focus on ideological differences. While Beijing no doubt disliked the one-upmanship regarding Marxism, ideology alone does not seem to explain the outcome – if it had mattered a great deal, ties should have been suspended sooner. Rather, Beijing showed the same kind of forbearance here that it had with India. Ideology may have mattered a great deal to the Albanians, but it did not to the Chinese.

In contrast, ideology had almost no influence on China's relationship with Cambodia. China did not alter its treatment of Cambodia depending on whether it was socialist or capitalist. In fact, Sihanouk and Zhou took considerable pride in their very different

countries' friendship; and although the KR certainly took Mao as a model, it never publicly commented on what it may have seen as Chinese deviations from socialism.¹³¹⁷ Sihanouk occasionally made mild public criticisms of China, but nothing as concerted, sustained, or extensive as Hoxha's efforts. For the most part, Cambodian politicians kept their complaints either to themselves or within the bilateral relationship.

Principles. Hoxha's criticisms and the problems in the aid relationship destroyed any semblance of mutual respect and equality. Even worse, Albania's interference in China's internal affairs and a lack of mutual benefit served to wear the diplomatic sleeve thin. By the time Deng asserted control in 1978, the Albanians had been launching their criticisms for six or seven years.

Albania's criticisms were not merely disrespectful. Tirana's running commentary on China's domestic power struggles through the mid-1970s constituted *interference in internal affairs*. The closing statement of the APL's 1974 congress "welcomed the Chinese radicals' stress on self-reliance, rejection of the expansion of economic cooperation with capitalist countries, and opposition to the superpowers."¹³¹⁸ Like the Khmer Rouge, Hoxha had been an ardent supporter of the Gang of Four. He hosted an unusually friendly visit for one of its members, Yao Wenyuan, in 1974, and expressed a preference for its continued leadership in Beijing through the spring of 1976.¹³¹⁹ But on several occasions Hoxha also published articles or gave speeches detailing not only what he saw in China's near future but also quite specifically why he thought the Gang of Four were better qualified to lead the country. The moderates who would soon claim the leadership cannot have appreciated his commentary. Apparently some of the more radical Chinese elements also disliked Hoxha's views, as the first formal protest lodged

by Beijing to Tirana on this matter was done prior to the fall of the Gang of Four in 1976.¹³²⁰

In addition, there was no *mutual benefit* to the relationship. Albania had ostensibly committed itself to advancing China's cause in Europe and at the UN. But by the early 1970s, Hoxha's advice had little influence on eastern European leaders, and to the extent that western European leaders were acting on anyone else's information with respect to China, they were listening to France, which had normalized with China in 1964. With respect to China's membership at the UN, Albania's efforts since 1963 had focused not on whether Beijing or Taipei should occupy the seat, but on whether the issue should be considered an "important question."¹³²¹ Even more important, Albania never spoke with any particular vehemence in support of the one-China policy. In short, Hoxha made none of the efforts that Sihanouk had with respect to mutual political benefit.

Ultimately, diplomatic rituals failed. High-level visits slowed considerably after 1970 and stopped altogether by 1975.¹³²² As a result of Hoxha's purges, there were few other Albanian leaders with whom Beijing could try to moderate relations. Other officials, such as Shehu and the defense minister, had visited Beijing, but not with sufficient frequency to develop any lasting relations or see the two sides through crisis periods. This became especially problematic after Hoxha dramatically misjudged the future of the Gang of Four, Hua, and Deng. When Hua Guofeng became the new premier, the Albanians were not only the last of the communist states to congratulate him¹³²³, but also implied that he was a legitimate candidate for the position.¹³²⁴ Given Hoxha's scathing criticism of Deng, it was clearly going to be a challenge to rebuild relations once his leadership position was secured.

China and Albania no longer even had an enemy in common. Their mutual hatred for the Soviet Union, the Yugoslavians, and the United States had been reflected in almost every document, speech, and article written through the end of the 1960s. But by 1970, China had reestablished ties to Yugoslavia, an action that was probably key to the changing view of China from Tirana. Moreover, two years later, China had taken important steps towards normalizing with the United States, such that the Soviet threat recedes somewhat for Beijing. Consequently, Beijing and Tirana no longer had even an enemy in common. It appeared that “setting aside differences” became impossible when there was nothing but. Had Hoxha limited the content of his commentary and directed it only to Beijing, the relationship might have survived.

China’s relationship with Cambodia was crucially different in several respects. Although the Cambodians and the Chinese had clearly had differences, neither Sihanouk nor Pol Pot ever attempted to dictate to Beijing what it should or should not do. Sihanouk did disagree with some of China’s choices, most notably the Nixon visit, but his tactic of leaving Beijing abruptly for Hanoi, Pyongyang, or Europe was not as damning as Hoxha’s full-on assaults. The Cambodians never faced such a breakdown in their diplomatic relations with the Chinese, and the two sides could almost always find common ground in their suspicions of the Vietnamese. Finally, the Cambodians accepted and adjusted to the new Chinese leadership far more gracefully than the Albanians. The DK had also praised Deng’s purge in April 1976, but it corrected itself quickly and publicly in October when Khieu Samphan, Ieng Sary, and Nuon Chea applauded the Gang of Four’s arrest and quickly offered respectful congratulations to Hua Guofeng.

Hoxha's handling of the post-Mao transition had the astonishing effect of making the Khmer Rouge appear comparatively diplomatic.

IV. China and the Afghan resistance, 1979-1985

Introduction. If China was so concerned about protecting Cambodia's sovereignty and autonomy, particularly in the face of Soviet expansionism, why was Beijing so much less supportive of the anti-Soviet Afghan resistance in the 1980s than it was of the Cambodian resistance? Beijing had moved swiftly after the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia to assist the reestablishment of a Cambodian coalition, launch a high-profile diplomatic campaign on its behalf, and transform it into a competent guerrilla force. Over a decade, Beijing made no comparable effort with the anti-Soviet resistance, or mujahideen.¹³²⁵ Despite the invasion of December 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan bringing Soviet troops to yet another outpost along China's border¹³²⁶, despite the mujahideen's superior military capabilities, and despite the similar timing and duration of the invasions, Beijing never responded to the Afghan resistance with the same vigor or volume it did to the Cambodian resistance. Why did China choose such a different strategy in such similar circumstances?

China's support to the mujahideen and its relations with Afghanistan. On December 24, 1979, 80,000 Soviet troops poured over the Afghan border, ostensibly to prop up the Moscow-backed Khalq regime. Predictably enough, China's first response was rhetorical outrage that a sovereign country had been invaded, that it would not recognize the new regime, and that this was yet more evidence of incorrigible Soviet hegemonism.¹³²⁷ Its second step was to suspend the "Friendship Talks" with Moscow.¹³²⁸ But its third step

was not to begin shipping its own weapons to the recently formed anti-Soviet resistance, or mujahideen. Instead, Beijing took the highly unusual step of permitting other states to channel weapons, equipment, and aid through Chinese territory.

Most notably, Beijing made it possible for the United States, with which it had finally normalized relations a year earlier, to launch a massive program in support of the mujahideen. In January 1980, senior Chinese officials received US Secretary of Defense Harold Brown in Beijing. At that meeting, China agreed to allow foreign transport planes to fly over Chinese territory in order to deliver arms to the resistance.¹³²⁹ It also agreed that, “In the event the Pakistan-Afghanistan border was sealed [China] would even allow unloading equipment in China and would facilitate the difficult transshipment by overland personnel.”¹³³⁰ These discussions paved the way for the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to pay China to transport weapons to the mujahideen¹³³¹ and for the CIA to purchase Chinese-made weapons.¹³³² Allowing the US to fight a proxy war using Chinese territory, and collaborating with the CIA, were certainly novelties for Beijing. At the same time as the talks on Afghanistan, and following two years of sporadic discussions, the US and China also committed to collaborating on signal intelligence sites in western China to replace facilities lost with the overthrow of the Shah in Iran. Those facilities became operational later in 1980.¹³³³ Over the coming years, the United States would spend a total of \$3 billion on the mujahideen, an amount that dwarfed even the combined contributions of the roughly thirty states that also supported the resistance.

China did contribute some of its own arms, and while some suggest that such donations began prior to the Soviet invasion, more substantive efforts did not begin until the middle of 1980¹³³⁴, when shipments were sent via the Karakoram Highway¹³³⁵ or by

ship to Karachi.¹³³⁶ In the latter case, the Pakistani Intelligence Services then distributed the weapons to the resistance through camps in Peshawar. The Soviets claimed China was sending heavy weapons to the resistance by parachute, but most historians agree that small arms were moved across the border from Peshawar via packhorse or mule.¹³³⁷ One analyst traveling in northeast Afghanistan in early 1982 noted the presence of Chinese grenade launchers, recoilless rifles, mortars, anti-aircraft guns, mines, and ammunition.¹³³⁸

Over the coming two years, others identified Chinese anti-aircraft missiles, anti-tank rockets¹³³⁹, rocket launchers, tripod-mounted machine guns¹³⁴⁰, and artillery.¹³⁴¹ Although the mujahideen needed all the weapons it could get, China's military aid paled in comparison to the US', particularly after Washington began providing Stinger missiles in 1985.

The extent to which China provided military training to the mujahideen remains somewhat unclear. Some suggest that China and others ran training camps for up to 350,000 resistance fighters¹³⁴², a number comparable to roughly eight percent of the entire PLA. Others insist that the PLA General Staff's Military Intelligence Department oversaw 300 PLA experts' instruction on weapons use and combat tactics for mujahideen, foreign volunteers, and Uighurs at four camps in Pakistan and two in Xinjiang.¹³⁴³ Farr and Merriam's more carefully documented research notes an early 1985 letter from the PDPA in Kabul to the CCP, accusing it of undertaking "terrorist activities" by running training camps for "counter-revolutionary bands" in Xinjiang and Pakistan.¹³⁴⁴ However, several American experts on the PLA express doubt as to whether such a large operation could have escaped notice and whether Beijing would encourage,

rather than discourage, militarizing Uighurs.¹³⁴⁵ It is plausible that PLA training took place at camps in Pakistan and possibly at small establishments in western China, but not on the orders of magnitude suggested above.

What had China's relationship with Afghanistan been like prior to the invasion such that Beijing was willing to let the US military and intelligence services use Chinese territory? Such actions would suggest that there had been a strong relationship, yet that was not the case. Ties were established in the early 1950s, and while they were normal, they were never particularly close. China provided a moderate amount of aid and the two states had resolved their outstanding border issues without any apparent difficulties by 1963. Zhou Enlai and King Zahir Shah exchanged a few visits, though no particularly strong relationship seems to have developed. Both sides agreed to discourage separatist or anti-government activities by Uighurs, the dominant ethnic minority across the Sino-Afghan border. Like many other bilateral relationships, Beijing-Kabul ties were effectively in limbo during the Cultural Revolution. By the early 1970s, a normal, albeit not particularly close, relationship had emerged, and it seemed that Beijing was simply not as interested in this region as it was in Indochina. By contrast, Afghanistan was the largest recipient of Soviet aid from 1950 to 1979.

The growing chaos in Afghanistan made it difficult for relations to deepen, and China stood back as a secular monarchy gave way to increasingly radical Marxist regimes. Beijing recognized Zahir Shah's ouster in July 1973¹³⁴⁶, Premier Daoud's in April 1978¹³⁴⁷, and Noor Mohammad Taraki's in September 1978. Although the new regimes were progressively more pro-Soviet, relations with Beijing did not begin to chill until Afghanistan signed a Treaty of Friendship with Moscow in December 1978 and criticized

China's invasion of Vietnam in February 1979. Beijing did not lodge a formal protest with Kabul but engaged in a low-grade battle of rhetoric with Moscow. In Kabul, the Khalq regime was unable to assert any meaningful control over the country and was progressively less able to defend against frequent insurgent attacks. Moscow, fearing a vacuum in Afghanistan, invaded in December 1979 on the grounds that it sought to buttress the Khalq.

Given the similarities between the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia, the different response to the resistance movements is striking. First, the timing of and Soviet involvement in both eliminated any remaining doubt for Beijing about Moscow's global ambitions.¹³⁴⁸ Second, both invasions amplified security concerns for China on its periphery. Third, there were obvious, extant groups ready to form armed resistance movements in both cases. Finally, China moved quickly to bolster regional allies, Thailand and Pakistan, against threats. Some Chinese analysts explicitly equated the situations in Cambodia and Afghanistan.¹³⁴⁹ How did all of these similarities translate into highly different policies of support for the mujahideen?

Factors driving China's lower level of support to the mujahideen. It is worth recalling that, within six months of Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia, China had offered the Cambodian resistance a base of operations in Beijing and funding, contemplated sending troops to Cambodia, negotiated assistance with Thailand, begun reconstructing a coalition government, launched a global rhetorical offensive, and undertaken a punitive war against Vietnam. Support of this magnitude was never considered for the mujahideen.

Security. Could China's lower levels of support for the mujahideen be explained by concerns for its own security? After all, the Soviet occupation of the Wakhan Corridor in the spring of 1980¹³⁵⁰ brought more Soviet troops to the Chinese border. Such a presence in Wakhan could have facilitated an attack on Xinjiang or Tibet¹³⁵¹ or encouragement of separatist activities in those areas.¹³⁵² Some analysts speculated that the proximity would also enable a "preventive" Soviet strike against China's main missile testing center at Lop Nor¹³⁵³ in Xinjiang, and it allowed for the construction of Soviet signal intelligence sites along the Chinese, Pakistani, and Indian borders.¹³⁵⁴ A decade earlier, similar provocations had triggered massive troop buildups along the Sino-Soviet border.

The United States saw the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan as the greatest threat to world peace of the time, and it may have tried to convince China of the threats listed above. Yet Beijing clearly did not see the situation that way. Its alignment with the US no doubt helped assuage some concerns, but arguably more important was China's conviction by 1980 that the Soviets were overextended. At no point did Chinese leaders indicate a concern that the Soviets might continue pushing eastward into China. Qian Qichen's June 1982 speech emphasized China's view that Sino-Soviet relations were actually improving and that Beijing remained far more concerned about the situation in Cambodia than in Afghanistan. Some Chinese diplomats hoped that by working with the US on Afghanistan, more interest could be leveraged with them in resolving the Cambodia problem.¹³⁵⁵

Unlike the United States, China did not seek the USSR's ultimate demise, but as it called for a resumption of normalization talks in 1981, it was content to see Moscow in a

weakened position. Beijing mocked Moscow's actions the same way it did Hanoi's, pointing out repeatedly that both situations were "quagmires"¹³⁵⁶, that their own soldiers' desertions demonstrated the illegitimacy of the invasions, and that they would never win because their citizens were starving to support the occupations.¹³⁵⁷ It may also have been clear to Chinese analysts that, "The Soviet commitment to the Hun Sen regime is probably stronger than its willingness to support [Afghan President] Najibullah."¹³⁵⁸ China saw no need to create a resistance army that could liberate Afghanistan; it simply needed a force that could keep the Soviets tied down. Moreover, it wanted to remain in the background as a supporter of the mujahideen.

A more aggressive China program of support to the mujahideen might have, in the Soviets' view, made China and the US equally threatening. Such a view would actually have decreased China's security. By providing a low level of support to the mujahideen, China found a way to fulfill a principled goal and improve its security situation. Combined with the US' vastly greater resources and enthusiasm for the mujahideen, there was simply less of a need for China to try to make a greater contribution. Security did factor into China's decision, but indirectly, and in a way that made low-level support to the mujahideen the logical choice.

In Cambodia, by contrast, had China not moved quickly to support the Cambodian resistance, Cambodia would probably still be occupied by Vietnam. Beijing perceived Hanoi's efforts as a step towards a long-standing goal of conquering Indochina, one that was far more alarming to China than the Soviets' involvement to Afghanistan. As a result, Beijing pursued a strategy there that was more similar to what the US pursued with

the mujahideen: Beijing not only wanted Hanoi permanently crippled, it wanted Hanoi to be perfectly clear who was inflicting the pain.

Wealth. Did China choose to provide less support to the mujahideen out of concerns over resources? By early 1980, Beijing was not willing to expend precious resources on resistance movements in which it had minimal innate interest and which were getting the necessary resources from other states, such as the Sandinistas. By contrast, Beijing's deep involvement with the Khmer Rouge prior to the Vietnamese invasion, and its knowledge that its own domestic turmoil contributed to the crisis in Cambodia, resulted in a willingness to get even more involved despite pressing developmental priorities.

With respect to the mujahideen, China's choices were indeed driven by the prospect of wealth. But the wealth was not coming from the mujahideen or other Afghans, it was coming from the United States. In exchange simply for allowing the US to ship arms and other supplies to the mujahideen via Chinese territory, Beijing was given technology and trade status that were helpful to its primary goal of the time, achieving the Four Modernizations. Within weeks of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the US agreed to sell China non-lethal military equipment and "dual use" technology such as satellite ground stations¹³⁵⁹ and communications and air transport equipment. Later in January 1980, the US Congress awarded China most favored nation trade status for the first time. By May, the US had agreed to sell China transport planes, helicopters, and air defense radar, and agreed to provide training for Chinese technicians' use of this equipment.¹³⁶⁰ In effect, China accrued considerable benefits not for aiding the mujahideen itself, but simply for enabling the US to do so. Had this incentive not existed, it seems unlikely that Beijing would have taken much interest in the mujahideen at all.

There was no comparable benefit to be gained in aiding the CGDK. Ultimately the resolution of the Cambodia problem made it possible to improve trade relations within and beyond the region, but that outcome cannot have been foreseen.

Ideology. Was China uninterested in the mujahideen because it lacked a commitment to socialism? There is no evidence to suggest that China sought or maintained much of a relationship with the Afghan Marxist regimes of the 1970s, and even less to sustain claims that China's interest in the mujahideen stemmed from a relationship with the Maoist *Sholah-I-Javed* faction.¹³⁶¹ Moreover, the diversity of political views held by the well-supported Cambodian resistance suggests that this factor was not particularly important to Beijing.

Principles. That China did not direct as much energy or resources into the Afghan resistance as it did to the Cambodian resistance suggested that principles were also not a motivating factor. What explains this, given China's nominal commitment to treating all states equally?

Quite simply, principles required relationships, and not only had there not been any particularly strong relationships between the two sides in the 1950s and 1960s, but also the rapid regime changes in Kabul in the 1970s meant that there were few relationships at all. Although the Chinese Embassy remained open and fully staffed during that decade, diplomatic interaction during that decade had been dramatically curtailed as Chinese officials tried to keep up with the shifting personnel in the Afghan leadership and ministries. King Zahir Shah, whom Chinese officials had known for two decades, fled into exile in Italy after being ousted in 1973 and effectively removed himself from Afghan politics. By the end of 1978, Afghanistan's next two prime ministers, Daoud and

Taraki, were dead, and the Embassy in Kabul closed shortly after the invasion.

Beijing had no substantive relations with any past or current officials in the Afghan regime.

Beijing was similarly handicapped in its relations with the mujahideen, as it had no real opportunities for formal or informal diplomatic interaction with the mujahideen. Articles in periodicals like *Peking Review* and *Shijie zhishi* do not name any individual Afghan resistance leaders. In part this was a function of the mujahideen's legendary fractiousness. It was divided along ethnic, religious, linguistic, geographical, and clan lines, it included volunteer fighters from across the world (most notably Saudis and Egyptians), and at its peak it included fifteen distinct factions with no clear leadership structure and no main base of operations. Moreover, the mujahideen factions did not all agree that the Soviets were their primary enemy, and some took advantage of the invasion to launch assaults on one another. The mujahideen did not ask for political or diplomatic assistance from China, and China does not appear to have offered it. Claims of a relationship to Ahmad Shah Massoud, leader of the mujahideen's *Jamiat-I Islam-I* faction, are unpersuasive.¹³⁶²

In principle, China was as eager to restore Afghanistan's sovereignty as it was Cambodia's.¹³⁶³ But Beijing had some defensible concerns about whether an Afghan regime comprised of victorious mujahideen factions would extend *mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty*. Even a cursory glance at their agendas suggested that it was possible that an independent Afghanistan would be led by an Islamic regime – one that would have had ample opportunity to establish ties to extremely conservative regimes in the Middle East, one that might support the idea of an independent state for

Chinese Muslims, and one that might provide training and weapons to Chinese separatists. China had ties to several states with Islamic governments, but to some extent these tried to walk a fine line by demonstrating principled relations with Islamic states but simultaneously limiting the prospect of support to Chinese Muslim separatists.¹³⁶⁴ One Chinese expert suggests that Beijing delayed normalizing relations with Saudi Arabia (the second-largest contributor of volunteer mujahideen after Pakistan) in part because of concerns about its growing tendency to export Wahhabism, a particularly conservative form of Islam.¹³⁶⁵

Beijing's concerns were not without reason or precedent. Until the establishment of the PRC, some Chinese Muslims had repeatedly attempted to form an independent state, East Turkmenistan, and drew support from similarly disaffected communities along the Soviet, Afghan, and Pakistani borders. Stalin and Mao had both employed considerable repressive force to bring these groups under control, but this seemed to lend credence to the Chinese Muslims' perceptions of Beijing as anti-Islamic. The relationship between China and Afghanistan in the early 1960s was driven in part by a Chinese interest in demonstrating that it did not hold such biases against Muslims. At the same time, Beijing and Kabul most likely reached an agreement that neither would tolerate anti-government activities emanating from each other's states and that they would help each minimize any separatist activities.¹³⁶⁶

A similar balancing act needed to be struck with respect to the mujahideen. But by the early 1980s, it was difficult for Beijing to carry out even its limited program of support to the mujahideen without the involvement of Chinese Muslims. Yet this invariably exposed that community to precisely what Beijing wanted to keep them away

from – training and weapons for a low-grade resistance movement. If it was a choice between supporting Afghanistan's sovereignty and protecting China's, the choice was clear. Persistent allegations throughout the late 1990s of Taliban support to Chinese Muslim separatists suggest that Beijing's concern was not unfounded.¹³⁶⁷ Beijing's tepid response to the mujahideen was largely a function of not knowing whom in the long run it might seek to topple.

This was clearly very different from the Cambodian case. Beijing had long-standing, well-cultivated relations with members of all the CGDK factions and had hosted most of them as a government within a decade of the invasion of Cambodia. Following the collapse of the DK and the Vietnamese invasion, moreover, the factions returned directly to Beijing to reestablish another coalition government. There were no time lags in contacts, no confusion as to which Cambodian politicians were affiliated with which faction, or how those factions perceived each other. And while the CGDK was far from united, it was certainly far more so than the mujahideen. At a minimum, the Cambodians all had at least one language in common; at a maximum, the CGDK did at least nominally concur that their top priority was to remove the Vietnamese from their country. There were occasional intra-CGDK skirmishes, but these tended to be the result of idiosyncratic hostilities by local commanders rather than any planned assaults by factional leaders.

