

傅莹：基辛格就美国如何与中国共处留下忠告

Fù Yíng: On Kissinger's Words of Wisdom on How China-US can Co-Exist

Translated by Chhavi Raj

PhD Researcher, Centre for Chinese & Southeast Asian Studies, School of Language,
Literature and Culture Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Email: raj.chhavi2545@gmail.com

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Author: 傅莹 Fù Yíng

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Kissinger in China, July 2023
Source: bbc.com

Editor's Note

[From the original article in Chinese]

After the demise of former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, Chinese people expressed their memoirs and reviews of Kissinger through conversation and articles. This article is a compilation of Fù Yíng's memoir and analysis of Kissinger's speeches and viewpoints, for the readers.

A Note on Fù Yíng

[From the ICS Translations Team]

Fù was born in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia, in 1953, and she is of Mongol descent. An ethnic Mongol, Fù Yíng is the first woman, and the only ethnic minority woman, to serve as Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs (2010-2013), and one of only two to serve in Chinese history. Fù graduated from the Beijing Foreign Studies University. In 1976, she became the official interpreter of the diplomatic service. As a diplomat, her first major assignment was as the head of the Chinese Delegation during multi-lateral talks

with North Korea that led to the latter country's decision (later reneged on) to abandon nuclear weapons. From 2004 to 2007 she was the ambassador to Australia.

She was the Chinese ambassador to the United Kingdom from March 2007 to 2009.



Fù Yíng
Source: fmprc.gov.cn/eng/ziliao

In a profile write-up, Brian Wong wrote, seventeen days after Joe Biden had been declared the winner of the 2020 Presidential Elections on November 24, 2020, the *New York Times* published an op-ed with – at first glance – a title that would seemingly appeal to the greatest common denominator across China and America: “Cooperative Competition is Possible Between China and the US” The

piece advocated a theoretically attractive, yet practically unprecedented *modus operandi* between the two largest economies in the world: the path forward, it argued, was – “even if competition between China and the United States is unavoidable, it needs to be managed well, cooperatively.” The article’s pithy elegance and delicate timing rendered it a subject of extensive circulation and debate amongst the upper political echelons in Washington and Beijing alike. A critical response termed the author of the piece “the most dangerous woman in China,” whilst the acting Editorial Page Editor of the *Times*, Kathleen Kingsbury, took to defending the paper’s decision to publish the op-ed against a barrage of criticisms. The criticism, or so it went, was that the *Times* was platforming an official of the Chinese Communist Party – and, by extension, lending credibility to a member of the government of a prominent rival towards which bipartisan antagonism has emerged in the United States (Source: <https://uscnpm.org/who-is-fu-ying/>).

Summary: “Kissinger has spent his entire life thinking about and exploring the conflicts between countries and constantly trying to come up with solutions. This is a great quality of a diplomat.”

Peking University Professor Wang Jisi told me in the evening on 29 November 2023, that a day before Kissinger’s death the American media approached him to write an article about Kissinger. Professor Jisi also updated me on Kissinger’s deteriorating health condition.

My heart was heavy, I was in disbelief that the ever-shining star of diplomacy and international politics was really about to fall. The next day from early morning, news about Kissinger’s passing kept filtering in. As someone who witnessed and participated in global events for over a century, his departure left me feeling miserable. We need the insights of wise men like him even more today when humankind is encountering changes not seen in a century, especially at the time when the material and spiritual worlds are experiencing a huge shock.

I met Kissinger only a couple of times; however, I was always impressed by his modesty. I met Dr. Kissinger for the first time in the late 1980s, when he used to appear at all kinds of forums in Beijing. Once while doing a simultaneous interpretation assignment for a forum at Diaoyutai State Guest House, I stumbled upon him during an interval. I took out my

camera and asked him if I could take a picture with him. He smiled and agreed to click a picture with us young interpreters one by one and said that the work we do in our booth is crucial. He hadn't changed even a bit when I met him years later. He was down to earth and would not refuse anyone seeking his help.



Kissinger with foreign minister Wu Jianguo in Beijing, 1985
Source: (Neal Ulevich/AP) – rfa.org

Even after retiring from active diplomacy, Dr. Kissinger kept a close watch on major international issues. Most of our interactions happened during international academic forums. At these forums, I found him always focused throughout the session and he was never seen skipping a lecture. At these forums, I used to interact with him during breaks, listening to his views on the topics discussed during the forum. He would express his views from a broader perspective on the issues at hand. In my observation, Kissinger had a willingness and interest to resolve global

issues. He was conscious of issues between countries and discussed possible solutions only after listening to others' viewpoints. I believe, of all the issues that he studied in the world, perhaps the majority of them were not resolved the way he expected them to be, sometimes his solutions were either not accepted or at times did not achieve the desired result. The international community, including the US, has mixed opinions on Kissinger. Since Kissinger has a mixed legacy of adulation and criticism at home, and even amongst the international community it is enough for people to understand why diplomacy is said to be an "art full of regrets". However, this did not hold Kissinger back from thinking about and exploring the disputes between countries and continuously striving to come up with solutions. I believe it is a great virtue of a diplomat.

Will you make it difficult for me?

