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Making the Foreign Serve China: Managing Foreigners in the People's Republic (Asia/Pacific/Perspectives)

Anne-Marie Brady

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This book provides the first detailed analysis of a crucial and distinctive element of Chinese foreign policy. Anne-Marie Brady follows the development of the Chinese Communist Party's 'foreign affairs' system since 1921, focusing on waishi, the external policies intended to influence and control both foreigners themselves as well as Chinese citizens' contact with and perception of outsiders. The term also comprises China's external relations—both official state-to-state and so-called unofficial or 'people-to-people' diplomacy. In effect, waishi activities encompass all matters related to foreigners and foreign things, not merely diplomacy. By managing the foreign presence in China and China's contacts with the outside world and by controlling the Chinese population, the author argues that waishi has proven to be one of the most effective tools in the CCP's repertoire for building and then sustaining its hold on power. Drawing for the first time on policy documents that underpin the phenomena they describe, Brady analyzes trends and developments in waishi during each chronological period. The book elucidates how the CCP's policies evolved: In the 1930s, the need for a broad united front in international relations warred with the desire to control the foreign presence in China; in the 1940s and 1950s, the Sino-Soviet alliance and ridding China of the traces of the 'semi-colonial' past took precedence; in the 1960s, the Sino-Soviet split led to China's claim as the center of world revolution; and in the past twenty years of reform, the focus has been the ongoing quest to create a modern nation-state as China opens up to the outside world. The author considers waishi's deeper meaning as an overriding approach to the 'foreign,' which links state-to-state diplomacy with the management of the foreign presence in China. Her groundbreaking research is based on a previously unexplored genre of waishi materials (almost all classified) in Chinese, extensive interviews with waishi officials and foreign participants of the system, as well as archival research inside and outside of China. The photograph used on the cover of the book was doctored by the Chinese government. The original photograph showed Edgar Snow standing on the Tiananmen podium with (reading from left to right) Snow, translator Ji Chaozhu, Mao Zedong, and Edgar Snow's wife, Lois Wheeler Snow. In the book's cover photograph, which was released internationally, Lois Wheeler Snow has been replaced by Lin Biao—at the time Mao's number two—shown prominently clutching Quotations from Mao Zedong, otherwise known as the Little Red Book. Lin Biao was no doubt inserted not only to show his ranking in the leadership but also to demonstrate that the shift towards rapprochement with the West which the Snow's visit to China in 1970 represented, was supported by the CCP's radical left as symbolized by Lin Biao.

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