V. Analysis

Wealth was not a consistent or prominent variable in China's foreign policy decisions. The only case in which monetary gain drove China's choices was also one that

lacked a set of political actors with which China could forge a principled relationship.

The economic benefits accrued to China as a result of its cooperation with the US to support the mujahideen was no doubt a driving factor in its involvement. Had such a motivation not existed, it is plausible that Beijing would not have pursued much assistance to the mujahideen at all. Had the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan taken place a decade earlier, China might still have been willing to expend considerable resources. But the developmental demands of the reform era dictated caution. Alternatively, had Chinese leaders had relationships with Zahir Shah or mujahideen leaders comparable to its relations with Sihanouk or Khmer Rouge leaders, more aid might have been forthcoming. The billion-dollar aid program to Albania obviously became a focus of dispute in the relationship, but not in the sense that China had expected a full or rapid repayment. It was Albania's lack of gratitude for the sacrifices – not the sacrifices themselves – that prompted China to reconsider the whole relationship.

Nor did adherence to or expansion of Marxism or socialism drive China's choices. What Hoxha perceived as China's divergence from the socialist path undoubtedly sparked his campaign of anti-Chinese sentiment, but the reverse did not cause Beijing to cut ties to Tirana. China did believe that Nehru had betrayed the Five Principles, but it did not go to war because India was capitalist or even because India began to attack China for its adherence to socialism. And ties to Afghan politicians never became sufficiently close to have any bearing at all on the relationship. Even if the mujahideen leaders had espoused a deep affinity for socialism, it is unlikely that that would have triggered a higher degree of support. To some extent the cases reveal and overlap between the political ideology of Marxism and the less doctrinally-specific Five

Principles, most notably in the commitment to promoting equality. But while China clearly sought to promote relationships based on the Five Principles, it did not do the same based on socialism.

The other two variables, security and principles, both mattered considerably across the three cases, suggesting that difficulties with both are necessary conditions for more aggressive policy outcomes. The instance in which China's choices were driven almost entirely on the basis of principles was also the instance in which there was no compelling security threat. Conversely, the episode in which a security threat triggered a militarized response was preceded and followed by efforts to behave in highly principled ways.

The Indian case suggests that principles only ceased to constrain China's policy choices after it became clear that India would continue to deny China the security it sought in a mutually demarcated border. In a sense, the extraordinarily circumscribed Chinese military campaign and prompt withdrawal reflect efforts to make the war as principled as it could be. It also underscored that, in a very real sense, China's preference for maintaining principled relations with another major state was more compelling than control over the NEFA. China put its victor's strength not into harming India or even holding disputed territory, but into making security a reality by repeating its demand for negotiations. Had India either engaged in talks or refrained from trying to drive China out of disputed territories, it is likely the border would eventually have been settled by largely diplomatic means.

Ironically, the lack of serious threats to Albania's security appears to have played a part in China's decision to suspend ties. China's forbearance with criticism elsewhere suggests that it would have been no more difficult to maintain ties than to suspend them.

Yet the fact that Tirana was by the late 1970s unlikely to have been overrun by Soviet troops enabled China to cut ties primarily over matters of principle – Hoxha’s interference, the singular detriment rather than mutual benefit, and the lack of equality. If Albania had faced a significant military threat from within the region, Beijing would not necessarily have leapt to Albania’s defense, but nor would Beijing have cut Tirana adrift.

The case of China’s failure to enthusiastically support the mujahideen provides a different vantage point with respect to the salience of principles. The lack of strong relationships to any Afghan political actors – Zahir Shah, Daoud, Taraki, or mujahideen leaders – seems to have rendered principles somewhat moot. With whom was China to have sought peaceful mutual benefit or equality? That vacuum, coupled with concerns about sovereignty and territorial integrity and the technological and trade benefits offered by the United States, illustrates that principles had little binding effect on China’s choices. Had Beijing developed a relationship to one or more of the mujahideen leaders in advance of the Soviet invasion, one would likely have seen more substantial Chinese involvement.

What does this tell us about the relationship of security and principles? First, an abstract or theoretical Chinese commitment to principles requires a relationship with a known group of known political actors. Beijing will not leap to the defense of groups it does not know. Second, triggering an attack requires a wholesale failure of principles coupled with aggressive behavior from the other state. Third, a wholesale failure of principles and a lack of a security threat can pave the way for a suspension of relations. Clearly there is a close relationship between principles and security. China’s ties to Cambodia were the product of long-standing and varied relationships between leaders on

both sides, of adherence to the Five Principles, and to ongoing threats to Cambodia's security.

The cases show that China will be driven by a combination of variables but that principles are consistent and consequential. The necessary conditions for unprincipled policy choices were not only extreme – a near-total lack of relationships, years of unwillingness to engage in talks, strident criticisms of China broadcast internationally, a complete breakdown of diplomatic relations – but they were also conditions that never prevailed in the Sino-Cambodian relationship. In all of these cases, China demonstrated noteworthy patience in the face of rhetorical and literal offensives, reflecting the lengths to which it would go to maintain workable relations to a variety of states and the consistency with which it operated according to the Five Principles.

CONCLUSION

I. Introduction

This research has sought to understand why China would devote considerable resources to Cambodia despite a lack of strategic, economic, or ideological imperatives. It has identified a set of principles as the driving force in the relationship – principles that, if widely adhered to over the long term, would contribute to promoting China's security. In order to test whether similar motivations and outcomes could be identified in a variety of other states across different eras, the project has also examined Beijing's choices with respect to the Sino-Indian border war, to the suspension of ties to Albania, and to the response to the anti-Soviet Afghan resistance. All of the cases reflect a similar pattern: establishing relations regardless of regime type or ideology, refraining from commenting on domestic political matters, never conditioning aid or asking that ties to other states be cut. Only in rare circumstances did China break off relations, resort to military means, request the adoption of a particular favorable policy, or attempt to "export revolution." The only instance in which Beijing failed to respond in a predictable manner was the one in which there were no strong ties and in which a more vigorous response might have created a threat to China.

In most instances, Chinese policy makers regularly weighed a variety of options, including ones that would be costly or jeopardize their security, and regularly pursued only those policies consistent with the Five Principles. Beijing pursued relationships with careful consideration of sovereignty and sought to augment other countries' capacity to resist external involvement in their domestic politics. It encouraged indigenous

leadership to make and learn from mistakes, promoted economic development, and engaged in extensive diplomatic interaction. Chinese foreign policy makers believed that that these kinds of relationships would make China and the other state in question more secure. That in turn would help make the international system less threatening. To Chinese foreign policy makers, beginning with Mao and Zhou even before 1949, security was not to be found in military alliances or exclusive economic pacts, the most common forms of cooperation in the west. China's "revisionism" with respect to its international relations was not to launch a global socialist revolution but to establish a model quite different from that forming the basis of so many American-dominated institutions.

More broadly, this project suggests that ideas or principles do have a profound effect on policy choices – an effect far more fundamental than a change in capabilities or a desire for greater integration to generate wealth, and one able to transcend the changes other approaches suggest should trigger different outcomes. Over the past fifty years, China has experienced all of the changes that are typically expected to produce greater cooperation or conflict, yet neither outcome has eventuated. Clearly it is difficult to make predictions about foreign policy choices without inquiring as to what states' leaders want out of their relationships.

Most international relations theory assumes that states have the same aspirations and will employ similar means to achieve them. Those theories generally take as their model that which the United States has wanted and its means of achieving its goals as the norm, and, as a result, they generally dismiss most Chinese foreign policy as at best irrational. However, this project has shown that there is rationality to China's choices, and the difficulty lies in accepting a fundamentally different approach to interstate relations.

Understanding that difference may not only go a long way towards improving international relations theory, but also to actually improving relations with China.

II. Evidence of principle-based foreign policy

There is broad evidence to support a claim for principle-based Chinese policy towards Cambodia over the past five decades. At a time when a more concerted or explicit rejection of American or Soviet involvement in Southeast Asia would have been far more helpful to China, Beijing encouraged Cambodian neutrality, and it did not demand a suspension of ties with those other states in exchange for bilateral relations with Beijing. At a time when Beijing raged internationally against the exile government in Taiwan, it offered a home for a group of Cambodians considered by some to be “splittists” but whom Beijing saw as the only legitimate government of Cambodia. Chinese foreign policy makers believed that the Democratic Kampuchea regime had to stand or fall based on its own policies, not as a result of Chinese intervention, and thus did little to curtail the genocide. China’s assault on Vietnam was driven by the latter state’s perceived violations of Cambodian sovereignty, and seemed a far greater affront to China because Vietnam had subscribed to the Five Principles. In many respects, tolerating the Hanoi-backed PRK rule of Cambodia in the 1980s should have been preferable, given that it would have dramatically eased China’s ties with the Soviets, the United States, Vietnam, and most of Southeast Asia – but Beijing opted to back the Cambodian resistance for a decade. Only the principles of mutual respect and non-interference can explain the ease with which China has developed a relationship to a Cambodian regime comprised of its former enemies in the 1990s.

Adhering to these principles was neither cheap nor easy. These choices cost China approximately \$2-3 billion – not necessarily a large amount, but certainly a resource that could have been well used at home. As important, the choices also caused considerable tension in China's relationships with the US, USSR, and future Asean member states, resulting in high opportunity costs. The already-complicated ties to Vietnam became even more difficult to untangle, and the costs of delayed normalization with the USSR and Vietnam were not small. There have also been reputation costs, primarily with respect to the failed invasion of Vietnam in 1979. Beijing's support to the Khmer Rouge continues to be construed in international forums as evidence of CCP inhumanity, and China continues to be pilloried in the popular press, as almost all articles written about Cambodia and China in English over the past decade make reference to China's support to the Khmer Rouge.¹³⁶⁸ China's principles were financially, diplomatically, and militarily costly – yet they prevailed.

Moreover, the principles did not simply prevail with respect to policy towards Cambodia. In its dispute with India, China offered to give up strategic territory most would consider to be China's in order to prevent an armed conflict. Even after winning the war, Beijing gave up the opportunity to hold the areas it had taken or threaten to take more in an effort to force India to negotiate. But this choice made it possible for India to continue to refuse talks, such that Beijing has had to maintain a low-grade, high-altitude war for four decades. In Albania, China continued to provide significant aid despite Tirana's increasing hostility, public chastisements, and willful wastes of aid. Yet there is reason to believe that, had there been a serious threat to Albania from the USSR or Yugoslavia, China would have remained engaged and found a way to cope with Hoxha's

intransigence. In the Albanian case, little more than principles were at stake. In the Indian case, China's security was at stake, but it chose to proceed via a highly circumscribed military campaign and a quick return to the search for a diplomatic solution. In large and small states, far away and sharing a border, communist and capitalist, and with varying abilities to threaten China, Beijing continuously pursued options only within the parameters of the Five Principles.

There have, however, been instances where principles appear to have had little bearing on foreign policy. In the case of the Afghan resistance, China showed little of the zeal for protecting autonomy and sovereignty against a Soviet invasion that it had in Cambodia. To be sure, Beijing condemned the invasion, but, lacking the same kind of longstanding relationships to any Afghan factions, the prospect of US technology transfer and MFN status seem to have been the primary attraction for Beijing's practical involvement. Coupled with its concerns over whether a victorious mujahideen would encourage Muslim separatism in China – a rather prescient concern – Beijing opted to provide relatively little assistance itself to the anti-Soviet resistance. It is possible policy makers in Beijing felt that they were fulfilling at least minimal principled obligations by facilitating other states' aid to the mujahideen, but the response was fundamentally different from that shown to the Cambodians. Without individuals with whom to conduct a fully principled relationship, with considerable benefits accruing simply for playing a low-level role, and with concerns about future Afghan regimes, Beijing did not pursue a more concerted strategy to support the mujahideen. In addition, foreign policy deviated particularly from the principle of non-interference during the early years of the Cultural Revolution, though that practice was reversed by 1968.

Nonetheless, particular policy options were regularly *not* pursued by the Chinese. States with which China established relations were not asked to form alliances, nor were they asked to choose between ties to China and ties to other states, such as the US or USSR. Those other states may have demanded that states like Cambodia “lean to one side,” but Beijing did not. Ultimatums, the use of force, and encouragement of regime change are relatively difficult to find in the history of PRC foreign policy. In a handful of cases China subsidized resistance movements, but this was extremely rare. Even the expectation that other states would not recognize Taiwan as independent of China did not translate into a uniform policy of precluding or suspending relations, as dozens of countries maintained unofficial and/or trade relations with Taipei. None of these tactics comports with the predicted behavior of an aggressive rising power or a more interdependent state, but they are consistent with the parameters of the Five Principles.

III. Assessing conventional explanations

As noted in the introduction, the more common explanations for China’s choices would identify security, wealth, or ideology as motivating factors. A brief review of their predictions and logics reveals their shortcomings.

The traditional security explanations suggest that Chinese foreign policy has been designed to minimize threats and to achieve at least regional domination. In three of the four cases, there was no shortage of the kinds of threats envisioned. With respect to Cambodia, the presence or influence of the US and the USSR there and across Southeast Asia, coupled with the real prospect of Vietnamese expansion along China’s southern border, certainly posed challenges to China’s political and territorial integrity. On

China's southwestern border, Indian encroachments were not in and of themselves seen as a great concern. But Nehru's call to drive Chinese out of the disputed territories was, particularly as India showed no sign of stopping its forward advance. While Beijing was less concerned about the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan than it was of the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia, another step in Moscow's seemingly inexorable march across the globe – particularly in Asia – was hardly reassuring.

According to the security perspective, China ought at a minimum to have ignored Cambodia, given that it posed no threat and served no real purpose. At a maximum, Beijing should have tried to dominate or make better use of it. Had that been China's agenda, it would have been considerably more practical in the 1950s and 1960s to request that the Cambodians for more assistance getting aid directly to the Vietnamese communists. Throughout the entire relationship, it would have made more sense to establish a more exclusive relationship with Phnom Penh, one that precluded maintaining relationships with or receiving military aid from the US or USSR. If for strategic reasons China was concerned about protecting Democratic Kampuchea from Vietnam, it would have been logical to send Chinese troops and/or prolong the punitive war against Vietnam to force Hanoi into fighting on two fronts. There were considerably more efficient means of resolving the problem in the 1980s than reestablishing a resistance coalition, given what had happened to its previous incarnation, and it would not have been difficult for China to continue dealing exclusively with Sihanouk since 1993, rather than engaging the CPP, Beijing's former enemies. Choices equally inconsistent with a security-oriented explanation can also be seen in the other cases. China ought not to have bothered with Albania, tried to create greater pressure on the Soviets in Afghanistan, and

continued its assault on India long enough to demonstrate that massive external support would be needed to drive China back.

Despite the presence of threats and the capability to respond to them directly, China consistently pursued other strategies. It consistently supported Cambodian neutrality, not alignment; only once did Beijing ask for preferential treatment. It set aside its own concerns about Vietnam in 1987 to encourage negotiations between Cambodian factions to resolve the problems there, and it similarly supported United Nations involvement despite anxieties about interference. Beijing provided extensive aid across all regimes, from a monarch to radical communists to soft authoritarians. It worked closely with resistance coalitions and, eventually, their enemies. In the other cases, China only resorted to military means long enough to reinforce a political point, not to forcibly subdue its opponent and seize more territory. Moreover, the chosen strategies toward Afghanistan, Cambodia, and India arguably created more or worse threats to China's security, yet choices were not reversed. These policies were not simply ironic or the result of poor foresight – they were evidence of the price China was willing to pay to maintain principled international relations.

Where are the domination and conflict – the supposedly inevitable outcomes of China's "rise" – suggested by Ross and Yahuda? The militarized, defensive posture described by Johnston? It is difficult to identify domination in any of these cases, particularly in Afghanistan, Albania, or India. Does China dominate Cambodia? It is a hard case to make. If, for example, Beijing's forgiveness of large DK-era debt or its support to the Hun Sen regime have been designed to discourage Cambodia from pursuing a tribunal for Khmer Rouge leaders, it has not worked.¹³⁶⁹ If China's recent aid

has been intended to weaken Cambodia's ties to the United States, Vietnam, or other Southeast Asian nations, its goals have not been achieved. Two of the three potential regional conflicts, in the South China Sea and on the Sino-Indian border, are slowly being resolved diplomatically, rather than by military force. China's agreement to a code of conduct in the South China Sea obliges it to follow the same rules as the other claimants, all of which are far smaller and would be easy to dominate. Beijing did not take advantage of Afghanistan's periodic power vacuums, and it did little to prevent the rise of a militant Islamic regime, China's worst fear for post-Soviet Afghanistan. Some might argue that China's channeling of resources into modernizing the PLA over the past two decades indicates an increasingly militaristic stance. But not only does the capability gap with other major states remain quite large, the only indication of an aggressive, defensive posture is with respect to Taiwan, which, as noted above, Beijing considers a domestic matter.

There is neither a causal nor a correlative relationship between this approach's variables of increasing economic or military might and hostile behavior. If anything, China's choices have actually *decreased* its security. This is not to suggest that China is not concerned about security, it is that the threats are simply not as one-dimensional as Mearshimer or Yahuda suggest. Those scholars do not see the concerns Beijing still holds about literal or figurative imperialism, economic dependencies, or subtle erosions of autonomy; consequently, they are unable to explain China's efforts to defend against them. Because security is an experience-based construct, one has to understand the experiences the way policy-makers in China did and do. Otherwise, China's aspirations and actions will be consistently misunderstood.

Given the emphasis PRC leaders have placed on China's economic development and domestic modernization since 1949, how do explanations for foreign policy based on the desire to protect resources or generate more wealth fare? Particularly those that insist China will become more cooperative as a result of its growing economic integration with the rest of the world? Are they successful in finding a clear relationship between economic imperatives and particular policy choices?

Obviously resolving the conflicts in Cambodia would have been economically beneficial to China and the region, and would have helped remove obstacles to potentially lucrative trade relations with the US and the USSR. In addition, it might have helped decrease the demand for Chinese aid, a factor that influenced China's relations with Hanoi and Tirana. Resolving the border dispute with India would of course facilitate better economic relations between the two most populous countries in the world.

But if money was what Beijing wanted, its policies did not logically follow. In all of these cases, China could have pared back its aid programs, insisted that outstanding loans be repaid, threatened a trade embargo to enforce compliance with its positions, and/or offered loans on an interest-generating basis. All of these strategies would have freed up or produced more revenue to be channeled into domestic economic development. China's relatively efficient low-cost labor should have made it make decisions on the merits of free trade. Given the obvious potential economic gains of better relations with Southeast Asia, the US, and the USSR, Beijing could have made a greater effort to reassure these countries that its support to Cambodia should not be confused with a drive

to sponsor radicalism across the region. If economic benefit was China's most pressing concern, it should have dropped its objection to the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia, let the Cambodian resistance find support elsewhere, and focused its efforts on cultivating trade ties across the region. Obviously China did not pursue these options. Instead, its policy choices deferred or eliminated opportunities to benefit from an earlier peace in Cambodia, a diplomatic solution in India, or a cessation of aid to Albania.

Afghanistan is the outlier, in that China gained considerable material benefit from providing minimal, rather than maximal, assistance to the mujahideen. Its strategy of low-grade support could be explained in part by these benefits. There is little evidence to suggest that Beijing would have provided much help to the mujahideen without such benefits. At the same time, had Beijing had a long-standing relationship to a particular Afghan faction, it is possible that greater support might have been provided.

It appears that China's cooperation with other countries and international organizations has increased over the past two decades. But can this be defensibly attributed to economic motivations or successes? Has China actually fundamentally changed its positions on issues? Or has it found ways to participate in or shape international organizations' programs to fit its own approach?

With respect to Cambodia, China obviously played a significant role in the Paris peace process and, for the first time ever, in a United Nations effort to reconstruct a country. But it is difficult to attribute those positions to primarily economic motivations, particularly as they had little or no bearing on post-Tiananmen sanctions or on China's efforts to join the World Trade Organization. Moreover, China remained wary of both the Paris process and UNTAC as they proved to create a far greater role for foreigners in

Cambodia's domestic politics than Beijing had predicted. China has subsequently been more careful about endorsing and participating in comparable negotiations or interventions. In India, it does appear that growing economic ties may help buttress the search for a diplomatic solution to the border issue. But the fact that China has employed the same tactics in recent negotiations as it did in discussions forty years ago suggests that the variable of greater wealth has not had much influence. Renewed cooperation with Albania is more a result of wholesale regime and leadership change in that country, not one of changing Chinese strategies. Similarly, China's current involvement in Afghanistan is not significantly different from what it was in the context of the bilateral relationship in the 1960s or through the pro-mujahideen coalition of the 1980s.

In sum, too many of China's choices towards these states have been consistent from times of little wealth to times of considerable wealth. The cooperation visible in these relationships did not directly derive from economic imperatives, and few of the positions reflect a fundamentally different stand on issues like domestic interference or sovereignty that would contrast China's prior approaches. It is difficult to attribute important and consistent Chinese foreign policy behaviors to economic motivations.

Some scholars point to the prevalence of Marxist or Maoist rhetoric, Cultural Revolution-era efforts to spread the revolution across the world, and support to communist resistance movements as evidence of the ideological underpinnings of Chinese foreign policy.

The first decade of the relationship with Cambodia certainly saw common positions on imperialism, independence, and colonialism, and Sihanouk's flirtations with socialism did not escape Beijing's attention. The brief redirection of foreign policy during the

Cultural Revolution explicitly advocated communism, and the Khmer Rouge's approach, modeled on radical Maoism, earned the Gang of Four's approval. Moreover, China's aid to Democratic Kampuchea continued while that regime pursued its own revolution. Albania clearly shared a commitment to Marxism, and Nehru and Zhou agreed on most of the non-aligned movement's agenda and the Five Principles. Afghanistan's King Zahir Shah expressed enthusiasm for the Five Principles, and Beijing did maintain relations with the two Marxist regimes that followed Zahir's rule.

But had China sought to promote the rise of similar communist parties or movements, it certainly could have helped develop the Khmer Rouge far earlier. Moreover, Beijing could have taken the ultimate step and sent its own troops to help prop up the crumbling Democratic Kampuchea regime, an action that would likely not have triggered as strong a reaction from the Soviet Union as in the Indian or Afghan cases. Had China sought to maintain a role for a communist ally in Cambodia, it ought to have placed the KR's interests at the core of its agenda with respect to the resistance and negotiations of the 1980s, and helped find a new role for the movement in the post-Paris era. Across the other cases, China should have been able to maintain ties to Albania, and should have sought to buttress the pro-communist factions in Afghanistan and India. Alternatively, it could have followed a Cold War-like pattern of conducting bilateral relations only with other socialist states.

But common positions on independence and imperialism were not necessarily Marxist; more important, evidence of communist proselytizing is hard to find. China's interest in Cambodia's communists has to be weighed against Zhou's repeated instructions not to advance an ideological position in other countries, and on Beijing's

ongoing affinity for Sihanouk over any of the Marxist-oriented factions throughout the entire relationship. Zhou quickly reversed the anomalous policies of the Cultural Revolution, and even when the Khmer Rouge came to power, China continued to insist that Sihanouk was the official head of state, and it repeatedly cautioned DK leaders that if they were going to pursue socialism that they should do so gradually – in other words, to not replicate China’s mistakes. Beijing withheld from the DK the one form of aid that would have saved it from a Vietnamese invasion, and China spared the DK no criticisms in the early 1980s – most notably by suggesting they *abandon* their quest for communism. China’s support to Cambodia’s communists was not about spreading the gospel of Marxism, it was about backing those who had fought their way to power and earned some degree of popular support, unlike Lon Nol.

In a similar demonstration of restraint, China never responded to the Albanians’ criticisms of perceived doctrinal transgressions. In that case, a common political ideology proved to be more of a hindrance as it clearly did little to help salvage the relationship. In India, it was not even Nehru’s efforts to stir up popular fears of a communist threat that drove Beijing to an armed response, and at no point did Beijing appear to have encouraged communist or any other kind of movements in India to work against Nehru. And despite a few feeble insinuations from journalists, there is no evidence that China sought ties to Afghan Maoists either before or after the Soviet invasion.

China’s alleged quest for global revolution is difficult to see. These cases suggest, consistent with Van Ness and Gurtov, that it is a rare phenomenon for China to implicitly or explicitly “export revolution.” China repeatedly pursued non-ideology-specific, non-

dogmatic approaches. To the extent that an ideology mattered, it was that relations with China deepened considerably if the other state also approved of the Five Principles, as was the case with Sihanouk. On no occasion were these states required to agree to a Marxist or Maoist agenda, and quite frequently Beijing cautioned against such efforts. It is remarkable how little evidence is marshaled in support of ongoing claims that China seeks to transform at least Southeast Asia, if not as much of the world as possible, into socialist states.

IV. The importance of understanding principles

Most international relations theories posit that behavior is driven by one of two responses to the structure of an anarchic world. But if, as Alexander Wendt suggested, anarchy is what states make of it, it is possible that there are other quite systematic responses to a world without a global government. This project demonstrates that principles have played a profoundly consistent role in shaping Chinese foreign policy – so much so that they almost fit Barbara Geddes’ definition of rational choice theory, in which systematic patterns of incentives lead to systematic patterns of outcomes. The difference lies in the definition and utility of that which is being maximized. Having won the Chinese civil war, held the US back in Korea and Vietnam, endured and rejected domestic political extremism, and raised the standard of living for millions of people while simultaneously normalizing relations with most of the world’s countries and avoiding major wars, China remains convinced that its approaches to domestic and international politics are valid and correct. In this view, it is not just logical but obligatory to provide aid even if there is no likely return, to pursue relations regardless of

regime type, to refuse to intervene with an abusive government, and to respond selectively to international initiatives. A relationship between a large state and a small one is neither irrelevant nor one of domination – rather, it is indicative of a commitment to consistent relations with *all* kinds of states. Behavior that looks inchoate or illogical to these other approaches is in fact comprehensible.

In addition to being comprehensible, this explanation also posits that Chinese foreign policy choices are reasonably predictable. The formulation of this particular set of beliefs may well have been contingent, but their application has not been. As much as it may frustrate Japan and South Korea, which prefer more decisive action, China will continue to press for negotiations with North Korea. It is unlikely that China will ever cast a vote at the United Nations in favor of policies such as the war on Iraq.¹³⁷⁰ China's participation in international economic organizations will be considered with extreme care to determine whether they will compromise Beijing's control over the country. Until it is persuaded that the majority of Cambodians wish to see a tribunal established for the surviving Khmer Rouge leadership, China will not support it. As long as China identifies hegemonic behavior, such as unilateral American interventions into other countries, economic imperialism via international financial institutions, or efforts to encourage Taiwanese independence, it will continue on its long, slow trek to make its model of more equitable relations dominant. At the same time, China's choices will rarely include aggressive military responses.

Obviously all states are concerned about their security, but the overly deterministic approaches that see only cooperation or conflict overlook the possibility that foreign policy elites may have very different beliefs how to achieve that security. Stanley

Hoffman details how realism has so thoroughly shaped American foreign policy, and it is equally plausible that other states' foreign policy has been influenced by other sets of beliefs. Chinese policy makers' perception of how to create security remains deeply rooted in their own country's experience. A secure state is a stable state with indigenous leadership capable of delivering a modicum of prosperity and maintaining control of its territory. A vulnerable state is one with some or all of its leadership installed by external forces, one dependent on foreign aid, and one constrained in its choices by international alliances. Given these beliefs, Chinese foreign policy must not proceed based on a state's level of development, regime type, or geographical proximity. Indeed, it should not even proceed based on whether there is a potential "return" that might accrue to China. Establishing equally respectful, restrained, and predictable relations with as many other countries as possible is at the core of China's security.

Without understanding what China wants out of its international relationships, it will remain difficult to make accurate predictions about its behavior, it will be easy to provoke hostility where it could be avoided, and opportunities for cooperation will regularly be missed. Until international relations analysts question whether their understanding of rationality, gains, and maximizing is the only understanding, little progress in relations with a crucially important country can be made. When analysts understand that the unyielding Chinese policies regarding Taiwan, Tibet, and Xinjiang do not necessarily extend beyond those territories, many will be forced to revise their overall evaluations of China's external posture. By extension, perhaps they will come to realize that China's support to smaller, poorer states is not about domination or buying loyalties, but about independence.

V. Implications and questions for further study

As noted in the introductory chapter, there are considerable practical and theoretical implications of demonstrating that a particular set of principles shapes Chinese foreign policy. At the same time, the study generates a number of questions that merit further research.

At a theoretical level, this project first shows that approaches with deterministic, dichotomous predictions are simply not reliable. Efforts to shoehorn China into particular categories such as a “revisionist” or “status quo” state, or as a “rising power” pursuing a “learning curve” are not only misleading, they are not much more than labels. Failing a systematic inquiry into why and how China does and does not use its newly acquired power or knowledge across a variety of cases, these approaches cannot help us understand past or predict future behavior.

Second, many international relations theorists would dismiss a belief-based explanation as entirely too contingent or idiosyncratic to have any predictive power. The Five Principles have actually proved to be quite consistent across dramatic variations in China’s power, leadership eras, levels of development, and relations. Their creation in 1949 may well be an ideal type of Legro’s ideational collapse and consolidation. Since that time, there have been no sufficiently unpleasant outcomes to make Chinese foreign policy makers to deviate from that course. It is true that this particular explanation is unique to China, but demonstrating that ideas have mattered here should make their examination in other states worthwhile, particularly if they can explain a variety of

outcomes. American exceptionalism, both in and of itself and with respect to other countries' reactions to it, is just one possible object of further study.

Given the close relationship between abstract theory and concrete policy, there are also important practical implications of this work. Most important, had China's priorities and tactics been better understood, terrible tragedies might have been avoided. For example, Zhou Enlai's insistence on returning Sihanouk to power in Cambodia in the early 1970s was consistently misconstrued by American foreign policy makers as little more than an effort to return a pro-China, anti-American leader to Phnom Penh. Obviously the Chinese harbored no affection for Lon Nol, but to Beijing the key issue was to reinstate a Cambodian leader with broad domestic support. A leader widely perceived to have been installed by the US virtually guaranteed Cambodian enthusiasm for a domestic resistance movement, a sentiment that might not have been so strong had Sihanouk returned. Tragically, the US did not accept the merits of this position until April 10, 1975 – a week before Phnom Penh fell to the Khmer Rouge. In another instance, had Soviet and Vietnamese leaders taken seriously Deng's 1980 suggestion of an election in Cambodia, the conflict could have been settled a decade earlier, saving more lives, diplomatic effort, and possibly making the \$2-3 billion UNTAC effort unnecessary. A careful reevaluation of instances like these could indicate possibilities for future cooperation.

There are three other practical implications. First, strategies of "containment" and "engagement" as commonly understood are unlikely to be effective, largely because they are premised on a flawed understanding of China's agenda for itself and in the world. Second, a greater appreciation of what makes China feel secure could more accurately

identify points of cooperation and contention. The former could include joint aid projects; the latter will primarily revolve around international interventions and concerns about sovereignty. However, it is unlikely that in this age of a single superpower China will ever feel entirely secure, particularly given that superpower's obligations to Taiwan. Third, as has been the case in Cambodia, it is likely that China will continue to make use of its resources to create alternatives to other states' foreign policies Beijing perceives to be excessively constraining or interventionist. China's efforts will most likely revolve around economic relations with other developing countries, but they should not be misconstrued as efforts by China to dominate those states.

There are a number of unanswered questions for future work to build on or challenge this approach. Will the Five Principles endure, particularly as the Chinese foreign policy apparatus becomes considerably larger and more bureaucratic? As Stinchcombe suggested, the means of replicating ideas function less well as one moves further away temporally from their point of origin. It is also possible that a conflict on Taiwan with the US or other states – the starkly undesirable consequences of Legro's model – could ultimately lead China to shift towards a more aggressive stance. It is also worth enquiring whether China's policies towards major powers, primarily the US and the USSR, can be explained within the framework of the Five Principles.

Analysis of China's involvement with international organizations and treaties is already well under way, but it will be particularly interesting to observe its efforts particularly if the United States continues its current campaign of unilateralism. It is perhaps ironic that where China once derided the United Nations as a tool of the US, it now sees that same institution as an important global forum from which the US is

retreating. Will China act on its ties to the majority of member states from the developing world, and former US allies now disgruntled by the US' actions in Iraq, to try to advance the Five Principles as the preferred basis of international relations? After all, Deng first introduced those concepts in 1974 and received an enthusiastic response. Even if the US reengages, will a stronger China insist on its norms, particularly with the rapid growth in international interventions?

China and the US have starkly different views on the development of stable regimes, ones that mirror their own experiences and influence their foreign policies. In general, US foreign policy makers believe that only a certain regime type – democracy – can gain domestic legitimacy and therefore stability. If necessary, the US feels it appropriate to remake regimes. Chinese policy makers, on the other hand, typically think that any kind of regime can have legitimacy and therefore stability, provided that regime is representative of the people and acts in their general interest.¹³⁷¹ International involvement only disrupts this more organic, exclusively domestic process. A systematic evaluation of both countries' policy towards a particular state undergoing regime transformation could more clearly illuminate the tensions caused by dichotomously opposed Chinese and American foreign policies.

Finally, a careful analysis of American and Chinese foreign policy choices toward another country, either in a particular instance or over time, may shed further light on a feedback loop. A cursory overview of both states' relationships with several countries suggests a particular chain reaction: the United States identifies a threat to an ally's regime and so seeks to bolster it through a military alliance, aid, or other means. China views such behavior as interventionist or imperialist and thus finds ways to ameliorate

the constraints – steps that unnerve the United States, which sees only a growing relationship with a large communist state, and thus becomes more involved, subsequently spurring greater Chinese involvement. Once in this cycle, it is difficult for both China and the United States to determine that their initial interests might not have been so different, and that some of their steps to assist the state in question may be quite similar and not necessarily threatening to one another. Identifying points of commonality could be extraordinarily useful – again, not simply for theoretical purposes, but also for the sake of everyone's security.

- ¹ The \$2 billion figure is calculated based on official PRC annual aid pledges, which are usually about 35 percent higher than the amounts eventually disbursed, and on what has been reported on China's aid to Cambodia, which almost certainly does not represent the full amounts actually given. The \$2 billion figure also does not include military aid or the funds to supporting the Cambodian government in exile from 1970-1975 or the Cambodian resistance from 1979-1991. The real total could be closer to \$3-3.5 billion. An appendix of aid disbursements will be included. For more on China's aid programs, see Teh-Chang Lin, "Problems in the Study of Beijing's Foreign Aid," *Issues & Studies* (July 1995): 66-78.
- ² The terms "China" and "Beijing" will be used interchangeably throughout this project to refer to the community of Chinese foreign policy elites. More will be said on the homogeneity of this group shortly.
- ³ Chen Jian, *Mao's China and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001) p. 42. Mao first spoke of these principles six months before the establishment of the PRC, proposing them as the basis for relations with the United States.
- ⁴ Brantly Womack, "How Size Matters: The United States, China and Asymmetry," *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 24 no. 4 (December 2001): 123-150.
- ⁵ Robert A. Scalapino, "China's Multiple Identities in East Asia: A Regional Force," in *China's Quest for National Identity*, Samuel S. Kim and Lowell Dittmer, eds., Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993, p. 236.
- ⁶ United States Liaison Office memo, Beijing, Department of State, 1 April 1974.
- ⁷ See, among others, Robert Keohane, *Neorealism and its Critics*; John Mearshimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*; Hans Morgenthau and Kenneth Thompson, *Politics Among Nations*; Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*.
- ⁸ See, among others, Robert Cox and John Gerard Ruggie in *Neorealism and its Critics*; Roxanne Doty, *Imperial Encounters: The Politics of Representation in North-South Relations*; Peter Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security*; Nicholas Greenwood Onuf, *World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations*; Steve Smith et al, *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond*; Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It," *International Organizations* (Spring 1992): 391-425; Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*.
- ⁹ Michael Hunt, *The Genesis of Chinese Communist Foreign Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996) p. 3.
- ¹⁰ See, among others, Kenneth Lieberthal, *Governing China: From Revolution Through Reform* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1995), and David Shambaugh, *Deng Xiaoping: Portrait of a Statesman* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), and "China's Ambivalent Diplomacy," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 15 November 2001.
- ¹¹ John J. Mearshimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: Norton, 2001) p. 402.
- ¹² A.M. Halpern, "Communist China's Demands on the World" (Los Angeles: RAND Corporation, 9 October 1961) p. 5.
- ¹³ See, among others, some of the essays in David Lampton, ed., *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform*, Edward Friedman and Barrett L. McCormick, eds., *What If China Doesn't Democratize?: Implications For War and Peace*, G. John Ikenberry and Michael Mastanduno, eds., *International Relations Theory and the Asia-Pacific*, and most of Richard Bernstein and Ross Munro, *The Coming Conflict With China*.
- ¹⁴ Robert Ross, *The Indochina Tangle: China's Vietnam Policy, 1975-1979* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988) p. 6.
- ¹⁵ Michael Yahuda, "China's Foreign Relations: The Long March, Future Uncertain," *China Quarterly*, #159, 1999.
- ¹⁶ Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).
- ¹⁷ Alastair Iain Johnston, "Cultural Realism and Strategy in Maoist China," in *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), p. 218.
- ¹⁸ Johnston bases his argument on data from Jonathan Wilkenfeld, Michael Brecher, and Sheila Rosen, *Crises in the Twentieth Century: Handbook on Foreign Policy Crises* (New York: Pergamon, 1988). Because the data set does not include American or Soviet involvement in proxy wars, both states appear far more peaceful than they actually are.
- ¹⁹ See, among others, Roeland Burger, *The Eyes of the Pineapple: Revolutionary Intellectuals and Terror in Democratic Kampuchea*; David P. Chandler, *Brother Number One: A Political Biography of Pol Pot*; Thomas Englebert and Christopher E. Goscha, *Falling Out of Touch: A Study on Vietnamese Communist Policy Towards an Emerging Cambodian Communist Movement, 1930-1975*; and Stephen Heder, *Vietnamese Communism and the Khmer Rouge*.
- ²⁰ Melvin Gurtov, *China and Southeast Asia – The Politics of Survival: A Study of Foreign Policy Interaction* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1971); Peter Van Ness, *Revolution and Chinese Foreign Policy: Peking's Support for Wars of National Liberation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970).
- ²¹ Thomas J. Christensen, *Useful Adversaries: Grand Strategy, Domestic Mobilization, and Sino-American Conflict, 1947-1958* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996) pp. 3-4.
- ²² Moore, Thomas G. and Dixia Yang, "Empowered and Restrained: Chinese Foreign Policy in the Age of Economic Interdependence," in *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform, 1978-2000* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).
- ²³ Bates Gill, "Discussion of 'China: a responsible great power'," *Journal of Contemporary China* 10 no. 26 (2001): 27.
- ²⁴ Hunt, p. 28.

- ²⁵ Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War: The Making of the Sino-American Confrontation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), pp. 213-214.
- ²⁶ Lowell Dittmer, "China's search for its place in the world," in *Contemporary Chinese Politics in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) p. 245.
- ²⁷ Chen, p. 26.
- ²⁸ Chen, p. 42.
- ²⁹ Christensen, p. 260.
- ³⁰ Hunt, p. 84.
- ³¹ Chen, p. 220.
- ³² Wang Jisi, "International Relations Theory and the Study of Chinese Foreign Policy: A Chinese Perspective," in *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994) p. 483.
- ³³ Melvin Gurtov and Byong-Moo Hwang, *China Under Threat: The Politics of Strategy and Diplomacy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980) p. 243.
- ³⁴ Wang Jisi, p. 495.
- ³⁵ David Lampton, *Same Bed, Different Dreams: Managing U.S.-China Relations 1989-2000* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001) p. 371.
- ³⁶ John Gerard Ruggie, "What Makes the World Hang Together? Neo-utilitarianism and the Social Constructivist Challenge," *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (Autumn 1998): 867.
- ³⁷ Harry Eckstein, "Culture as a Foundation Concept for the Social Sciences," *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 8 (1996): 471-497.
- ³⁸ Jeffrey W. Legro, "Culture and Preferences in the International Cooperation Two-Step," *American Political Science Review* 90, no. 1 (March 1996).
- ³⁹ Ted Hopf, "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory," *International Security* 23 (Summer 1998): 174-176.
- ⁴⁰ Ruggie, p. 869.
- ⁴¹ See, among others, Thomas Berger, and Richard Price and Nina Tannenwald in *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).
- ⁴² Arthur Stinchcombe, *Constructing Social Theories* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1968).
- ⁴³ Norbert Elias and John L. Scotson, *The Established and the Outsiders: A Sociological Inquiry Into Community Problems* (London: Sage Publications, 1994).
- ⁴⁴ On the importance of particular historical episodes in shaping elite decision-making, see, for example, E.P. Thompson, *The Essential E.P. Thompson*, or Ruth Berins Collier and David Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena: Critical Junctures, the Labor Movement, and Regime Dynamics in Latin America*. On the role of institutions, see Stanley Hoffmann, "An American Social Science: International Relations," *Daedalus* 106, no. 3 (1977); James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, "The Institutional Dynamics of International Political Orders," *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (Autumn 1998); and Sven Steinmo and Kathleen Thelen, *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis*.
- ⁴⁵ Jeffrey W. Legro, "Whence American Internationalism," *International Organizations* 52, no. 2 (Spring 2000).
- ⁴⁶ Interviews, Beijing, October 2002-April 2003.
- ⁴⁷ Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, translated by A.M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons, edited by Talcott Parsons (New York: Free Press, 1997).
- ⁴⁸ The subsets of international relations theory that deal with these issues, loosely labeled as "critical" or "feminist" approaches, are decidedly in the minority. On security, see, among others, J. Ann Tickner, "You Just Don't Understand: Troubled Engagement between Feminists and International Relations Theorists," *International Studies Quarterly* 41 (1997): 611-632. On international relations concepts, see J. George, "(Re)Introducing the Theory as Practice of International Relations," in *Discourses of Global Politics* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994).
- ⁴⁹ At a June 2004 conference in Beijing, Lowell Dittmer likened PRC policymakers' feelings about Taiwan to that of an amputee experiencing the pain of a phantom limb – a dramatic, but illustrative, comparison.
- ⁵⁰ Wang Jisi, p. 493.
- ⁵¹ Brantly Womack, *China and Vietnam: The Politics of Asymmetry*, Chapter Two, ms., 2003.
- ⁵² At the end of a four hundred-page book on Chinese foreign policy, David Lampton concludes that, "the pattern of China's policy-making behavior remains highly reactive, grudging, based on national interest, and designed to test international limits. From a Western perspective, the overall direction is positive, but there is a substantial distance to go." Yet from a "Western perspective," it was acceptable to bomb Cambodia, to trade with apartheid-era South Africa, and to invade Iraq – policies China found wholly unacceptable. Those "perspectives" matter, and PRC foreign policy experts were keenly aware, long before even coming to power, that those "perspectives" could hurt them.
- ⁵³ Similar official American sensitivities caused William Shawcross to laud the Freedom of Information Act in the preface to his controversial book *Sideshow*, which addresses the illegal US bombing of Cambodia.
- ⁵⁴ Gurtov and Hwang, p. 4.

- ⁵⁵ Qiang Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950-1975* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2000) p. 50.
- ⁵⁶ Roger M. Smith, *Cambodia's Foreign Policy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1965) pp. 64-65.
- ⁵⁷ Kuo-kang Shao, "Zhou Enlai's Diplomacy and the Neutralization of Indo-China, 1954-55," *China Quarterly* 107 (September 1986): 483.
- ⁵⁸ Qiang Zhai, p. 53.
- ⁵⁹ The five principles are: mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, non-aggression, noninterference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.
- ⁶⁰ Sihanouk, a prince by birth, ascended the throne in 1941. He abdicated in order to run for office in 1955 and his mother, Kossamak, became Queen. Although Sihanouk has nominally remained the head of state for decades, he did not become King again until 1993.
- ⁶¹ Paul Quinn-Judge, "Too few communists," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 16 February 1984, p. 113.
- ⁶² William Shawcross, *Sideshow: Nixon, Kissinger and the Destruction of Cambodia* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1979) p. 52.
- ⁶³ Du Liangxin and Zhao Heman, eds., *Yuenan Laowo Jianpuzhai shouce* (Beijing: Shijie chubanshe, 1988) p. 546.
- ⁶⁴ Brantly Womack, *China and Vietnam: The Politics of Asymmetry* (ms., March 2003) Chapter 8, p. 7.
- ⁶⁵ Interview, Phnom Penh, August 2000.
- ⁶⁶ Interview, Phnom Penh, June 2003.
- ⁶⁷ *Yuenan Laowo Jianpuzhai shouce*, p. 547.
- ⁶⁸ Kuo-kang Shao, p. 496.
- ⁶⁹ Kuo-kang Shao, p. 500.
- ⁷⁰ Thomas Englebert and Christopher E. Goscha, *Falling out of Touch: A Study on Vietnamese Communist Policy Towards an Emerging Cambodian Communist Movement, 1930-1975* (Melbourne: Monash Asia Institute, 1995) p. 48.
- ⁷¹ Qiang Zhai, p. 57.
- ⁷² Zhang Xizhen, *Xihanuke jiazhu* (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenpian chubanshe, 1996) p. 97.
- ⁷³ Zhang Xizhen, p. 97.
- ⁷⁴ Interview, Beijing, February 2003.
- ⁷⁵ France did not recognize China until 1964.
- ⁷⁶ Interview, Beijing, April 2003.
- ⁷⁷ Tung Feng, "The Bandung Spirit," *Peking Review*, 29 April 1958, p. 7.
- ⁷⁸ Zheng Ruiyang, "Heping gongchu wuxian yuanze de lishi zuoyong yu xianshi yiyi," *Guoji wenti yanjiu* (March 1994): 2.
- ⁷⁹ Interview, Beijing, April 2003.
- ⁸⁰ In *My War with the C.I.A.*, Sihanouk described his first meeting with Zhou as "a case of 'love at first sight.'" See p. 202.
- ⁸¹ "Waijiaobu shengming: Jianpuzhai he Laowo," Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Beijing, 23 April 1955.
- ⁸² Smith, p. 80.
- ⁸³ China established bilateral relations with Vietnam on January 18, 1950, with Indonesia on April 13, 1950, and with Myanmar on June 8, 1950.
- ⁸⁴ Although the Sino-Soviet split was still five years away, Khrushchev's "secret speech" in 1956 began to make Beijing more wary of Moscow, and thus more wary of its ties in Southeast Asia.
- ⁸⁵ Kuo-kang Shao, p. 502.
- ⁸⁶ *Yuenan Laowo Jianpuzhai shouce*, p. 156.
- ⁸⁷ Zhonghua renmin gongheguo waijiaobu waijiao shipian, *Zhongguo waijiao gailan* (Beijing: Shijie zhishi chubanshe, 1987 edition) p. 59.
- ⁸⁸ Interview, Bangkok, August 2003.
- ⁸⁹ "A Definition of Cambodia's Neutrality," Royal Government of Cambodia, Phnom Penh: Ministry of Interior, 1962, p. 70.
- ⁹⁰ Qiang Zhai, p. 68.
- ⁹¹ Zhang Xizhen, p. 114.
- ⁹² Norodom Sihanouk and Wilfred Burchett, *My War with the CIA: Cambodia's Fight for Survival* (Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1973) pp. 78-81.
- ⁹³ Interview, Beijing, April 2003.
- ⁹⁴ Milton Osborne, *Sihanouk: Prince of Light, Prince of Darkness* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 1994) p. 103.
- ⁹⁵ "Jianpuzhai yihui," *Renmin ribao*, 29 February 1956.
- ⁹⁶ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1987 edition, p. 59.
- ⁹⁷ "Xihanuke shuo," *Renmin ribao*, 16 July 1956.
- ⁹⁸ *Yuenan Laowo Jianpuzhai shouce*, p. 552.
- ⁹⁹ Yun Shui, *Chushi qiguo jishi: jiangjun dashi Wang Youping* (Beijing: Shijie zhishi chubanshe, 1996) p. 44.
- ¹⁰⁰ Tan Shi et al, *Jianpuzhai* (Nanning: Guangxi Renmin Chubanshe, 1985) p. 195.

- ¹⁰¹ Justin Corfield, *Khmers Stand Up! A History of the Cambodian Government, 1970-1975*, Center of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, Monash Papers on Southeast Asia, No. 32, 1994, p. 21.
- ¹⁰² There were noteworthy exceptions to this minimum, including France and Egypt.
- ¹⁰³ Chen Shuliang, "ZhongJian guanxi de jianli yu fazhan," in *Shenmi zhimen: gongheguo waijiao shilu*, (Beijing: Tuanjie chubanshe, 1993) p. 134.
- ¹⁰⁴ Osborne, p. 104.
- ¹⁰⁵ "Discours de Son Altesse royale Le Prince Norodom Sihanouk au VIIIeme Congres National," Kingdom of Cambodia, Department of Legal Affairs, National Archives #13-432, 1958, p. 1.
- ¹⁰⁶ Interview, Phnom Penh, June 2003.
- ¹⁰⁷ "Attack on Cambodia Condemned," *Peking Review*, 8 July 1958, p. 18. It is also worth noting that Mao and Liu had also met earlier in the same day with a delegation from the Cambodian Buddhist Association.
- ¹⁰⁸ Yun Shui, p. 49.
- ¹⁰⁹ Chen Shuliang, "ZhongJian guanxi de jianlin yu fazhan," in *Shenmi zhimen: gongheguo waijiao shilu*.
- ¹¹⁰ "Premier Sihanouk in Peking," *Peking Review*, 19 August 1958, p. 21.
- ¹¹¹ Sihanouk and Burchett, p. 204.
- ¹¹² Osborne, p. 108.
- ¹¹³ Yun Shui, p. 50.
- ¹¹⁴ See, among others, "China-Cambodia Joint Statement," *Peking Review*, 2 September 1958, pp. 14-15.
- ¹¹⁵ "ZhongJian liangguo," *Renmin ribao*, 28 August 1958.
- ¹¹⁶ Shen Jian and Shen Li, *Wuxing hongqixia de dashimen* (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 1993).
- ¹¹⁷ Yun Shui, p. 53.
- ¹¹⁸ For a remarkable history of Chinese diplomacy, see Liu Xiaohong's *Chinese Ambassadors: The Rise of Diplomatic Professionalism Since 1949*. One of the other members of this group was Geng Biao, whose name we will encounter with respect to Sino-Cambodian relations in the early 1980s.
- ¹¹⁹ Yun Shui, p. 44.
- ¹²⁰ "Chinese delegation in Cambodia," *Peking Review*, 2 December 1958, pp. 21-22.
- ¹²¹ "China Backs Cambodia's Policy of Peace and Neutrality," *Peking Review*, 10 March 1959, p. 17.
- ¹²² Chu Lin, "Meiguo dui Jianpuzhai de qinlue he zhixia huodong," *Shijie zhishi*, 10 December 1962, pp. 11-12.
- ¹²³ For a fascinating discussion of this episode, see David Chandler's *Tragedy of Cambodian History*.
- ¹²⁴ "Xihanuke qinwang," *Renmin ribao*, 11 September 1958.
- ¹²⁵ "Xihanuke qinwang."
- ¹²⁶ "Sommaire, Numero Special," Bulletin Mensuel de Documentation du Secretariat Prive de sa Majeste Norodom Sihanouk, Roi du Cambodge, June 2003, p. 4.
- ¹²⁷ "Chinese Aid to Cambodia," *Peking Review*, 10 June 1958.
- ¹²⁸ Francois Nivolon, "Jianpuzhai de waiguo yuanzhu," *Dongnanya jingji ziliao huibian*, January 1960, p. 51. Nivolon probably originally wrote this article in English for the *Far Eastern Economic Review*. At that time *Dongnanya* often translated and reprinted FEER articles.
- ¹²⁹ When China officially launched its aid program in 1952, per capita income was about 80RMB, or \$35, per year. By comparison, American per capita income was about US\$1,500 when the US began the Marshall Plan in 1948.
- ¹³⁰ Chu Lin, p. 12.
- ¹³¹ Nivolon, "Jianpuzhai de waiguo yuanzhu."
- ¹³² Interview, March 2003, Beijing.
- ¹³³ I thank David Chandler for his description of the published messages of this time as "very mild."
- ¹³⁴ Brantly Womack, ms., p. 70.
- ¹³⁵ Chen Shuliang, p. 137. This effort must have resonated deeply. When Jiang Zemin visited Phnom Penh in November 2000 – forty years after Suramarit's funeral – Sihanouk thanked him for Zhou's presence at that event. Interview, Washington, July 2001. Zhou's participation also allowed him to establish a relationship with the Queen. When she became ill in 1973 following her relocation to Guangzhou, Zhou personally oversaw the selection of her physicians as he had done a few years earlier for Ho Chi Minh.
- ¹³⁶ According to Zhang Xizhen, two Taiwanese agents, one of them a high-ranking military official, took up residence a week before Liu's arrival in a house along the airport road. The two were released from prison after Lon Nol's coup, after which they claimed they had been paid by the CIA. See *Xihanuke jiazhu*, p. 142. See also Yang Mu, *Xihanuke guowang* (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 1996) p. 67.
- ¹³⁷ Colina MacDougall, "Coexisting with China," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 5 January 1961, p. 10. At the end of Sihanouk's October 1965, it was Prince Naradipo who performed his father's composition, "In Remembrance of China." See "Solidarity Against U.S. Imperialism: China Welcomes Prince Sihanouk," *Peking Review*, 1 October 1965, p. 14.
- ¹³⁸ "Prince Sihanouk's visit to China," *Peking Review*, 2 October 1964, p. 22.
- ¹³⁹ "Solidarity Against US Imperialism: China welcomes Prince Sihanouk," *Peking Review*, 1 October 1965, p. 13.

- ¹⁴⁰ “Chen Shuliang xiang Xihanuke qinwang baodi guoshu,” *Renmin ribao*, 12 April 1962.
- ¹⁴¹ Shen Jian and Shen Li, pp. 78-79. Chen was in China until 1969, after which he spent three years in a “cadre education and labor unit,” then at a research institute until 1978. He was then rehabilitated and made the Ambassador to Romania.
- ¹⁴² “Cambodian Minister in China,” *Peking Review*, 15 June 1962, p. 21.
- ¹⁴³ See, among others, “Yingji lai woguo jinxing fangwen,” 7 August 1965 and “Ganxie dui Song Shuang fu shouxiang shailing de daibiaotuan de reqing jiejian,” 17 August 1965, from *Renmin Ribao*.
- ¹⁴⁴ Shawcross, pp. 51-57.
- ¹⁴⁵ Interview, Beijing, March 2003.
- ¹⁴⁶ Interview, Beijing, March 2003.
- ¹⁴⁷ Shawcross, p. 50.
- ¹⁴⁸ “Dick Wilson, “Asia at Mid-Decade,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 30 December 1965, p. 590.
- ¹⁴⁹ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1987 edition, p. 59. Other English-language documents refer to this as the Treaty of Non-Aggression, but the key word in Chinese translates quite literally as encroachment rather than aggression.
- ¹⁵⁰ Interview, Phnom Penh, July 2000.
- ¹⁵¹ Ren Pin, “U.S. Intrigues Against Cambodia,” *Peking Review*, 14 September 1962, p. 12.
- ¹⁵² “China Supports International Guarantee of Cambodian Neutrality,” *Peking Review*, 7 September 1962, pp. 10-11.
- ¹⁵³ See, among others, Ren Pin, “Background Facts: U.S. Intrigues Against Cambodia,” *Peking Review*, September 14, 1962, pp. 12-13.
- ¹⁵⁴ “On Cambodia’s Neutrality,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Beijing, October 1962.
- ¹⁵⁵ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1987 edition, p. 59.
- ¹⁵⁶ Hou Songling, “Lun Meiguo cedong lang nuo fadong zhengbian de yinsuo,” *Dongnanya yanjiu* 1 (1991): 84-85.
- ¹⁵⁷ Kang Daisha, “Jianpuzhai riji,” in *Nu waijiao guan* (Beijing: Renmin tiyu chubanshe, 1994) p. 479.
- ¹⁵⁸ “Chinese Government’s Statement,” *Peking Review*, 19 November 1963, pp. 8-9.
- ¹⁵⁹ “Xihanuke qinwang jiejian Chen Shuliang dashi,” *Renmin ribao*, 30 November 1963.
- ¹⁶⁰ Interview, Beijing, December 2002.
- ¹⁶¹ Shan Chuanchou, “Jianpuzhai de duiwai guanxi he waiyuan wenti,” *Dongnanya yanjiu ziliao* 1 (1966): 66.
- ¹⁶² Interview, Beijing, March 2003.
- ¹⁶³ “Premier Chou En-lai’s Press Conference in Phnom Penh,” *Peking Review*, 17 May 1950, p. 31.
- ¹⁶⁴ Yun Shui, p. 60. Zhou was apparently so moved by the technicians’ hard work that he composed a couplet for them. The couplet still hangs on the wall in the Chinese Embassy in Phnom Penh.
- ¹⁶⁵ “More Aid From China,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 12 January 1961, p. 63. The author of this article is identified only as “Our Special Correspondent.”
- ¹⁶⁶ “Chinese Embassy to Pay for Repair of Memorial to Luo Jinchun,” *Sin Chew Ribao* (Phnom Penh), 21 February 2003.
- ¹⁶⁷ Yuan Renhou, “He Jianpuzhai renmin gongzhan youyi de ‘pingguoshu,’” *Shijie zhishi*, 10 December 1965, p. 32.
- ¹⁶⁸ “Dongnanya dashiji,” *Dongnanya wenti ziliao*, 16 August-15 October 1965, p. 37.
- ¹⁶⁹ Tan Shi et al, p. 198.
- ¹⁷⁰ Francois Nivolon, “Cambodia: Partners in Trade,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 30 September 1965, p. 622.
- ¹⁷¹ “Premier Chou En-lai’s Press Conference in Phnom Penh,” *Peking Review*, 17 May 1960, p. 31.
- ¹⁷² *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1987 edition, p. 59. Ironically, a series of Chinese articles published through the first half of the 1960s strongly criticized the US for not publicizing details of its military aid. See, for example, “Meiguo dui dongnanya geguo de ‘yuanzhu,’” *Dongnanya yanjiu ziliao*, February 1963.
- ¹⁷³ “Visit of Cambodian Military Delegation,” *Peking Review*, 20 March 1964, pp. 4-5.
- ¹⁷⁴ Odd Arne Westad et al, *77 Conversations Between Chinese and Foreign Leaders of the Wars in Indochina, 1964-1977* (Washington, DC: Cold War International History Project, 1998) pp. 66-67.
- ¹⁷⁵ “Xihanuke zaice,” *Renmin ribao*, 24 February 1964.
- ¹⁷⁶ Li Xuedun, “Jianpuzhai zhixing,” *Shijie zhishi*, 25 August 1964, p. 21.
- ¹⁷⁷ “Jianpuzhai fanwei meiguo qinlue,” *Renmin ribao*, 15 September 1964.
- ¹⁷⁸ Feng Pei, “Jianpuzhai fangwenji,” *Shijie zhishi*, 10 December 1964, p. 64.
- ¹⁷⁹ “Prince Sihanouk’s Visit to China,” *Peking Review*, 2 October 1964, p. 23.
- ¹⁸⁰ “New Bonds of Friendship,” *Peking Review*, 9 October 1964, p. 11.
- ¹⁸¹ “China-Cambodia Joint Communique,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 5 October 1964.
- ¹⁸² *77 Conversations*, p. 52.
- ¹⁸³ Hou Songling, p. 85.
- ¹⁸⁴ Hou Songling, p. 85.
- ¹⁸⁵ “The Kingdom of Cambodia Stands by Its Honour and Integrity,” *Renmin Ribao*, 4 May 1964.
- ¹⁸⁶ “Dongnanya dashiji,” *Dongnanya wenti ziliao*, 16 April-16 June 1965, p. 34.
- ¹⁸⁷ Hou Songling, p. 85.
- ¹⁸⁸ Marie Alexandrine Martin, *Cambodia: A Shattered Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994) pp. 92-93.

- ¹⁸⁹“Exchange of Views,” *Le Sangkum* (Phnom Penh), November 1965.
- ¹⁹⁰ Interview, Beijing, February 2003.
- ¹⁹¹ Chen Zanwei, “Jianpuzhai zai fan Mei douzheng zhongjian buqian jin,” *Shijie zhishi*, 10 November 1965, p. 11.
- ¹⁹² Chen Zanwei, p.11. Khrushchev’s visit never took place.
- ¹⁹³ Harald Munthe-Kass, “Facing Four Ways,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 25 November 1965, p. 369.
- ¹⁹⁴ “Joint Communique of Chairman Liu Shao-chi and Prince Norodom Sihanouk,” *Peking Review*, 15 March 1963, pp. 70-71.
- ¹⁹⁵ Cheng Xiangqun, *Nu waijiaoguan* (Beijing: Renmin tiyu chubanshe, 1994) p. 476.
- ¹⁹⁶ Interview, April 1999. This Cambodian diplomat could recite the Five Principles in English, Mandarin, Korean, and French. A former advisor to Sihanouk reported that by the mid-1960s he and others were “sick of those damn principles.” Interview, August 2000.
- ¹⁹⁷ Norodom Sihanouk, “How We See China,” *The Nationalist* (Phnom Penh), 17 September 1963.
- ¹⁹⁸ See, among others, “Xihanuke qinwang,” *Renmin ribao*, 22 October 1964.
- ¹⁹⁹ Colina MacDougall, “Coexisting with China.”
- ²⁰⁰ “China Dares to Run Risks to Thoroughly Defeat U.S. Imperialism,” *Peking Review*, 22 October 1965, p. 17.
- ²⁰¹ “Joint Statement of Chairman Liu Shao-chi and Prince Sihanouk,” *Peking Review*, 27 December 1960, p. 7.
- ²⁰² “Xihanuke qinwang zaidao lianheguo,” *Renmin ribao*, 13 October 1962.
- ²⁰³ Norodom Sihanouk, “Comment Nous Voyons La China,” *Neak Cheat Niyum* (Phnom Penh), 15 September 1963.
- ²⁰⁴ Sihanouk, “How We See China.”
- ²⁰⁵ Andrew Nathan, “Breaking Even,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 16 December 1965, p. 509. One does have to wonder if there were – and if there were any in Cambodia.
- ²⁰⁶ Nathan, “Breaking Even.” In early October 1965, China’s and Cambodia’s frustrations with the US and the UN commingled when Zhou lavishly praised Sihanouk’s recent withdrawal from the United Nations committee on decolonization, stating that, “. . .this just action is also a courageous gesture of protest against the increasingly marked tendency of the United Nations to allow itself to be manipulated by the U.S. imperialists.” See “Sino-Cambodian Joint Statement,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 3 October 1965.
- ²⁰⁷ Other regular supporters of China’s cause at the UN included Albania, Algeria, Congo-Brazzaville, Cuba, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Pakistan, Romania, Somalia, and Syria.
- ²⁰⁸ Wei Min, “Xihanuke de Zhongguo qingxiang,” *Ershiyi shijie*, June 1997, p. 37.
- ²⁰⁹ Melvin Gurtov, *China and Southeast Asia – The Politics of Survival* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1971) p. 59.
- ²¹⁰ Gurtov, p. 59.
- ²¹¹ For more on the political involvement of ethnic Chinese Cambodians, see William E. Willmott, *The Political Structure of the Chinese Community in Cambodia* (London: Athlone Press, 1970).
- ²¹² Zhou Zhongjian, “Zhanhou wushinian Jianpuzhai huaren de quzhe licheng,” *Nanyang wenti yanjiu* 1 (1996): 24-35.
- ²¹³ Zheng Xinbin, “Jianpuzhai huaqiao jiji zhichi dangdi jianshe,” *Dongnanya yanjiu ziliao* 1 (1965): 48.
- ²¹⁴ Gurtov, p. 60.
- ²¹⁵ “Premier Chou En-lai’s Press Conference in Phnom Penh,” *Peking Review*, 17 May 1960, p. 32.
- ²¹⁶ Timothy Carney, “Unexpected Victory,” in *Cambodia 1975-1978: Rendezvous with Death* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989) p. 32.
- ²¹⁷ Kang Daisha, “Jianpuzhai rijì,” in *Nu waijiaoguan*, p. 486.
- ²¹⁸ Corfield, p. 38.
- ²¹⁹ “Premier Chou on Sino-Cambodian Friendship,” *Peking Review*, 22 October 1965, p. 15.
- ²²⁰ Even when official sources did begin identifying the Cambodian Communist Party, which was not until 1975, the discussions almost invariably begin with a recounting of the Lon Nol regime’s failings and rarely mention Pol Pot himself. See, for example, *Jianpuzhai renmin de weida shengli: relie qingzhu Jianpuzhai aiguo junmin jiefang Jin Bian* (Beijing: Renmin dabanshe, May 1975).
- ²²¹ David Chandler, *Brother Number One: A Political Biography of Pol Pot* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992) p. 69.
- ²²² Zhang Xizhen, *Xihanuke jiazhu* (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenpian chubanshe, 1996) p. 154.
- ²²³ Stephen Heder, *Vietnamese Communism and the Khmer Rouge* (manuscript, 2004) p. 47.
- ²²⁴ Chandler, p. 75.
- ²²⁵ “Renwu jieshao: Po’er Po’té, Qiao Senbo, Ying Sali,” *Dongnanya yanjiu ziliao* 1 (1979): 92. This is the only statement I have found from a Chinese source confirming this assistance. I believe that, in the immediate post-VN invasion, openly discussing this assistance was a way of demonstrating loyalty and being on the side of the aggrieved; within months, Beijing would probably not think this way any more.
- ²²⁶ Englebert and Goscha, p. 79.
- ²²⁷ Ben Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime: Race, Power, and Genocide in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, 1975-79* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996) p. 14. Kiernan’s work exemplifies the unsubstantiated assumption that China would

automatically support any communist insurgency that presented itself. He argued – without evidence or even an attempt at illuminating the logic of such action – that China was pleased to encourage the development of a communist faction not so closely tied Vietnam. Kiernan makes no attempt to reconcile that statement against ties that were then quite strong between Beijing and Hanoi and Beijing and Sihanouk.

²²⁸ Gurtov, p. 24 and p. 92.

²²⁹ Peter Van Ness, *Revolution and Chinese Foreign Policy: Peking's Support for Wars of National Liberation* (Berkeley: University of California at Los Angeles Press, 1970): pp. 56, 64.

²³⁰ Van Ness, p. 169.

²³¹ Van Ness, p. 132.

²³² Melvin Gurtov, "The Foreign Ministry and Foreign Affairs During the Cultural Revolution," *China Quarterly* (October-December 1969): 65.

²³³ "Dongnanya dashiji," *Dongnanya wenti ziliao* (16 February-15 April 1966): 28.

²³⁴ "Zhongguo Jianpuzhai qianding jingji wenhua hezuo xieding," *Renmin Ribao*, 1 May 1966.

²³⁵ Shawcross, p. 64.

²³⁶ Gurtov, *China and Southeast Asia – The Politics of Survival*, p. 75.

²³⁷ Interview, Washington, DC, April 2000.

²³⁸ Osborne, p. 181.

²³⁹ Gurtov, *China and Southeast Asia – The Politics of Survival*, p. 55.

²⁴⁰ "Celebrating the 13th Anniversary of Cambodia's Independence," *Peking Review*, 18 November 1966, p. 36.

²⁴¹ "Zhang Gang dashi Chen fuzongli zai songqing Jian duliri zhaodaihuishang jianghua," *Renmin ribao*, 10 November 1966. Truong was not mentioned again in the Chinese press until January 1969, when he returned to Cambodia.

²⁴² "Wengezhong de 'geming wajiao luxian'," from *Zhou Enlai de wajiao* (Beijing: Dongfang chubanshe, 1992) p. 190.

²⁴³ "Xihanuke qinwang zhongshen," *Renmin ribao*, 26 February 1967.

²⁴⁴ Chandler, p. 83.

²⁴⁵ Osborne, p. 193. These three promptly disappeared into the jungle to join their Khmer Rouge comrades.

²⁴⁶ Gurtov, *China and Southeast Asia – The Politics of Survival*, p. 80.

²⁴⁷ *77 Conversations*, p. 77.

²⁴⁸ Hou Songling, p. 85.

²⁴⁹ Lois Dougan Tretiak, "Cambodia: Number One Friend," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 14 December 1967, pp. 471-472.

²⁵⁰ *Zhou Enlai de wajiao*, p. 208.

²⁵¹ Gurtov, *China and Southeast Asia – The Politics of Survival*, p. 78.

²⁵² Gurtov, *China and Southeast Asia – The Politics of Survival*, p. 120.

²⁵³ For a detailed account of diplomatic debacles in Chinese embassies worldwide – from Czechoslovakia to Mongolia, from Kenya to Myanmar, from Bulgaria to Indonesia – see *Zhou Enlai de zuihou suiyue, 1966-1976* (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1995).

²⁵⁴ Liu Xiaohong, p. 115.

²⁵⁵ Qiang Zhai, "China and the Cambodia Conflict, 1970-1975," ms., pp. 7-8.

²⁵⁶ Liu Xiaohong, p. 115.

²⁵⁷ Ying Bing, You Xiexiong and Shi Ze Liang Zhao, "Jianpuzhai xiandai shilue," *Dongnanya yanjiu ziliao* 1 (1983): 106.

²⁵⁸ Zhang Xizhen, p. 161.

²⁵⁹ Gurtov, *China and Southeast Asia – The Politics of Survival*, p. 121.

²⁶⁰ Zhang Xizhen, p. 161.

²⁶¹ "Xihanuke qinwang dianzhu," *Renmin ribao*, 4 October 1967.

²⁶² Gurtov, *China and Southeast Asia – The Politics of Survival*, p. 126.

²⁶³ Heder, ms. p. 65.

²⁶⁴ Gurtov, "The Foreign Ministry and Foreign Affairs During the Cultural Revolution," p. 100.

²⁶⁵ Kang Maozhao, *Wajiao huiyilu*, Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2000, p. 175.

²⁶⁶ Kang Maozhao, pp. 175-176.

²⁶⁷ Gurtov, *China and Southeast Asia – The Politics of Survival*, p. 125.

²⁶⁸ Kang Maozhao, p. 175.

²⁶⁹ Kang Maozhao, pp. 177-178.

²⁷⁰ Interview, Beijing, March 2003.

²⁷¹ Gurtov, "The Foreign Ministry and Foreign Affairs During the Cultural Revolution," p. 100.

²⁷² *77 Conversations*, p. 107.

²⁷³ Qiang Zhai, "China and the Cambodia Conflict, 1970-1975," p. 11.

²⁷⁴ *Yuenan Laowo Jianpuzhai shouce*, p. 159.

²⁷⁵ Alessandro Casella, "Cambodia: Whitewashed!," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 6 July 1969, p. 111.

- ²⁷⁶ Hou Songling, p. 86. To this day there is a debate over whether Sihanouk actually explicitly agreed to these bombings. For the most nuanced discussion of this and other matters related to the Nixon Administration's illegal bombing of Cambodia, see William Shawcross, *Sideshow*.
- ²⁷⁷ Qi Shan, "'Gaomianhua' yu geming," in *Yinduzhina zhichaide yinian 1972-1973* (Henei: Yuenan waijiao chubanshe, 1974) p. 124.
- ²⁷⁸ *77 Conversations*, p. 126.
- ²⁷⁹ Like Wang Youping and Chen Shuliang, Kang had a military background and had served in the Eighth Route Army before joining the MFA. He had worked at the embassies in India and Afghanistan prior to the Cultural Revolution and appears to have been spared especially bad treatment during that period.
- ²⁸⁰ Kang Maozhao, p. 181.
- ²⁸¹ Kang Maozhao, p. 179.
- ²⁸² "Cambodian Ambassador to China Gives Independence Day Reception," *Peking Review*, 14 November 1969, p. 3.
- ²⁸³ Kang Maozhao, p. 182.
- ²⁸⁴ Hou Songling, p. 87.
- ²⁸⁵ Corfield, p. 90.
- ²⁸⁶ Lowell Dittmer, "China's search for its place in the world," in *Contemporary Chinese Politics in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) p. 238.
- ²⁸⁷ *Zhou Enlai nianpu 1949-1976 (Volume 3)* (Beijing: Shijie zhishi chubanshe, 1988) p. 354.
- ²⁸⁸ Qiang Zhai, "China and the Cambodian Conflict, 1970-1975," ms., p. 14.
- ²⁸⁹ Qiang Zhai, "China and the Cambodian Conflict, 1970-1975," p. 14.
- ²⁹⁰ *77 Conversations*, p. 129.
- ²⁹¹ Zhang Qing, "Huiyi xin Zhongguo diyidai lingdaoren dui Jianpuzhai de bangzhu," *Dongnanya congheng* 2 (2003): 22.
- ²⁹² *77 Conversations*, pp. 128-129.
- ²⁹³ Zhang Xizhen, *Xihanuke jiazhu*, p. 183.
- ²⁹⁴ Kang Maozhao, *Waijiao huiyilu*, p. 190.
- ²⁹⁵ Jie Lifu, ed., *Guomen hongditan: xin Zhongguo waijiao 50 nian* (Beijing: Shijie zhishi chubanshe, 1998) p. 709.
- ²⁹⁶ Qi Shan, "Zhanzheng 'Gaomianhua' yu geming," in *Yinduzhina zhichaide yinian 1972-1973* (Henei: Yuenan waijiao chubanshe, 1974) p. 145.
- ²⁹⁷ Thomas Englebert and Christopher Goscha, p. 92.
- ²⁹⁸ "Surging Advances of Cambodian People's Patriotic Struggle Against U.S. Imperialism," *Peking Review*, 17 April 17, 1970, p. 24.
- ²⁹⁹ "Coup d'Etat Clique Intensifies Persecution of Chinese Residents in Cambodia," *Peking Review*, 17 April 1970, p. 24.
- ³⁰⁰ "U.N. Tentacles Extend to Cambodia," *Peking Review*, 17 April 1970, p. 25.
- ³⁰¹ *77 Conversations*, p. 130.
- ³⁰² Wang Tulu, *Dangdai Jianpuzhai* (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 1994) p. 284.
- ³⁰³ Tan Shi et al, p. 200.
- ³⁰⁴ Zhang Qing, "Huiyi xin Zhongguo," p. 23.
- ³⁰⁵ Qiang Zhai, "China and the Cambodian Conflict, 1970-1975," p. 18.
- ³⁰⁶ "Statement of the Government of the People's Republic of China, April 28, 1970," *Peking Review*, 8 May 1970, pp. 7-8.
- ³⁰⁷ Zhang Qing, "Huiyi xin Zhongguo," p. 23.
- ³⁰⁸ Norodom Sihanouk and Wilfred Burchett, *My War with the C.I.A.: Cambodia's Fight for Survival*, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1973, p. 31.
- ³⁰⁹ Kang Maozhao, "Zai peiyang Xihanuke qingwang de rizili," *Bainianchao* 2 (1999): 31.
- ³¹⁰ Zhang Qing, "Huiyi xin Zhongguo," p. 23.
- ³¹¹ "Political Programme of the National United Front of Kampuchea," 3 May 1970, Beijing.
- ³¹² "Chinese Government Formally Recognizes Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia," *Peking Review*, 15 May 1970, p. 14.
- ³¹³ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1987 edition, p. 59.
- ³¹⁴ Wolfgang Bartke, *The Agreements of the People's Republic of China with Foreign Countries, 1949-1990*, Hamburg: Institute of Asian Affairs, 1992, p. 27.
- ³¹⁵ Justin Corfield, *Khmers Stand Up! A History of the Cambodian Government, 1970-1975*, Melbourne: Center for Southeast Asian Studies Monash University, Monash Papers on Southeast Asia, No. 32, 1994, p. 100.
- ³¹⁶ *77 Conversations*, p. 135.
- ³¹⁷ Ni Liyu, "Yuelun Zhou Enlai de waijiao zhengce sixiang," *Guoji wenti yanjiu* 2 (1989): 4.
- ³¹⁸ *Jianpuzhai renmin de weida shengli: relie qingzhu Jianpuzhai aiguo junmin jiefang Jin Bian* (Beijing: Renmin dabanshe, May 1975).
- ³¹⁹ Yang Mu, *Xihanuke guowang* (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 1996) pp. 105-106.
- ³²⁰ Yang Mu, *Xihanuke guowang*, p. 107.

- ³²¹ Zhang Qing, "Huiyi xin Zhongguo," p. 24.
- ³²² Today the Friendship Hotel is a relatively expensive hotel primarily for tourists. An American fast food franchise restaurant, TGI Friday's, now occupies a part of the building once used by the coalition.
- ³²³ Interview, Phnom Penh, August 2003.
- ³²⁴ Zhang Qing, "Huiyi xin Zhongguo," p. 25.
- ³²⁵ Kang Maozhao, *Waijiao huiyilu*, p. 193.
- ³²⁶ Sihanouk continues to make use of the Dongdan mansion on his long visits to China. The "Khmer Rouge home" was torn down in 1992 as part of an urban renewal effort.
- ³²⁷ Kang Maozhao, *Waijiao huiyilu*, p. 185.
- ³²⁸ Kang Maozhao, *Waijiao huiyilu*, p. 185.
- ³²⁹ "Chinese Diplomatic and Other Personnel Triumphantly Return From Cambodia," *Peking Review*, 29 May 1970, p. 37.
- ³³⁰ Kang Maozhao, *Waijiao huiyilu*, p. 186. According to Justin Corfield, the Cambodian diplomats, including Ambassador Nay, were not allowed to leave China until May 26, despite the fact that they had been trying to do so since April 30.
- ³³¹ Kang Maozhao, "Zai peiyang Xihanuke qingwang de rizili," *Bainianchao* 2 (1999): 31.
- ³³² Kang Maozhao, *Waijiao huiyilu*, pp. 188-189.
- ³³³ Corfield, p. 136.
- ³³⁴ Sihanouk and Burchett, p. 207.
- ³³⁵ "Cambodian Head of State Samdech Norodom Sihanouk Receives Diplomatic Envoys Accredited to China," *Peking Review*, 22 May 1970, p. 22.
- ³³⁶ Tan et al, p. 201. Englebert and Goscha suggest this move did not take place until July 1971.
- ³³⁷ "Press Communique of Secretariat of Central Committee of N.U.F.K.," *Peking Review*, 4 September 1970, p. 27. All three were radical intellectuals with degrees from France and were great survivors. Khieu Samphan today lives in retirement in northwestern Cambodia, while Keat Chhon currently serves as Minister of Economy and Finance. Thiounn served as the next coalition's ambassador to the United Nations and tried to remain in New York after the end of his posting but eventually moved to France. I thank Stephen Heder for this point.
- ³³⁸ Interview, Phnom Penh, August 2003. The CPK's existence was not announced until almost two and a half years after the Khmer Rouge took power and renamed the country Democratic Kampuchea.
- ³³⁹ "Cambodian Head of State Samdech Norodom Sihanouk Receives Diplomatic Envoys Accredited to China," *Peking Review*, 22 May 1970, p. 21.
- ³⁴⁰ "Cambodian Head of State Samdech Norodom Sihanouk Cables Premier Chou," *Peking Review*, 10 July 1970, p. 66.
- ³⁴¹ "The Cambodian People March On," *Peking Review*, 17 November 1972, pp. 9-10.
- ³⁴² Tan et al, p. 201.
- ³⁴³ "Third World's Growing Opposition to Superpower Hegemonism," *Peking Review*, 26 October 1973, p. 9.
- ³⁴⁴ Kang Maozhao, *Waijiao huiyilu*, p. 206.
- ³⁴⁵ "Cambodian Head of State Samdech Norodom Sihanouk Arrives in Peking," *Peking Review*, 12 June 1970, p. 13.
- ³⁴⁶ Bartke, p. 27.
- ³⁴⁷ "Agreement Between China and Cambodia," *Peking Review*, 25 February 1972, p. 5.
- ³⁴⁸ *Yuenan Laowo Jianpuzhai shouce*, p. 572.
- ³⁴⁹ "Comrade Lin Piao's Message of Greetings to Deputy Prime Minister Khieu Samphan," *Peking Review*, 25 June 1971, p. 2.
- ³⁵⁰ David P. Chandler, *Brother #1: A Political Biography of Pol Pot* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992) p. 98.
- ³⁵¹ "Cambodian Patriotic Officer Arrives in Peking," *Peking Review*, 2 May 1973, p. 10.
- ³⁵² "Speech by Premier Chou En-lai," *Peking Review*, 13 November 1970, pp. 7-9.
- ³⁵³ See, for example, "Cambodian People's War Against U.S. Aggression and for National Salvation Will Win," *Peking Review*, 31 March 1972, pp. 9-11, and "The Cambodian People Will Win," *People's Daily*, 23 March 1973.
- ³⁵⁴ "Friendship of Militant Unity Between Chinese and Cambodian Peoples," *Peking Review*, 25 December 1970, pp. 14-15.
- ³⁵⁵ Kang Maozhao, "Zai peiyang Xihanuke qingwang de rizili," p. 36. Although Chen Yi died of cancer, his demise was exacerbated by untreated injuries resulting from Red Guard beatings endured in late 1970 at the Foreign Affairs Institute.
- ³⁵⁶ Kang Maozhao, *Waijiao huiyilu*, p. 194.
- ³⁵⁷ Kang Maozhao, *Waijiao huiyilu*, p. 193.
- ³⁵⁸ "Statement of the Government of the People's Republic of China, October 10, 1970," *Peking Review*, 16 October 1970, p. 9.
- ³⁵⁹ Sihanouk and Burchett, p. 142.
- ³⁶⁰ Zhang Xizhen, *Xihanuke jiazhu*, p. 178.
- ³⁶¹ Corfield, p. 107.
- ³⁶² Melvin Gurtov, *China and Southeast Asia*, p. 141.
- ³⁶³ Kang Maozhao, *Waijiao huiyilu*, pp. 183-184.
- ³⁶⁴ Gurtov, p. 141.

- ³⁶⁵ Shawcross, pp. 124-126.
- ³⁶⁶ Interview, Beijing, April 2003.
- ³⁶⁷ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1987 edition, p. 59.
- ³⁶⁸ Qiang Zhai, p. 19.
- ³⁶⁹ *Guomen hongditan*, p. 758.
- ³⁷⁰ *Yuenan Laowo Jianpuzhai shouce*, p. 570.
- ³⁷¹ "Speech by Premier Chou En-lai," *Peking Review*, 10 July 1970, pp. 7-9.
- ³⁷² "Hail the New Victory of the Cambodian Patriotic Armed Forces and People," *People's Daily* (Beijing), 24 January 1971.
- ³⁷³ "Kissinger to Visit China," *Xinhua* (Beijing), 5 October 1971.
- ³⁷⁴ Upon his return, Sihanouk demanded to be taken to all of the sites Nixon saw, stay at the same hotels, and be served better food. See Kang Maozhao, *Waijiao huiyilu*, p. 209.
- ³⁷⁵ "Memorandum of Conversation, February 24, 1972, The Great Hall of the People, Peking," The White House.
- ³⁷⁶ Shawcross, p. 286.
- ³⁷⁷ "Keng Piao's Report on the Situation of the Indochinese Peninsula," *Issues & Studies* (January 1981): 81. Hereafter this document will be referred to as "Geng Biao."
- ³⁷⁸ Kang Maozhao, *Waijiao huiyilu*, p. 208.
- ³⁷⁹ "Warm Congratulations on the Great Success of Samdech Sihanouk's Inspection Tour of the Liberated Zone of Cambodia," *People's Daily*, 11 April 1973. See also David P. Chandler, *The Tragedy of Cambodian History*.
- ³⁸⁰ Nayan Chanda, *Brother Enemy: The War After the War: A History of Indochina Since the Fall of Saigon* (New York: Collier Books, 1986) p. 75.
- ³⁸¹ Yang Mu, *Xihanuke guowang*, p. 139.
- ³⁸² Interview, Beijing, December 2002.
- ³⁸³ "Statement by Khieu Samphan, You Yuon, and Hu Nim," *Peking Review*, 22 May 1970, p. 16.
- ³⁸⁴ Tan et al, p. 202.
- ³⁸⁵ From February-March 1971, Sihanouk and his entourage went on a lengthy journey throughout China, while from May-July 1973, Sihanouk conducted diplomatic visits to Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Africa.
- ³⁸⁶ Kuo-kang Shao, *Zhou Enlai and the Foundations of Chinese Foreign Policy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996) p. 149.
- ³⁸⁷ An Jianshe, ed., *Zhou Enlai de zuihou suiye, 1966-1976* (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1995) p. 181.
- ³⁸⁸ *Zhou Enlai de zuihou suiye, 1966-1976*, p. 304.
- ³⁸⁹ *Zhou Enlai de zuihou suiye, 1966-1976*, p. 292.
- ³⁹⁰ Barnouin, Barbara and Yu Changgen, *Chinese Foreign Policy During the Cultural Revolution* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1988) pp. 36-37.
- ³⁹¹ Kang Maozhao, *Waijiao huiyilu*, p. 226.
- ³⁹² "A Year of Brilliant Victories," *Peking Review*, 9 November 1973, p. 22.
- ³⁹³ Barnouin and Yu, p. 39.
- ³⁹⁴ Englebert and Goscha, pp. 109-110.
- ³⁹⁵ Qiang Zhai, p. 23.
- ³⁹⁶ Interview, Beijing, February 2003.
- ³⁹⁷ Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 40.
- ³⁹⁸ I thank Steve Heder for this point.
- ³⁹⁹ Geng Biao, p. 81.
- ⁴⁰⁰ *77 Conversations*, p. 145.
- ⁴⁰¹ Ma Faxiang, "Zhou Zonglin yunchou yuan Yue saoxue," *Junshi lishi* 5 (1989): 36.
- ⁴⁰² *Yinduzhinei zhishi de yinian 1972-1973*, p. 165.
- ⁴⁰³ *Yuenan Laowo Jianpuzhai shouce*, p. 160.
- ⁴⁰⁴ *Yuenan Laowo Jianpuzhai shouce*, p. 571.
- ⁴⁰⁵ Yunnansheng dongnanya yanjiuhui, *Yuenan Jianpuzhai wenti taolunhui wenji* (Kunming: Yunnansheng dongnanya yanjiusuo, 1986) p. 92.
- ⁴⁰⁶ Kang Maozhao, *Waijiao huiyilu*, p. 191.
- ⁴⁰⁷ *77 Conversations*, p. 142.
- ⁴⁰⁸ "Inward Cablegram," Department of Foreign Affairs, Australian Embassy, Beijing, 22 October 1973.
- ⁴⁰⁹ "Inward Cablegram," Department of Foreign Affairs, Australian Embassy Beijing, 6 April 1974.
- ⁴¹⁰ Qiang Zhai, "China and the Cambodian Conflict, 1970-1975," p. 25.
- ⁴¹¹ Kang Maozhao, *Waijiao huiyilu*, pp. 219-221.
- ⁴¹² "A Warm Welcome to Comrades-in-Arms from the Heroic Land of Cambodia," *Renmin Ribao*, 1 April 1974.
- ⁴¹³ Kang Maozhao, *Waijiao huiyilu*, p. 219.

- ⁴¹⁴ Tan et al, p. 201.
- ⁴¹⁵ Interview, Phnom Penh, August 2003.
- ⁴¹⁶ Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 79.
- ⁴¹⁷ Interview, Phnom Penh, August 2003.
- ⁴¹⁸ “Joint Communique,” *Peking Review*, 31 April 1974, pp. 10-12.
- ⁴¹⁹ “Joint Communique,” *Peking Review*, 31 April 1974, pp. 10-12. This phrase dates from imperial times and was typically used to describe chaos in the world.
- ⁴²⁰ “Premier Chou’s Speech,” *Peking Review*, 5 May 1974, p. 9.
- ⁴²¹ “China and Cambodia,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Embassy of New Zealand, Beijing, 10 April 1974.
- ⁴²² “Head of Delegation Khieu Samphan’s Speech,” *Peking Review*, 5 May 1974, p. 10.
- ⁴²³ Bartke, p. 27.
- ⁴²⁴ Interview, Phnom Penh, August 2003.
- ⁴²⁵ Shawcross, p. 336.
- ⁴²⁶ “Cambodian Economic and Financial Delegation Visits China,” *Peking Review*, 8 November 1975, pp. 3-4.
- ⁴²⁷ “Inward Cablegram,” Embassy of Australia, Beijing, citing a *Xinhua* report of 10 November 1974.
- ⁴²⁸ Zhang Qing, “Huiyi,” p. 25.
- ⁴²⁹ Kang Maozhao, *Waijiao huiyilu*, p. 218.
- ⁴³⁰ Kang Maozhao, *Waijiao huiyilu*, p. 221.
- ⁴³¹ Interview, Beijing, October 2002.
- ⁴³² Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 69.
- ⁴³³ “Telegram: Secret,” Embassy of the United States of America, Beijing, Department of State, 1 April 1974.
- ⁴³⁴ *Zhou Enlai de zuhou suiyue, 1966-1976*, p. 99.
- ⁴³⁵ Kang Maozhao, *Waijiao huiyilu*, p. 226. Zhou did continue to receive officials while in the hospital, including a visit from Ieng Sary on November 24, 1970.
- ⁴³⁶ “Memorandum of Conversation between Vice Foreign Minister Ch’iao Kuan-hua and Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger, October 2, 1974,” Washington, Department of State. See also “Cambodia: Briefing paper for the Secretary of State’s November 25-30, 1974 visit to Beijing,” Washington, Department of State.
- ⁴³⁷ I borrow this formulation from Jeffrey Race’s *War Comes to Long An: Revolutionary Conflict in a Vietnamese Province* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973).
- ⁴³⁸ “Special Adviser Ieng Sary in Peking,” *Peking Review*, 7 March 1975, pp. 3-4.
- ⁴³⁹ “Cambodian People’s Triumphant Advance is Irresistible,” *People’s Daily* (Beijing), 9 March 1975.
- ⁴⁴⁰ “Invincible Might of People’s War,” *Xinhua* (Beijing), 4 April 1975.
- ⁴⁴¹ “Fighting Cambodia: Reports of the Chinese Journalists Delegation to Cambodia” (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1954) pp. 59-60.
- ⁴⁴² Interview, Phnom Penh, August 2003.
- ⁴⁴³ Interview, Phnom Penh, August 2003.
- ⁴⁴⁴ Interview, Phnom Penh, August 2003.
- ⁴⁴⁵ Corfield, p. 220.
- ⁴⁴⁶ Tan et al, pp. 209-210.
- ⁴⁴⁷ Corfield, p. 222.
- ⁴⁴⁸ Interview, Beijing, November 2002.
- ⁴⁴⁹ “Fighting Cambodia: Reports of the Chinese Journalists Delegation to Cambodia,” pp. 59-60.
- ⁴⁵⁰ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1987 edition, p. 59.
- ⁴⁵¹ “A Great Historic Victory,” *People’s Daily* (Beijing), 18 April 1975.
- ⁴⁵² “A Great Historic Victory,” *China Pictorial*, July 1975, p. 5.
- ⁴⁵³ *Yuenan Laowo Jianpuzhai shouce*, p. 221.
- ⁴⁵⁴ Personal communication, Professor Stephen Heder, School of Oriental and African Studies, October 2003.
- ⁴⁵⁵ Judith Banister and E. Paige Johnson, “After the Nightmare: The Population of Cambodia,” in *Genocide and Democracy in Cambodia* (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1993) p. 72.
- ⁴⁵⁶ “Chinese Leaders Congratulate Samdech Sihanouk,” *Peking Review*, 25 April 1975, p. 21.
- ⁴⁵⁷ “Message of Warm Congratulations on Complete Liberation of Phnom Penh,” *Peking Review*, 25 April 1975, p. 4.
- ⁴⁵⁸ *Jianpuzhai renmin de weida shengli: Relie qingzhu Jianpuzhai aiguo junmin jiefang Jin Bian*, p. 3.
- ⁴⁵⁹ Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 12.
- ⁴⁶⁰ “Press Communique of Cambodian Special National Congress,” *Peking Review*, 2 May 1975, p. 19.
- ⁴⁶¹ “Press Communique of Cambodian Special National Congress,” *Peking Review*, 2 May 1975, p. 19.
- ⁴⁶² Interview, Beijing, February 2003.
- ⁴⁶³ Interview, Beijing, February 2003.
- ⁴⁶⁴ Shen Jian and Shen Li, *Wuxing hongqixia de dashimen* (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 1993) p. 358.

- ⁴⁶⁵ Interview, Beijing, February 2003.
- ⁴⁶⁶ Interview, Beijing, March 2003.
- ⁴⁶⁷ Interview, Kompong Cham, Cambodia, June 2003.
- ⁴⁶⁸ Interview, Phnom Penh, August 2003.
- ⁴⁶⁹ Yang Mu, *Xihanuke guowang*, p. 181.
- ⁴⁷⁰ “Visit to the Phnom Penh Front,” *Peking Review*, 2 May 1975, pp. 20-21.
- ⁴⁷¹ “Self-Reliance Works Miracles,” *Peking Review*, 23 May 1975, pp. 11-13.
- ⁴⁷² “New Look in Cambodian Rural Areas,” *Peking Review*, 6 June 1975, p.19.
- ⁴⁷³ Chandler, *Brother Number One*, p. 110.
- ⁴⁷⁴ “Confession of Chheum Sam-aok alias Vang alias Seuang alias 010,” (Phnom Penh: Documentation Center of Cambodia).
- ⁴⁷⁵ *77 Conversations*, p. 156.
- ⁴⁷⁶ Geng Biao, p. 82.
- ⁴⁷⁷ “Deputy Prime Ministers Khieu Samphan and Ieng Sary Visit China,” *Peking Review*, 22 August 1975, pp. 3-4.
- ⁴⁷⁸ Had Khieu been listening to his starving people’s wishes, he would likely not have offered on this visit to sell Cambodian rice to China. I thank Steve Heder for this point.
- ⁴⁷⁹ Zhang Qing, “Huiyi xin Zhongguo,” p. 26.
- ⁴⁸⁰ Fan Xiaojun, “1975-1978 nianjian Jianpuzhai gongchandang de lilun yu zhengce zhi deshi,” *Shehuizhuyi yanjiu* 2 (1991): 35.
- ⁴⁸¹ Yang Mu, *Xihanuke guowang*, pp. 188-189.
- ⁴⁸² Qiang Zhai, p. 27.
- ⁴⁸³ Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 43.
- ⁴⁸⁴ Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 17.
- ⁴⁸⁵ Ben Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime: Race, Power, and Genocide in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, 1975-79* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996) pp. 130-132.
- ⁴⁸⁶ Roeland Burger, *The Eyes of the Pineapple: Revolutionary Intellectuals and Terror in Democratic Kampuchea* (Fort Lauderdale, FL: Breitenback Publishers, 1990) p. 121.
- ⁴⁸⁷ “Peking Rally Celebrations Liberation of Phnom Penh,” *Peking Review*, 25 April 1975, p. 19.
- ⁴⁸⁸ Qiang Zhai, “China and the Cambodian Conflict, 1970-1975,” p. 27.
- ⁴⁸⁹ “Warm Farewell to Distinguished Cambodian Guests Returning Home,” *Peking Review*, 12 September 1975, pp. 3-4.
- ⁴⁹⁰ Shawcross, p. 378.
- ⁴⁹¹ See Oriana Fallaci, *Interview With History* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1977).
- ⁴⁹² Zhang Xizhen, *Xihanuke jiazhu*, p. 378.
- ⁴⁹³ George McArthur, “Sihanouk Silence Proves Figurehead Role,” *Los Angeles Times*, 1 February 1976.
- ⁴⁹⁴ Tan et al, p. 220.
- ⁴⁹⁵ Tan et al, p. 220.
- ⁴⁹⁶ Liu Xiaohong, *Chinese Ambassadors: The Rise of Diplomatic Professionalism Since 1949* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2001) p. 137.
- ⁴⁹⁷ *77 Conversations*, p. 156.
- ⁴⁹⁸ Englebert and Goscha, p. 121.
- ⁴⁹⁹ *Yuenan Jianpuzhai wenti taolunhui wenji*, p. 284.
- ⁵⁰⁰ Tan et al, p. 219.
- ⁵⁰¹ Geng Biao, p. 82.
- ⁵⁰² Interview, Beijing, January 2003.
- ⁵⁰³ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1987 edition, p. 59.
- ⁵⁰⁴ Tan et al, p. 218.
- ⁵⁰⁵ For some of the best works on this subject, see: Elizabeth Becker, *When the War Was Over: Cambodia and the Khmer Rouge Revolution*; François Bizot, *The Gate*; Roeland Burger, *The Eyes of the Pineapple: Revolutionary Intellectuals and Terror in Democratic Kampuchea*; David Chandler, *A History of Cambodia, Brother Number One: A Political Biography of Pol Pot, The Tragedy of Cambodian History, Voices from S-21: Terror and History in Pol Pot’s Secret Prison*, and “Pol Pot Plans the Future: Confidential Leadership Documents From Democratic Kampuchea, 1976-1977,”; Stephen Heder, “Pol Pot and Khieu Samphan,” “Seven Candidates for Prosecution: Accountability for Crimes of the Khmer Rouge,” and “Reassessing the Role of Senior Leaders and Local Officials in Democratic Kampuchea Crimes”; Vann Nath, *A Cambodian Prison Portrait: One Year in the Khmer Rouge’s S-21*; Laurence Picq, *Beyond the Horizon: Five Years with the Khmer Rouge*; and Loung Ung, *First, They Killed My Father: A Daughter of Cambodia Remembers*.
- ⁵⁰⁶ Interview, Phnom Penh, August 2003.
- ⁵⁰⁷ Chanda, p. 90.
- ⁵⁰⁸ Interview, Phnom Penh, July 2000.

- ⁵⁰⁹ David P. Chandler, *Voices from S-21: Terror and History in Pol Pot's Secret Prison* (St. Leonard's, New South Wales: Allen and Unwin, 2000) pp. 124-127.
- ⁵¹⁰ Personal communication, Professor Stephen Heder, School of Oriental and African Studies, November 2003.
- ⁵¹¹ Phelim Kyne, "China enraged by alleged link to S-21," *Phnom Penh Post*, 24 November-7 December 2000.
- ⁵¹² Liao Xiaokang, "Jianpuzhai huaqiao huaren zhengce de fazhan bianhua," *Dongnanya yanjiu* 6 (1996): 40.
- ⁵¹³ For a discussion of the DK's treatment of ethnic Chinese and other minorities, see Stephen Heder, "Reassessing the role of senior leaders and local officials in Democratic Kampuchea's crimes: Cambodian accountability in comparative perspective." Based on "Historical justice in international perspective: How societies are trying to right the wrongs of the past," March 2003, German Historical Institute and Woodrow Wilson International Center, Washington, DC.
- ⁵¹⁴ Kiernan, p. 431.
- ⁵¹⁵ Interview, Beijing, February 2003.
- ⁵¹⁶ Interview, Beijing, December 2002.
- ⁵¹⁷ Interview, Beijing, March 2003.
- ⁵¹⁸ Kiernan, p. 132.
- ⁵¹⁹ Interview, Beijing, February 2003.
- ⁵²⁰ One booklet, "Democratic Kampuchea Is Moving Forward," was published in Beijing in 1977 for the DK's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Most of the photographs in the booklet were taken by Chinese journalists and had previously been printed in other Chinese publications.
- ⁵²¹ Tan et al, p. 218. Bartke (1989) notes official aid agreements between China and the DK in August 1975 and in March, August, and December 1976. No details are given.
- ⁵²² "Chinese Economic and Trade Delegation Visits Cambodia," *Peking Review*, 19 March 1976, p. 5.
- ⁵²³ "Greeting First Anniversary of Democratic Kampuchea's Independence," Beijing: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 16 April 1976.
- ⁵²⁴ Chandler, *Brother Number One*, p. 122.
- ⁵²⁵ Chandler, *Voices from S-21*, p. 56.
- ⁵²⁶ "Chinese Economic and Trade Delegation Visits Cambodia," *Peking Review*, 19 March 1976, p. 5.
- ⁵²⁷ Tan et al, p. 210.
- ⁵²⁸ Georges Biannic, "Sihanouk Silent on Mao's Death," *Agence France Presse* (Beijing), 22 September 1976. See also Edith Lennart, "Power behind the throne," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 28 May 1976.
- ⁵²⁹ Tan et al, p. 218.
- ⁵³⁰ "A Visit to Democratic Kampuchea," *China Pictorial*, February-March 1977, pp. 45-46.
- ⁵³¹ John Pilger and Anthony Barnett, *Aftermath: The Struggle of Cambodia and Vietnam* (Manchester: Manchester Free Press, 1982) p. 21.
- ⁵³² Bartke, p. 27.
- ⁵³³ Chandler, *Brother Number One*, pp. 140-141.
- ⁵³⁴ Kiernan, p. 378.
- ⁵³⁵ Zhuo Liming, "Lengzhanhou Laowo de duihua zhengce," *Dangdai yatai* 9 (2000) p. 19.
- ⁵³⁶ "Why Vietnamese Authorities Provoked Viet am-Kampuchea Border Conflict," *Peking Review*, 21 July 1978, p. 6.
- ⁵³⁷ Interviews, Beijing, November 2002 and February 2003.
- ⁵³⁸ Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 195.
- ⁵³⁹ Interview, Beijing, February 2003.
- ⁵⁴⁰ Chandler, *Brother Number One*, p. 144.
- ⁵⁴¹ "Kampuchean Party and Government Delegation Visits China," *Peking Review*, 7 October 1977, p. 9. The Cambodians also met with other senior Chinese officials, including Chi Denggui, Wu De, Geng Biao, Fang Yi, Chen Muhua, Wang Dongxing, and Ye Jianying.
- ⁵⁴² "Chairman Hua Kuo-feng's Speech," *Peking Review*, 7 October 1977, pp. 20-21.
- ⁵⁴³ "Secretary Pol Pot's Speech," *Peking Review*, 7 October 1977, pp. 24-29.
- ⁵⁴⁴ "Kampuchean Party and Government Delegation Visits China," *Peking Review*, 7 October 1977, pp. 9-11.
- ⁵⁴⁵ *77 Conversations*, pp. 157-158.
- ⁵⁴⁶ "Kampuchean Party and Government Delegation Visits China," *Peking Review*, 7 October 1977, pp. 9-11.
- ⁵⁴⁷ Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 229.
- ⁵⁴⁸ Chandler, *Brother Number One*, p. 143.
- ⁵⁴⁹ "17th Anniversary of Founding of Communist Party of Kampuchea Warmly Greeted," *Peking Review*, 7 October 1977, p. 12.
- ⁵⁵⁰ Interview, Phnom Penh, June 2000.
- ⁵⁵¹ "Kampuchean Party and Government Delegation Visits China," *Peking Review*, 7 October 1977, pp. 9-11.
- ⁵⁵² Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 209.
- ⁵⁵³ "Chinese people dedicate themselves to Four Modernizations," *Xinhua* (Beijing), 24 August 1977.

- ⁵⁵⁴ Interview, Beijing, February 2003.
- ⁵⁵⁵ Burger, p. 130.
- ⁵⁵⁶ Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 203.
- ⁵⁵⁷ Interviews, Beijing, February and March 2003.
- ⁵⁵⁸ Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 79.
- ⁵⁵⁹ The phrase “to set up a new kitchen” was one of Zhou’s slogans from the 1940s. It applied quite specifically to reconstructing the foreign policy establishment to remove all traces of Guomindang rule.
- ⁵⁶⁰ Ying Ming, “Hongse gaomian de xingshau chenfu,” in *Dongdang de shijie: Zhongguo waijiaoguan yanzhong de zhijie redian* (Shenyang: Ninghai chubanshe, 2000) p. 111.
- ⁵⁶¹ Interview, Beijing, April 2003.
- ⁵⁶² Interview, Nanning, March 2003.
- ⁵⁶³ Nayan Chanda, “Foreign Relations: Cambodia and China Cool,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 30 September 1977, p. 26.
- ⁵⁶⁴ Interview, Beijing, March 2003.
- ⁵⁶⁵ Interview, Beijing, February 2003.
- ⁵⁶⁶ Interviews, Beijing, October 2002-April 2003.
- ⁵⁶⁷ Geng Biao, p. 93.
- ⁵⁶⁸ Geng Biao, p. 82.
- ⁵⁶⁹ Bartke, p. 27.
- ⁵⁷⁰ Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 201.
- ⁵⁷¹ Chandler, *Brother Number One*, p. 149.
- ⁵⁷² Geng Biao, p. 85.
- ⁵⁷³ *Yuenan Jianpuzhai wenti taolunhui wenji*, p. 284.
- ⁵⁷⁴ Laurence Picq, *Beyond the Horizon: Five Years with the Khmer Rouge* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1989) p. 16.
- ⁵⁷⁵ Picq, p. 46.
- ⁵⁷⁶ Picq, p. 101.
- ⁵⁷⁷ Picq, p. 125.
- ⁵⁷⁸ “Vice Chairman Teng Ying-chao Visits Democratic Kampuchea,” *China Pictorial*, April 1978, p. 1.
- ⁵⁷⁹ Zhang Xizhen, *Xihanuke jiazu*, p. 242.
- ⁵⁸⁰ Chanda, p. 210.
- ⁵⁸¹ “To Normalize Relations,” *Peking Review*, 17 February 1978, p. 27.
- ⁵⁸² Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 102.
- ⁵⁸³ Chandler, *Brother Number One*, p. 152.
- ⁵⁸⁴ Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 212.
- ⁵⁸⁵ Geng Biao, p. 83.
- ⁵⁸⁶ Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 334.
- ⁵⁸⁷ Kimmo Kiljunen, ed., *Kampuchea: Decade of the Genocide, Report of a Finnish Inquiry Commission* (London: Zed Books, 1984) pp. 22-23.
- ⁵⁸⁸ “Statement by the Government of Democratic Kampuchea,” *Peking Review*, 13 January 1978, p. 23.
- ⁵⁸⁹ Shawcross, p. 381.
- ⁵⁹⁰ Hoang Nguyen, *The Vietnam-Kampuchea Conflict (A Historical Record)* (Hanoi: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1979) p.14.
- ⁵⁹¹ Hoang Nguyen, p. 31.
- ⁵⁹² Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 212.
- ⁵⁹³ John Pilger and Anthony Barnett, p. 19.
- ⁵⁹⁴ “Why Vietnamese Authorities Provoked Viet Nam-Kampuchea Border Conflict” and “Time Will Tell True from False,” *Peking Review*, 21 July 1978. As will be discussed in chapter six, China employed similar tactics to demonstrate its anger at Albania.
- ⁵⁹⁵ Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 93.
- ⁵⁹⁶ Interview, Beijing, November 2002.
- ⁵⁹⁷ *Yuenan Laowo Jianpuzhai shouce*, p. 577.
- ⁵⁹⁸ “Viet Nam’s Attempted Coup Foiled,” *Peking Review*, 7 July 1978.
- ⁵⁹⁹ “Time Will Tell the True From the False,” *People’s Daily* (Beijing), 22 July 1978.
- ⁶⁰⁰ Tan et al, p. 218.
- ⁶⁰¹ Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, pp. 261-262.
- ⁶⁰² Nayan Chanda, “Cambodia’s Cry for Help,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 11 August 1978, p. 10.
- ⁶⁰³ Tan et al, p. 218.
- ⁶⁰⁴ Kiernan, p. 378.

- ⁶⁰⁵ Xie Yibian, ed., *Zhongguo waijiao shi, 1979-1994* (Zhengzhou: Henan renmin chubanshe, 1995) pp. 63-64.
- ⁶⁰⁶ Huang Hua, "The International Situation and China's Foreign Policies," *Peking Review*, 6 October 1978, pp. 12-17.
- ⁶⁰⁷ "Chinese Foreign Ministry Protest," *Peking Review*, 3 November 1978, p. 26. Womack notes that, "Border clashes rose from a total of 1,625 reported by both sides in 1977 to 2,175 reported by Vietnam and 1,108 reported by China in 1978." *China and Vietnam: The Politics of Asymmetry*, ms., Ch. 9, p.12.
- ⁶⁰⁸ Jiang Peizhu, "Mulin youhao waijiao de lichengbei: ji 1978 Deng Xiaoping fuzongli chufang zhoubian linguo," in *Xin Zhongguo waijiao fengyun*, 5th ed. (Beijing: Shijie zhishi chubanshe, 1999) p. 86.
- ⁶⁰⁹ Tan et al, p. 218.
- ⁶¹⁰ Picq, p. 137. According to Picq, the November delegation was also accompanied by a PLA acrobatic troupe.
- ⁶¹¹ Evan Gottesman, *Cambodia After the Khmer Rouge* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003) p. 7.
- ⁶¹² "China Supports Kampuchean Struggle Against Aggression," *Peking Review*, 15 December 1978, p. 3.
- ⁶¹³ Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 323.
- ⁶¹⁴ "Statement by Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesman," Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Beijing, 16 December 1978.
- ⁶¹⁵ Zhonggong zhongyang dangshi yanjiushi, *Zhongguo gongchandang xinshiqi lishi dashiji* (Beijing: Zhonggong danshi chubanshe, 2002) pp. 4-5. Because the Gang of Four had been considered false leftists, they were therefore labeled as rightists.
- ⁶¹⁶ Sa Benwang, "Guanyu 'zhanlue' he 'junshi zhanlue' neihan de xianjian," *Heping yu fazhan* 2 (1999): 53.
- ⁶¹⁷ Li Jinzhi, ed., *Dangdai Zhongguo waijiao gailun* (Beijing: Zhongguo renmindaxue chubanshe, 1992) pp. 146-147.
- ⁶¹⁸ *Zhongguo gongchandang xinshiqi lishi dashiji*, p. 5.
- ⁶¹⁹ For one of the best descriptions of these chaotic few weeks, see Gottesman, pp. 37-44.
- ⁶²⁰ "Cong Jinbian dao Doukoushan," in *Guoji fengyunzhong de Zhongguo waijiaoguan* (Beijing: Shijie zhishi chubanshe, 1992) pp. 87-93.
- ⁶²¹ *Yuenan Laowo Jianpuzhai shouce*, p. 579.
- ⁶²² Chandler, *Brother Number One*, p. 164.
- ⁶²³ Peter H. Maguire, "War of Genocide," *Searching for the Truth: A Magazine of the Documentation Center of Cambodia* 38 (February 2003).
- ⁶²⁴ Zhang Xizhen, *Xihanuke jiazhu*, pp. 263-265.
- ⁶²⁵ Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 260.
- ⁶²⁶ Nayan Chanda, "Cambodia's Cry for Help," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 11 August 1978, p. 10.
- ⁶²⁷ Interview, Nanning, March 2003.
- ⁶²⁸ Chandler, *Brother Number One*, p. 161.
- ⁶²⁹ Geng Biao, p. 85.
- ⁶³⁰ Geng Biao, pp. 86-87.
- ⁶³¹ Nayan Chanda, "Cambodia: Peking Pulls Back: China has several options for helping Cambodia, but may have to let the regime fall," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 8 September 1978, p. 11.
- ⁶³² Zhongguo zhongyang dangjiao dangshi jiaoyan shi ziliao zupian xie, *Zhongguo gongchandang lici zhongyao huiyiji (xia)* (Shanghai: Renmin dabanshe, 1983) p. 286.
- ⁶³³ Zhonggong zhongyang dangshi yanjiushi, *Zhongguo gongchandang xinshiqi lishi dashiji* (Beijing: Zhonggong danshi chubanshe, 2002) p. 46.
- ⁶³⁴ Xia Zhenxing, "Nanbei jingji guanxi he nanbei tanpan," *Guoji wenti yanjiu* 2 (1981): 15-20.
- ⁶³⁵ Most Chinese sources continue to refer to the Khmer Rouge as Democratic Kampuchea throughout the 1980s, partly as a means of demonstrating ongoing recognition of that regime. Most western sources covering this time period reverted to referring to them as the Khmer Rouge. I use the two interchangeably.
- ⁶³⁶ Yao Jishen, ed., *1979 de gushi* (Beijing: Zhongguo shaonian erliang chubanshe, 2001) p. 5.
- ⁶³⁷ Du Liangxin and Zhao Heman, eds., *Yuenan Laowo Jianpuzhai shouce* (Beijing: Shijie chubanshe, 1988) p. 157.
- ⁶³⁸ Gottesman, p. 13.
- ⁶³⁹ Hoang Nguyen, *The Vietnam-Kampuchea Conflict (A Historical Record)* (Hanoi: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1979) p. 34.
- ⁶⁴⁰ *Undeclared War Against the People's Republic of Kampuchea* (Phnom Penh: Ministry of Foreign Affairs Press Department, 1985) p. 10.
- ⁶⁴¹ Geng Biao, "Keng Piao's Report on the Situation of the Indochinese Peninsula," *Issues & Studies*, January 1981, p. 79. (Subsequently referred to as "Geng Biao.")
- ⁶⁴² Geng Biao, pp. 78-79.
- ⁶⁴³ Zhang Xizhen, *Xihanuke jiazhu* (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenpian chubanshe, 1996) p. 265.
- ⁶⁴⁴ "Some evidence of the plots hatched by the Beijing expansionists and hegemonists against the Cambodian people" (Phnom Penh: Ministry of Foreign Affairs Press Department, September 1982).
- ⁶⁴⁵ Nayan Chanda, *Brother Enemy: The War After the War: A History of Indochina since the Fall of Saigon* (New York: Collier Books, 1986) p. 348. "Some evidence of the plots" also contains copies of the correspondence between Vice

Premier Chen Muhua and Ieng Sary regarding aid. See pp. 29-31.

⁶⁴⁶ Peter H. Maguire, "War of Genocide," *Searching for the Truth – A Magazine of the Documentation Center of Cambodia* 38 (February 2003).

⁶⁴⁷ "Chinese Government Statement, January 14, 1979," *Peking Review*, 19 January 1979, p. 8.

⁶⁴⁸ Geng was one of Zhou's most trusted allies at the MFA, best evidenced by his early 1969 posting as Ambassador to Albania.

⁶⁴⁹ Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 349. It is perhaps ironic that this meeting took place at the military base used by thousands of American troops during the Vietnam War.

⁶⁵⁰ David Chandler, *Brother Number One: A Political Biography of Pol Pot* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992) p. 167.

⁶⁵¹ Geng Biao, pp. 90-91.

⁶⁵² Geng Biao, p. 85.

⁶⁵³ Geng Biao, pp. 88-91. Intriguingly, Geng also noted the presence of Guomindang fighters in Thailand, Burma, and Laos, and suggested that, "If this force can be transformed to help us wage guerrilla warfare against Vietnam, the situation will be better than what the Thai Communists can achieve." Clearly China's own united front spirit had yet to fade.

⁶⁵⁴ Geng Biao, pp. 92-94.

⁶⁵⁵ "Cong Jinbian dao Doukoushan," in *Guoji fengyunzhong de zhongguo waijiao guan* (Beijing: Shijie zhishi chubanshe, 1992) pp. 92-93. An excellent translation of this article by Paul Marks was published under the title, "The Collapse of the Pol Pot Regime, January-April 1979," in *Critical Asian Studies* 34, no. 4 (2002), though its introduction, written by Ben Kiernan, contains several pieces of misinformation. The book, a collection of essays by diplomats about their tenure in particularly difficult circumstances, was labeled "neibu" (classified), but a copy has been available in the open stacks at the Beijing University Library since 1993.

⁶⁵⁶ The others were Embassy staff members Zheng Jianfeng, Wang Yongyuan, Ma Hengyue, and Qi Ling'en, physician Pan Jiaqin, and journalist Zuo Yi.

⁶⁵⁷ "Cong Jinbian dao Doukoushan," p. 95.

⁶⁵⁸ "Cong Jinbian dao Doukoushan," pp. 96-112.

⁶⁵⁹ Geng Biao, p. 94.

⁶⁶⁰ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1987 edition, p. 60. An original copy of this statement was not available; consequently, I refer to the *Diplomatic Yearbook* that first covered 1975-1985 and included the statement.

⁶⁶¹ Maguire, "War of Genocide."

⁶⁶² Zhang Xizhen, *Xihanuke jiazhu*, p. 269.

⁶⁶³ Yang Mu, *Report from the Jungle of Kampuchea* (Beijing: Beijing Review Press, 1987) p. 243.

⁶⁶⁴ *Yuenan Laowo Jianpuzhai shouce*, p. 578.

⁶⁶⁵ Maguire, "War of Genocide."

⁶⁶⁶ "Chinese Government Statement, January 14, 1979," *Peking Review*, 19 January 1979, p. 8.

⁶⁶⁷ Tan Shi et al, *Jianpuzhai* (Nanning: Guangxi renmin chubanshe, 1985) p. 231.

⁶⁶⁸ Zu Lie, "SuYue hehuo de qin Jian zhanzheng," *Shijie zhishi*, 16 January 1979, pp. 1-3.

⁶⁶⁹ "Aggressors' Lame Argument," *Peking Review*, 16 April 1979, p. 25.

⁶⁷⁰ Zhu Lie, "YueSu qinlue bishi, Jianpuzhai kangzhen bisheng," *Shijie zhishi*, 1 February 1979, p. 2.

⁶⁷¹ Zu Lie, "SuYue hehuo de qin Jian zhanzheng," pp. 1-3.

⁶⁷² "Dongnanya guojia lianmeng, shi xujia de xianxiang, haishi 'shidai de long'er'?", *Dongnanya yanjiu ziliao* 2 (1979): 3-4.

⁶⁷³ Ding Yuanda, "Dongmeng junshi lianhe diyu yuenan de qushi," *Dongnanya yanjiu ziliao* 1 (1980): 1-4.

⁶⁷⁴ Hoang Nguyen, p. 34.

⁶⁷⁵ Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 352.

⁶⁷⁶ *Zhongguo gongchandang xinshiqi lishi dashijie*, p. 12. See also *Dangdai Zhongguo waijiao lishi (1949-2001)*, pp. 221-227.

⁶⁷⁷ Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 356.

⁶⁷⁸ *Yuenan Laowo Jianpuzhai shouce*, p. 578.

⁶⁷⁹ Brantly Womack, *China and Vietnam: The Politics of Asymmetry*, ms., May 2003, Chapter Nine, p. 13.

⁶⁸⁰ *Yuenan Laowo Jianpuzhai shouce*, p. 578.

⁶⁸¹ Womack, p. 13.

⁶⁸² *Yuenan Laowo Jianpuzhai shouce*, p. 578.

⁶⁸³ "Deng Xiaoping, "An important principle for handling relations between fraternal parties," Talk to the CCCPC, 31 May 1980, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/dengxp/vol2/text/b1450.html>.

⁶⁸⁴ Interview, Beijing, January 2003.

⁶⁸⁵ Interview, Beijing, March 2003.

⁶⁸⁶ Ruan Ming, *Deng Xiaoping: Chronicle of an Empire* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992) p. 55.

⁶⁸⁷ Interview, Beijing, March 2003.

⁶⁸⁸ Zhuo Liming, "Lengzhanhou Laowo de duihua zhengce," *Dangdai yatai* 9 (2000): 19.

- ⁶⁸⁹ Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 379.
- ⁶⁹⁰ Yunnansheng dongnanya yanjiuhui, *Yuenan Jianpuzhai wenti taolunhui wenji* (Kunming: Yunnansheng dongnanya yanjiusuo, 1986) pp. 11-12.
- ⁶⁹¹ “Khieu Samphan on Kampuchea’s Seat in U.N. [sic],” *Peking Review*, 22 September 1980, p. 9.
- ⁶⁹² “Kampuchea: China’s Strategic Interests,” US Department of State Memo, Beijing, 31 December 1980.
- ⁶⁹³ Zhang Xizhen, *Xihanuke jiazhu*, p. 272.
- ⁶⁹⁴ Laurence Picq, *Beyond the Horizon: Five Years with the Khmer Rouge* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1989) p. 215.
- ⁶⁹⁵ Zhang Xizhen, ed., *Dangdai dongnanya zhengzhi* (Nanning: Guangxi renmin chubanshe, 1994) p. 87.
- ⁶⁹⁶ Ying Wu, “Jianpuzhai kang Yue weiguo zhanzheng de xingshi,” *Shijie zhishi*, 1 March 1979, p.6.
- ⁶⁹⁷ Tan Shi et al, *Jianpuzhai*, p. 224.
- ⁶⁹⁸ *Yuenan Laowo Jianpuzhai shouce*, p. 579.
- ⁶⁹⁹ Zhang Xizhen, *Dangdai dongnanya zhengzhi*, p.87.
- ⁷⁰⁰ Zhou Zhongjian, “Hongse gaomian de miewang he Jianpuzhai de fuxing,” *Dongnanya congheng* 2 (2002): 36. Maguire also suggests that the KR had abandoned communism by late 1979.
- ⁷⁰¹ Zhou Zhongjian, “Hongse gaomian de miewang he Jianpuzhai de fuxing,” p. 38.
- ⁷⁰² “Support for Broadest United Front in Kampuchea,” *Peking Review*, 7 January 1980, p. 4.
- ⁷⁰³ Interview, Beijing, November 2002.
- ⁷⁰⁴ Interviews, Beijing, November 2002 and March 2003.
- ⁷⁰⁵ “Kampuchean Policy Shifts to Fight Aggression,” *Peking Review*, 22 September 1980, p. 8.
- ⁷⁰⁶ Lu Hu, “Hongse gaomian sishinian xingwanglu,” *Bainianchao* 6 (1999): 74.
- ⁷⁰⁷ Ying Ming, “Hongse gaomian de xingshuai chenfu,” in *Dongdang de shijie: Zhongguo waijiaoguan yanzhong de zhijie redian* (Shenyang: Ninghai chubanshe, 2000) p. 112.
- ⁷⁰⁸ Interview, Beijing, March 2003.
- ⁷⁰⁹ Yang Mu, pp. 225-226.
- ⁷¹⁰ “China and the Four Modernizations, 1979-1982,” <http://www-chaos.umd.edu/history/prc4.html>.
- ⁷¹¹ *Zhongguo gongchandang xinshiqi lishi dashijie*, p. 58.
- ⁷¹² “Answers to the Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci,” 21-23 August 1980, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/dengxp/vol2/text/b1470.html>.
- ⁷¹³ Deng Xiaoping, “The present situation and the tasks before us.” Report to cadres of the CCPCC, 16 January 1980, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/dengxp/vol2/text/b1390.html>.
- ⁷¹⁴ “China and the Four Modernizations, 1979-1982,” <http://www-chaos.umd.edu/history/prc4.html>.
- ⁷¹⁵ Deng Xiaoping, “The present situation and the tasks before us.”
- ⁷¹⁶ *Zhongguo gongchandang xinshiqi lishi dashijie*, p. 77.
- ⁷¹⁷ *Zhongguo gongchandang xinshiqi lishi dashijie*, pp. 47-48.
- ⁷¹⁸ Interview, Beijing, December 2002.
- ⁷¹⁹ Zhou Zhongjian, “Hongse gaomian de miewang he Jianpuzhai de fuxing,” p. 38.
- ⁷²⁰ Deng Xiaoping, “Three Point Principle Concerning the Kampuchea Question,” 11 November 1980, Beijing: Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- ⁷²¹ Maguire, “War of Genocide.”
- ⁷²² Zhong Xinying, “At Kampuchean Refugee Camps,” *Peking Review*, 14 December 1979, p. 16.
- ⁷²³ “Renwu jieshao (Po’er Po’te, Qiao Senbo, Ying Sali),” *Dongnanya yanjiu ziliao* 1 (1979): 92-93. The actual sentence about aid reads: “While in Beijing at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution members of the Khmer Rouge received some assistance.”
- ⁷²⁴ “The Kampuchean Issue,” *Peking Review*, 12 January 1981, p. 3.
- ⁷²⁵ “Zainanzhong de Jianpuzhai,” *Dongnanya yanjiu ziliao* 1 (1981): 93-94.
- ⁷²⁶ *Yuenan Laowo Jianpuzhai shouce*, p. 581.
- ⁷²⁷ Interview, Beijing, October 2002.
- ⁷²⁸ Lu Yun, “Jianpuzhai zhanzheng xianwen,” *Shijie zhishi*, 16 July 1982, p. 24.
- ⁷²⁹ Interview, Beijing, February 2003.
- ⁷³⁰ Yang Mu, pp. 37-39.
- ⁷³¹ Yang Mu, p. 19.
- ⁷³² Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, p. 382.
- ⁷³³ Interview, Phnom Penh, August 2003.
- ⁷³⁴ Interview, Phnom Penh, August 2003.
- ⁷³⁵ Cheng Hanchen, Xing Heping, and Cong Yingmin, “MinJian kongzhiqu fangwenji,” *Shijie zhishi*, 1 May 1982, p. 8.
- ⁷³⁶ Deng Xiaoping, “Three Point Principles Concerning the Kampuchea Question.” Most western sources give credit for the core elements of the Paris Accords to American or Australian diplomats and politicians.
- ⁷³⁷ “The Kampuchean Issue,” *Peking Review*, 12 January 1981, p. 3.

- ⁷³⁸ Xie Yibian, ed., *Zhongguo waijiao shi, 1979-1994 (di se ce)* (Zhengzhou: Henan renmin chubanshe, 1995) pp. 93-94.
- ⁷³⁹ Interview, Beijing, April 2003.
- ⁷⁴⁰ Interview, Washington, April 2000.
- ⁷⁴¹ Interview, Beijing, December 2002.
- ⁷⁴² Peter H. Maguire, "War of Genocide," *Searching for the Truth – A Magazine of the Documentation Center of Cambodia* 38 (February 2003).
- ⁷⁴³ Norodom Sihanouk, "China Has Never Dictated My Politics," from the forthcoming memoir *The Cup to the Dregs*, p. 10.
- ⁷⁴⁴ Chanda, *Brother Enemy*, pp. 368-369.
- ⁷⁴⁵ One former member of Sihanouk's entourage explained that they lived in Beijing, "but with a set of bags always packed and ready by the door" for abrupt departures to Pyongyang. Interview, Washington, April 2000.
- ⁷⁴⁶ Zhang Xizhen, *Xihanuke jiazhu*, p. 270.
- ⁷⁴⁷ Zhang Xizhen, *Xihanuke jiazhu*, p. 272.
- ⁷⁴⁸ "Forming a Broad United Front for Victorious Resistance," *Peking Review*, 16 February 1979, p. 24.
- ⁷⁴⁹ Zhang Xizhen, *Xihanuke jiazhu*, p. 272.
- ⁷⁵⁰ Norodom Sihanouk, "China Has Never Dictated My Politics," p. 10.
- ⁷⁵¹ *Jianpuzhai*, p. 227.
- ⁷⁵² Zhang Xizhen, *Xihanuke jiazhu*, p. 273.
- ⁷⁵³ *Yuenan Laowo Jianpuzhai shouce*, p. 581.
- ⁷⁵⁴ "Khieu Samphan's Visit," *Peking Review*, 24 March 1980, p. 6.
- ⁷⁵⁵ Zhang Xizhen, *Dangdai dongnanya zhengzhi*, p.88.
- ⁷⁵⁶ *Yuenan Laowo Jianpuzhai shouce*, p. 581.
- ⁷⁵⁷ "Song Shuang lingdao de jiefangjun," *Renmin ribao* (Beijing), 27 April 1980, p. 4. One Chinese diplomat implied that Son Sann's commitment to Cambodia's liberation was questionable, as he had spent the DK period in France.
- ⁷⁵⁸ "Kampuchea: Call on Patriots to Unite Against the Enemy," *Peking Review*, 8 December 1980, p. 9.
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- ⁹⁷⁹ Frustratingly, not all Chinese aid statistics are published, and some are published both at the time the aid is announced and at the time it is disbursed, leading to inflated totals. Only aid figures for which sources can be found are used in this project. This it is plausible that the real totals are higher.
- ⁹⁸⁰ For further reading on UNTAC, see: Mats Berdal and Michael Leifer, "Cambodia," in *The New Interventionism, 1991-1994: United Nations Experience in Cambodia, the Former Yugoslavia, and Somalia*; Michael Doyle, ed., *Keeping the Peace: Multidimensional United Nations Operations in Cambodia and El Salvador*; Trevor Findlay, *Cambodia: The Legacy and Lessons of UNTAC*; Stephen Heder and Judy Ledgerwood, eds., *Propaganda, Politics and Violence in Cambodia: Democratic Transition Under United Nations Peacekeeping*; Sorpong Peou, *Cambodia After the Cold War: The Search for Security Continues*, and *Intervention and Change in Cambodia: Towards Democracy?*; and William Shawcross, *Cambodia's New Deal: A Report*.
- ⁹⁸¹ "Agreement on a comprehensive political settlement of the Cambodia conflict," United Nations Treaty Series, Volume 1663, I-28613, Paris, 23 October 1991, p. 60.

- ⁹⁸² Interview, Beijing, December 2002.
- ⁹⁸³ For a neorealist analysis of Chinese involvement in peacekeeping operations, see M. Taylor Fravel, "China's Attitude Toward U.N. Peacekeeping Operations Since 1989," *Asian Survey* v36, no. 11 (November 1996).
- ⁹⁸⁴ "Guoji ziliao: Zhongguo he baocan yu Lianheguo he xingdong," *Xinhua* (Beijing), 19 May 2002.
- ⁹⁸⁵ Xiao Yu, "China and the UN: Peacekeeping Operations," *Beijing Review*, 2-8 October 1995, pp. 16-17.
- ⁹⁸⁶ *Zhongguo lankui* (Shenzhen: Zhongguo changcheng chubanshe, 1994) pp. 30-84.
- ⁹⁸⁷ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1994 edition, p. 55.
- ⁹⁸⁸ Ni Xuyin, "Jianpuzhai nanmin guifan jihua ruqi wancheng," *Shijie zhishi*, 25 April-1 May 1993, p. 19.
- ⁹⁸⁹ Interview, Beijing, December 2002.
- ⁹⁹⁰ Zhang Xizhen, ed., *Dangdai dongnanya zhengzhi* (Nanning: Guangxi renmin chubanshe, 1994) p. 95.
- ⁹⁹¹ Interview, Beijing, November 2002.
- ⁹⁹² Interviews, Beijing, November 2002, February 2003, and March 2003. Some of those activities were not in fact undertaken by UNTAC but by other international organizations. To the interviewees, however, it only mattered that it was foreigners, rather than Cambodians, performing these activities.
- ⁹⁹³ Zhu Deming, "Jianpuzhai dangqian xingshi jiqi fazhan qushi," *Dongnanya* 1 (1994): 51.
- ⁹⁹⁴ Interview, Beijing, April 2003.
- ⁹⁹⁵ Interviews, Beijing, March 2003 and April 2003.
- ⁹⁹⁶ Peter Bartu, "'The Fifth Faction': The United Nations Intervention in Cambodia, 1991-1993," dissertation manuscript, Matheson Library, Australia National University, Melbourne, 1998, p. iv.
- ⁹⁹⁷ Interview, Beijing, February 2003.
- ⁹⁹⁸ Ren Zhi, "Niaoyun longzhai Jianpuzhai daxuan," *Shijie zhishi*, 25 April-1 May 1993, p. 13.
- ⁹⁹⁹ Interviews, Beijing, February 2003 and April 2003.
- ¹⁰⁰⁰ Nayan Chanda, "Ghost at the feast: Khmer Rouge decries UN aid, blocks peace process," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 2 July 1992, p.8.
- ¹⁰⁰¹ Rodney Tasker, "Caught in the act," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 23 December 1993, p. 12. The title refers to Thai, not Chinese, support to the KR. Not only did the aid and arms stop flowing, Cambodia experts also agree that by 1991 China had shut down the KR radio station run from southwestern China.
- ¹⁰⁰² Rodney Tasker, "Fortunes at risk: sanctions threaten Thai-Khmer Rouge trade," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 12 November 1992, p. 12.
- ¹⁰⁰³ Interview, Beijing, December 2002.
- ¹⁰⁰⁴ Nayan Chanda, "Ghost at the feast: Khmer Rouge decries UN aid, blocks peace process," p.8.
- ¹⁰⁰⁵ Bartu, p. 202. Bartu claims that Ieng Sary was also at this meeting, though he provides no evidence other than his certainty that Beijing would have "insisted" on such participation because "the Chinese liked Ieng Sary." See p. 201. US officials, also without evidence, claimed that Xu also met on this visit with Pol Pot. Regardless of the participants, it is hard to see why Xu would have deviated from Beijing's message to cooperate.
- ¹⁰⁰⁶ Yang Baoyun, "Hongse gaomian guisu ruzai?" *Dongnanya congheng* 7 (2000): 18.
- ¹⁰⁰⁷ Lu Hu, "Hongse gaomian sishinian xingwanglu," *Bainianchao* 6 (1999): 75.
- ¹⁰⁰⁸ "Thai Tourniquet," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 15 October 1992, p. 8.
- ¹⁰⁰⁹ Rodney Tasker, "Diplomatic engineering: Thais seek to emphasise aid role in Cambodia," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 3 September 1997, p. 17.
- ¹⁰¹⁰ Rodney Tasker, "Fortunes at risk: sanctions threaten Thai-Khmer Rouge trade," p. 12.
- ¹⁰¹¹ Tian Cengpei, p. 93.
- ¹⁰¹² Bartu, p. 211.
- ¹⁰¹³ Interview, Beijing, April 2003.
- ¹⁰¹⁴ Ma Xudong, "Zhongguo hongbing xueliang Jianpuzhai," *Junshi lishi* 6 (1998): 47.
- ¹⁰¹⁵ *Zhongguo lankui*, p. 86. Following the Kompong Cham incident, Ambassador Fu actually lodged a complaint with General John Sanderson, the Australian head of UNTAC's military component, that his forces in the area were failing to fulfill their responsibilities.
- ¹⁰¹⁶ Interviews, November 2002, February 2003, and April 2003.
- ¹⁰¹⁷ Interview, Beijing, March 2003.
- ¹⁰¹⁸ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1994 edition, p. 54.
- ¹⁰¹⁹ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1994 edition, p. 55.
- ¹⁰²⁰ Interview, Beijing, April 2003.
- ¹⁰²¹ Interview, Beijing, November 2002.
- ¹⁰²² Ma Xudong, "Zhongguo hongbing xueliang Jianpuzhai," pp. 53-54.
- ¹⁰²³ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1994 edition, pp. 55-56.
- ¹⁰²⁴ Interviews, Beijing, October 2002 – April 2003.
- ¹⁰²⁵ Interviews, Beijing, December 2002 and March 2003.

- ¹⁰²⁶ Interview, Beijing, April 2003.
- ¹⁰²⁷ Interviews, Beijing, October 2002 – April 2003.
- ¹⁰²⁸ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1994 edition, p. 56.
- ¹⁰²⁹ Yang Baoyun, “Hongse gaomian guisu ruzai?” *Dongnanya congheng* 7 (2000): 18.
- ¹⁰³⁰ “Daguo dui Jianpuzhai shiwu de jieru,” *Dongnanya yanjiu* 9 (1993): 82.
- ¹⁰³¹ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1994 edition, p. 56.
- ¹⁰³² Interview, Beijing, February 2003.
- ¹⁰³³ Li Guangyou, “Wuge cangsang: Li Guangyou huiyilu,” *Dongnanya congheng* 2 (2001): 15.
- ¹⁰³⁴ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1994 edition, p. 56.
- ¹⁰³⁵ “Old Indochina Hand,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 18 February 1993, p. 9.
- ¹⁰³⁶ M. Taylor Fravel, “China’s Attitude Toward U.N. Peacekeeping Operations Since 1989.”
- ¹⁰³⁷ Cheng Ruisheng et al, “Zhongguo waijiao zouxiang chengshu,” *Shijie zhishi* 3 (1994): 31.
- ¹⁰³⁸ Interview, Beijing, April 2003.
- ¹⁰³⁹ Interview, Beijing, April 2003.
- ¹⁰⁴⁰ Jin Zhao, “Shilun Deng Xiaoping de guoji zhanlue sixiang,” *Guoji guanxi xueyuan xuebao* 4 (1999): 27.
- ¹⁰⁴¹ Ministries and ambassadorial postings were divided up between the two parties. The CPP retained control over the more powerful and lucrative ministries, such as Commerce and Justice, while Funcinpec settled for weaker agencies like Health and Culture. Some agencies, such as Interior and National Defense, had co-ministers, but in reality these remained firmly in CPP control.
- ¹⁰⁴² On the Cambodian side, visits usually involved Sihanouk, Ranariddh, Hun Sen, Chief of Cabinet Sok An, President of the National Assembly Chea Sim, Foreign Ministers Norodom Sirivudh and Ung Huot, Minister of Commerce Cham Prasidh, co-Minister of Defense Tea Banh, General Ke Kim Yan, and/or Chief of Staff Lay Bunsong. Chinese participants included Premier Li Peng, President Jiang Zemin, Foreign Minister Qian Qichen, Politburo Standing Committee member Qiao Shi, Vice Premier Li Lanqing, Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxun, CCP international affairs secretary You Wengqin, CCP international affairs department head Wang Yinggong, Li Ruihuan, Vice Minister of Planning Chen Fuhua, and/or NPC Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Zhang Zhenya.
- ¹⁰⁴³ Both Cambodian parties confirmed the consistency and seriousness of these messages, such that the accounts from Chinese sources cannot simply be dismissed as revisionist accounts that cast China in a better light. Interviews, Phnom Penh, March 1996, April 1996, June 1997, and September 1998.
- ¹⁰⁴⁴ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1995 edition, p. 51.
- ¹⁰⁴⁵ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1996 edition, p. 50.
- ¹⁰⁴⁶ Interview, Phnom Penh, August 2003.
- ¹⁰⁴⁷ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1996 edition, pp. 49-51.
- ¹⁰⁴⁸ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1997 edition, pp. 62-63.
- ¹⁰⁴⁹ Dittmer, pp. 226-227.
- ¹⁰⁵⁰ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1996 edition, p. 48.
- ¹⁰⁵¹ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1997 edition, pp. 64-65.
- ¹⁰⁵² “Hun Sen visits China,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 1 August 1996, p. 13.
- ¹⁰⁵³ “China’s favourite,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 19 December 1996, p. 12.
- ¹⁰⁵⁴ Luo Qing, “Bannian Jianpuzhai zhengju zongshu,” *Dongnanya congheng* 2 (1996): 49.
- ¹⁰⁵⁵ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1997 edition, p. 64.
- ¹⁰⁵⁶ Interview, Washington, April 2000.
- ¹⁰⁵⁷ Interview, Beijing, November 2003.
- ¹⁰⁵⁸ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1996 edition, p. 51.
- ¹⁰⁵⁹ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1997 edition, p. 64.
- ¹⁰⁶⁰ *Xin Zhongguo waijiao fengyun: Zhongguo waijiaoguan huiyilu* (Beijing: Waijiaobu waijiaoshi yanjiushi, 1994) pp. 61-63.
- ¹⁰⁶¹ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1997 edition, p. 61.
- ¹⁰⁶² *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1995 edition, p. 54.
- ¹⁰⁶³ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1994 edition, p. 58.
- ¹⁰⁶⁴ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1996 edition, p. 53.
- ¹⁰⁶⁵ Nayan Chanda, “The enemy within,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 22 August 1996, p. 14.
- ¹⁰⁶⁶ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1997 edition, p. 63.
- ¹⁰⁶⁷ Nayan Chanda, “The enemy within,” p. 14.
- ¹⁰⁶⁸ Luo Qing, “Bannian Jianpuzhai zhengju zongshu,” p. 49.
- ¹⁰⁶⁹ Interview, Phnom Penh, April 1996.
- ¹⁰⁷⁰ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1995 edition, p. 53.
- ¹⁰⁷¹ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1996 edition, pp. 51-53.

- ¹⁰⁷² *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1997 edition, pp. 65-66.
- ¹⁰⁷³ “Cambodia Thanks Chinese Government, People for Flood Relief,” *Xinhua* (Beijing), 13 October 1996.
- ¹⁰⁷⁴ All aid figures will be compiled in an appendix with citations. All of China’s standard practices have been put to use in Cambodia: low-interest or interest-free loans (to be used “when foreign aid and bank funds are combined...[to] broaden the scope of use for the aid...”); joint cooperation in foreign aid projects and with particular emphasis on small- and medium-sized enterprises; ordinary interest-free loans; and appropriate unconditional aid (to help make impoverished countries “eligible for other low-interest loans”). See Li Xingwang, ed., *Guoji jingji hezuo* (Changchun: Dongbei caijing daxue chubanshe, 2002).
- ¹⁰⁷⁵ Few of these critics bothered to note that France and Japan typically do not condition aid either.
- ¹⁰⁷⁶ Interview, Beijing, March 2003.
- ¹⁰⁷⁷ Nayan Chanda, “The enemy within,” p. 14.
- ¹⁰⁷⁸ Interview, Beijing, November 2002.
- ¹⁰⁷⁹ Interview, Beijing, April 2003.
- ¹⁰⁸⁰ Yang Mu, *Xihanuke guowang*, p. 356.
- ¹⁰⁸¹ Zhen Zhongxing, “Jianpuzhai dangqian anquan xingshi,” *Dongnanya congheng* 2 (1995): 34.
- ¹⁰⁸² Rodney Tasker, “Caught in the act,” p. 12.
- ¹⁰⁸³ Li Chuyang, “Yijiujiusinian Jianpuzhai wenti zongshu,” *Dongnanya congheng* 1 (1995): 24.
- ¹⁰⁸⁴ Yang Mu, *Xihanuke guowang*, p. 357.
- ¹⁰⁸⁵ In late July 1994, for example, a KR unit attacked a train in Kampot province, killing a dozen Cambodians and taking three western travelers hostage. Both the CPP and Funcinpec unsuccessfully attempted to negotiate for the hostages’ release: Funcinpec representatives kept the ransom money given to them by the hostages’ families for themselves, while KR representatives flatly refused to speak to the CPP negotiators. In October, the entire unit defected to the government and then admitted that they had killed the hostages a month earlier. Although the unit’s leaders were tried for the foreigners’ murders, all were eventually acquitted due to the amnesty agreement. None stood trial for the murders of the Cambodians.
- ¹⁰⁸⁶ Qu Heman, ed., *Dongnanya shouce* (Nanning: Guangxi renmin chubanshe, 2000) p. 47.
- ¹⁰⁸⁷ Nayan Chanda, “Fall of the high-flyer,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 22 August 1996, p. 16.
- ¹⁰⁸⁸ Qu Heman, ed., *Dongnanya shouce*, p. 47.
- ¹⁰⁸⁹ Wang Lisheng, ed., *Dongdang de shijie: Zhongguo waijiaoguan yanzhong de zhijie redian* (Shenyang: Ninghai chubanshe, 2000) p. 115.
- ¹⁰⁹⁰ Nayan Chanda, “The enemy within,” p. 14.
- ¹⁰⁹¹ Interview, Beijing, November 2002.
- ¹⁰⁹² Interviews, Beijing, December 2002 and April 2003.
- ¹⁰⁹³ H.Res.345, “Expressing Concern about the deterioration of human rights in Cambodia.” Introduced by Representative Doug Bereuter, 25 January 1996, United States House of Representatives, Washington: USGPO, 1997.
- ¹⁰⁹⁴ Li Chuyang, “Waiyin suoji weilai Jian jushi yuci yinxiang Jian heping yu wending de nei,” *Dongnanya yanjiu* 2-3 (1994): 32-33.
- ¹⁰⁹⁵ Xu Mei, “Jianpuzhai Laowo zhengzhi jingji fazhan xianxhuang,” *Dongnanya yanjiu* 1 (2002): 32.
- ¹⁰⁹⁶ Luo Qing, “Bannian Jianpuzhai zhengju zongshu,” p. 49.
- ¹⁰⁹⁷ Interview, Beijing, February 2003.
- ¹⁰⁹⁸ Interviews, Beijing, November 2002, February 2003, and April 2003.
- ¹⁰⁹⁹ In an interview in Phnom Penh in August 1993, Xing Heping commented that, in 1993 and 1994, officials at the Chinese Embassy saw Rainsy as “brave” for his anti-corruption efforts.
- ¹¹⁰⁰ Interview, Beijing, April 2003.
- ¹¹⁰¹ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1998 edition, pp. 68-71.
- ¹¹⁰² Qin Zhan, “Jianpuzhai Hong Sen suo mianlin de jushi,” *Dongnanya congheng* 4 (1997): 58-59.
- ¹¹⁰³ Luo Qing, “Jianpuzhai duodang minzhu zhengzhi tuanhexianru kunnan,” *Dongnanya congheng* 3 (1996): 60-61.
- ¹¹⁰⁴ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1998 edition, p. 73.
- ¹¹⁰⁵ Interview, Phnom Penh, July 2000.
- ¹¹⁰⁶ Interview, Beijing, November 2002.
- ¹¹⁰⁷ Interview, Beijing, April 2003.
- ¹¹⁰⁸ Wang Lisheng, ed., *Dongdang de shijie: Zhongguo waijiaoguan yanzhong de zhijie redian*, p. 115.
- ¹¹⁰⁹ Lu Hu, “Hongse gaomian sishinian xingwanglu,” *Bainianchao* 6 (1999): 76.
- ¹¹¹⁰ Wang Lisheng, ed., *Dongdang de shijie: Zhongguo waijiaoguan yanzhong de zhijie redian*, p. 116.
- ¹¹¹¹ Interview, November 2002.
- ¹¹¹² Interview, March 2003.
- ¹¹¹³ Interview, Beijing, November 2002.
- ¹¹¹⁴ Interview, Beijing, December 2002.
- ¹¹¹⁵ Philip Gourevitch, “Pol Pot’s Children,” *The New Yorker*, 10 August 1999.

- ¹¹¹⁶ The EU actually continued its assistance to preparations for the national elections scheduled for 1998 that were now very much in question.
- ¹¹¹⁷ H.Res.195, “Concerning the Crisis in Cambodia.” Sponsored by Representative Benjamin A. Gilman, introduced July 23, 1997, and adopted on July 28, 1997, United States House of Representatives, Washington: USGPO, 1998.
- ¹¹¹⁸ One commentator observed that Hun Sen had done the impossible within Asean by making the Burmese military junta, SLORC, “look good by comparison.”
- ¹¹¹⁹ He Qida et al, *Zouxiang 21 shijie de dongnanya yu Zhongguo* (Kunming: Yunnan daxue chubanshe, 1998) p. 324.
- ¹¹²⁰ Murray Hiebert, “All for one,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 7 August 1997, p. 26.
- ¹¹²¹ Xu Mei, “Jianpuzhai xianzhuang yu weilai fazhan,” *Dongnanya yanjiu* 6 (1997): 11-12.
- ¹¹²² *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1998 edition, p. 71.
- ¹¹²³ Interview, Beijing, October 2002.
- ¹¹²⁴ Li Chuyang, “Jianpuzhai zhengju zouxiang daoshe,” *Dongnanya congheng* 3 (1997): 58.
- ¹¹²⁵ “Zhongguo tong Jianpuzhai de guanxi, zhengzhi guanxi yu zhongyao wanglai,” in *Zhongguo waijiao: 1998 nian* (Beijing: Zhonghua renmin gongheguo waijiaobu zhengce yanjiu qubanshe, 1999) p. 70.
- ¹¹²⁶ He Qida et al, *Zouxiang 21 shijie de dongnanya yu Zhongguo*, p. 324.
- ¹¹²⁷ “Zhongguo tong jianpuzhai de guanxi, zhengzhi guanxi yu zhongyao wanglai,” p. 70.
- ¹¹²⁸ “Jianpuzhai xingshi yu dongmeng kuangda,” in *Dongya zhanlue gailan* (Beijing: Guofang daxue chubanshe, 1998) pp. 16-17.
- ¹¹²⁹ Xing Heping, “Jianpuzhai: zhengzhi wending, waijiao huoyue, jingji fazhan,” *Dongnanya congheng* 2 (2002): 7.
- ¹¹³⁰ Zhu Guangyang, “Jianpuzhai zhengzhi weiwei de Beijing, yuanyin jiqi houguo,” *Dongnanya yanjiu* 6 (1997): 4.
- ¹¹³¹ Li Shi, “Jianpuzhai wenti qianjin,” *Lishi jiaoxue* 2 (1999): 48.
- ¹¹³² At the same time, Beijing never publicly de-recognized Ranariddh. His changed status was quietly acknowledged in the Chinese press by a different honorific – after July, he was “Prince” rather than “First Prime Minister.” In the western press, Ung Huot was now referred to as the second First Prime Minister, though Ranariddh insisted that he was only First Prime Minister. Hun Sen consistently remained Second Prime Minister.
- ¹¹³³ Interview, Beijing, March 2003.
- ¹¹³⁴ “Beijing to Sign Aid Package with Phnom Penh,” *Xinhua* (Beijing), 8 August 1997.
- ¹¹³⁵ Interview, Beijing, April 2003.
- ¹¹³⁶ Gu Guanfu, “50 nian de Zhongguo waijiao zhanlu ji zhanwang,” *Heping yu fazhan* 4 (1999): 24.
- ¹¹³⁷ Zhonggong zhongyang dangshi yanjiushi, *Zhongguo gongchandang xinshiqi lishi dashiji* (Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi chubanshe, 2002) p. 562.
- ¹¹³⁸ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1999 edition, p. 5.
- ¹¹³⁹ Gu Guanfu, “50 nian de Zhongguo waijiao zhanlu ji zhanwang,” p. 24.
- ¹¹⁴⁰ Interviews, Beijing, November 2002 and April 2003.
- ¹¹⁴¹ Wu Ziceng, “Zhongguo waijiao sixiang de yanbian: cong ‘heping gongchu’ dau ‘heping fazhan’,” *Zhongguo waijiao* 9 (2002): 4.
- ¹¹⁴² Interview, Beijing, December 2002.
- ¹¹⁴³ Interview, Beijing, April 2003.
- ¹¹⁴⁴ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1999 edition, p. 64.
- ¹¹⁴⁵ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1999 edition, p. 64.
- ¹¹⁴⁶ “PRC Providing Aid for Cambodia’s Elections,” *Xinhua* (Beijing), 19 May 1998.
- ¹¹⁴⁷ Zou Fei, “Jianpuzhai xinzhengfu chengli yilai de guonei jushi,” *Dongnanya congheng* 3 (1999), p. 28.
- ¹¹⁴⁸ Liang Yuanling, “Lun Jianpuzhai di’erceng lianhe zhengfu,” *Dongnanya congheng* 2 (1999): 26-27.
- ¹¹⁴⁹ Xu Mei, “Jianpuzhai xianzhuang yu weilai fazhan,” pp. 11-12.
- ¹¹⁵⁰ Ning Sheng, “Jianpuzhai wangguo shouxiang Hong Sen,” *Xiandai guoji guanxi* 9 (1998): 40.
- ¹¹⁵¹ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1998 edition, p. 72.
- ¹¹⁵² *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1998 edition, pp. 69-72.
- ¹¹⁵³ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1999 edition, p. 65.
- ¹¹⁵⁴ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 2000 edition, p. 72.
- ¹¹⁵⁵ “Dalai Lama not invited to religion conference,” *Xinhua* (Beijing), 9 August 2002.
- ¹¹⁵⁶ “Li Ruihuan huijian Jianpuzhai canyiyuan zhuxi Xie Xin,” *Xinhua* (Beijing), 26 March 2001.
- ¹¹⁵⁷ “Jianpuzhai shouxiang Hong Sen huijian Wei Jianxing,” *Xinhua* (Beijing), 13 December 2001.
- ¹¹⁵⁸ “Guowai gejie qianze ‘falun gong’ guoji face,” *Xinhua* (Beijing), 11 July 2002.
- ¹¹⁵⁹ Xing Heping, “Jianpuzhai shouxiang Hong Sen fangwenji,” *Dongnanya congheng* 1 (2000): 6.
- ¹¹⁶⁰ *Zhongguo waijiao gailan*, 1999 edition, p. 65.
- ¹¹⁶¹ These figures come from “Direction of Trade Statistics,” International Monetary Fund, updated March 1999. They are based on 1997 statistics.
- ¹¹⁶² Interview, Beijing, April 2003.

- ¹¹⁶³ Zhang Ping, “Xihanuke wangwei zhuan geishe?” *Dongnanya congheng* 7 (2000): 21-23.
- ¹¹⁶⁴ “Li Peng huijian Jianpuzhai wangguo zhengfu shouxiang Hong Sen,” *Xinhua* (Beijing), 18 December 1998.
- ¹¹⁶⁵ Zhang Songdian, “Li Ruihuan huijian Hong Sen,” *Xinhua* (Beijing), 10 February 1999.
- ¹¹⁶⁶ “Jiang Zemin zhuxi huijian Jianpuzhai shouxiang Hong Sen,” *Xinhua* (Beijing), 10 February 1999.
- ¹¹⁶⁷ “Chi Haotian huijian Jianpuzhai keren,” *Xinhua* (Beijing), 20 December 2001.
- ¹¹⁶⁸ “Jiang Zemin zhuxi huijian Jianpuzhai shouxiang Hong Sen,” *Xinhua* (Beijing), 10 February 1999.
- ¹¹⁶⁹ “Li Peng, Hun Sen discuss ways to enhance Sino-Cambodian ties,” *Xinhua* (Beijing), 19 May 2001.
- ¹¹⁷⁰ “Wei Jianxing huijian Jianpuzhai renmindang zhuxi Xie Xin qinwang,” *Xinhua* (Beijing), 14 December 2001.
- ¹¹⁷¹ “Yousong like yu guowang zhaoquan: jinri Hong Sen zouxiang quanli xiangfeng,” *Xinhua* (Beijing), 21 March 2002.
- ¹¹⁷² Interview, Beijing, February 2003.
- ¹¹⁷³ Interview, Beijing, April 2003.
- ¹¹⁷⁴ I thank David Chandler for suggesting that this “tribunal” be given equal weight as the proceedings suggested for the rest of the leadership by some members of the international community.
- ¹¹⁷⁵ Wang Lisheng, ed., *Dongdang de shijie: Zhongguo waijiaoguan yanzhong de zhijie redian*, p. 116.
- ¹¹⁷⁶ Qu Heman, ed., *Dongnanya shouce*, p. 47.
- ¹¹⁷⁷ Peter Sainsbury, “Burned like old rubbish,” *Phnom Penh Post*, 24 April-7 May 1998.
- ¹¹⁷⁸ They were, respectively, the Special Advisor for Health, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Immigration, and the Minister of Labor in the Democratic Kampuchea regime.
- ¹¹⁷⁹ Qu Heman, ed., *Dongnanya shouce*, p. 47.
- ¹¹⁸⁰ Wang Lisheng, ed., *Dongdang de shijie: Zhongguo waijiaoguan yanzhong de zhijie redian*, pp. 117-118.
- ¹¹⁸¹ In September 1999, Ta Mok and Duch were charged with genocide. They have still not stood trial, and the Cambodian government continues to violate its own and international law on pre-trial detention as they enter their fifth year in custody.
- ¹¹⁸² Commission on Human Rights Resolution 1997/49, U.N. ESCOR, “Situation of Human Rights in Cambodia,” U.N. Doc. E/CN.4/RES/1997/49 (1997).
- ¹¹⁸³ Stephen Heder with Brian D. Tittmore, “Seven Candidates for Prosecution: Accountability for the Crimes of the Khmer Rouge,” War Crimes Research Office, American University, June 2001, pp. 13-14.
- ¹¹⁸⁴ “Not Pol Pot, but...,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, January 15, 1998.
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- ¹²⁴⁹ Melvin Gurtov and Byong-moo Hwang, *China Under Threat: The Politics of Strategy and Diplomacy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980) p. 115.
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- ¹²⁵² Gurtov and Hwang, p. 117.
- ¹²⁵³ Yang Gongsuo, p. 122.
- ¹²⁵⁴ Gurtov and Hwang, p. 116.
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- ¹²⁵⁶ Gurtov and Hwang, p. 118.
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- ¹³²³ Biberaj, 1986, p. 120.
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- ¹³²⁵ There are as many different spellings of 'mujahideen' as there were members. I have opted to use what appears to be the most common spelling.
- ¹³²⁶ The Sino-Afghan border is only about 80 kilometers long, but so was the stretch of the Ussuri River over which Moscow and Beijing had nearly gone to war in 1969.
- ¹³²⁷ "Statement of the Chinese Government," Beijing: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 26 December 1979.
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- ¹³⁵⁹ Thomas T. Hammond, *Red Flag Over Afghanistan* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984) p. 123.
- ¹³⁶⁰ Cooley, p. 52.
- ¹³⁶¹ Cooley, p. 57. Cooley provides no evidence for this claim.
- ¹³⁶² Robert D. Kaplan, *Soldiers of God: With Islamic Warriors in Afghanistan and Pakistan* (New York: Vintage Books, 2001) p. 39. Like Cooley, Kaplan provides no evidence for this claim.
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- ¹³⁶⁶ John C. Griffiths, *Afghanistan: Key to a Continent* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1981) p. 149.
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- ¹³⁶⁸ It is worth noting that relatively few articles about the United States and Cambodia in English or Chinese make reference to the US bombing, the 1970 Lon Nol coup, or American silence on the DK's abuses during its rule. Equally few note that the US supported the resistance coalition of the 1980s, which included the Khmer Rouge, and many incorrectly attribute efforts to establish a tribunal for surviving KR leaders to the United States. Most treatments of American and Chinese policy toward Cambodia seem to automatically assume, in much the same way Maxwell identified in the Sino-Indian dispute, that the United States could not possibly be responsible for the worst outcomes.
- ¹³⁶⁹ In October 2004, the Cambodian National Assembly passed the final piece of legislation necessary to create such legal proceedings. It is possible that the tribunal may begin proceedings in 2005.
- ¹³⁷⁰ Predictably enough, China voted repeatedly at the UN to condemn Iraq's 1991 invasion of Kuwait, but it would not vote in support of the Gulf War. In 2002-2003, it voted in support of ongoing inspections in Iraq and would likely have abstained from a UN vote endorsing an invasion.

¹³⁷¹ For more on Chinese elites' perception of their obligations to the population, see Brantly Womack, "The Party and the People: Revolutionary and Postrevolutionary Politics in China and Vietnam," *World Politics* 39, no. 4 (July 1987): 479-508. For more on the plasticity of Chinese authoritarianism, see Sophie Richardson, "Self-reform within Authoritarian Regimes: Reallocations of Power in Contemporary China" (Paper presented at the Association for Chinese Political Scientists' conference "Political Civilization and Modernization in China," People's University, Beijing, June 2004).

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