In 2010, I had the opportunity to share the stage with Dr. Kissinger for the first time at a closed-door forum in Europe. After arriving at the hotel, I found an event brochure mentioning "China's Development and Policies" as the topic of discussion, which was to be chaired by Kissinger and I was the keynote speaker. It was very difficult to understand where to start on such a broad topic.



Fù Yíng in conversation with Kissinger, 2015
Image: VCG

In the evening, during the welcome dinner, I sat next to Kissinger at the table and asked him how I should proceed with my speech the next day. “Will you make it difficult for me?” he replied with a smile, leaving me confused. In the following years, we shared the stage many times and each time we met, he smiled and posed the same question, “will you make it difficult for me?”. Later, I realised that he often posed this question so that his counterpart feels at ease and does not contradict oneself out of nervousness.

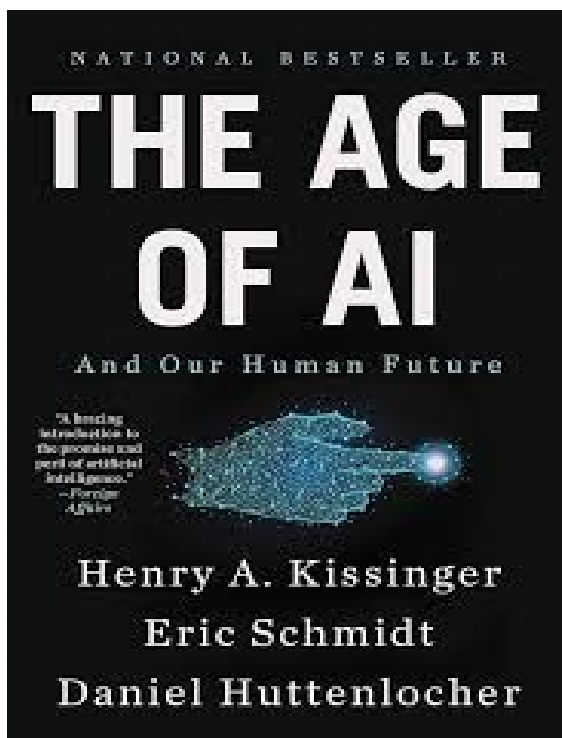
At a forum in Europe, Dr. Kissinger told me that people were curious to learn about China and my insights on China would be completely new to them, he gave me a platform to speak freely. During my talk, I spoke about China’s view on world peace and development and, I used “trend” to express the Chinese word 勢 (*shi*). Kissinger interrupted and said, “Let me

explain this word to the audience for you. He said that the English word ‘trend’ is not synonymous with 勢 (*shi*) as the latter is a typical Chinese political concept. He said the term 勢 (*shi*) is like an unstoppable torrent gushing down a mountain, it is the responsibility of the leaders to find out where the 勢 (*shi*) is and guide people along the 勢 (*shi*) to achieve success.

I admired Dr. Kissinger’s childlike acumen and curiosity about things and ideas that were new to him, it could be one of the reasons for his unending desire to learn. The knowledge he had acquired through years of engagements knows no bounds, this made him even more curious and have an open mind about people and things. Later, I was fortunate enough to meet him frequently in New York and Beijing. Every time we met, he encouraged me and my team to express our views. He was so interested in knowing our views that he would ask us to answer first and one could see excitement in his eyes when we answered.

Before parting ways, he would encourage us to let people (Americans) know what Chinese people think about these important issues and why. His curiosity seemed to be ceaseless, even in his old age, he pursued knowledge in new fields

such as artificial intelligence because he was concerned about its implications for the future of humankind. In his last book, *The Age of AI: And Our Human Future*, he appealed to the United States and China to work together to address and tackle the uncertainties brought by technological advancement and deal with potential risks.



The Age of AI
Source: amazon.in

“Looking at the issue from a philosophical perspective”

In his last years, Dr. Kissinger raised concerns about the direction in which the world was heading as well as on the deteriorating Sino-US bilateral relations. The title of the last section of his book *World Order* was “Where do we go from

here?”, which was also the question he asked time and again. During the Obama administration, he advocated that “the United States and China must coexist”. In an article published in *Foreign Affairs*, in March 2012, Kissinger explained whether the United States would enter into a confrontation with China. He believed that conflict was a choice, not a necessity, and also warned of possible risks and proposed a way to deal with them. “Thus, both sides need to explain their actions in a convincing manner and regard them as a normal part of international affairs, rather than letting these actions cause an alarm. The inevitable tendency to impinge on each other should not be equated with a conscious drive to contain or dominate, so long as both can maintain the distinction and calibrate their actions accordingly. China and the United States will not necessarily transcend the ordinary operation of great power rivalry, but they owe it to themselves, and the world, to make an effort to do so,” he wrote. Perhaps, at the time very few people paid close attention to his words, and despite living thousands of kilometres away from China, he was able to sense the looming crisis.



Hu Jintao and Kissinger
Source: ncuscr.org



Obama with Kissinger
Source: (Mandel Ngan/AFP/Getty) – vox.com



Obama welcoming Hu Jintao
Source: en.wikipedia.org

When Dr. Kissinger visited Beijing in 2018, Sino-US relations were already at a low ebb due to the trade war. I asked him about his opinion on the two prevailing views of Sino-US relations over dinner. One, over the past 40 years, despite setbacks Sino-US relations always returned to a normal state, will this time be any different? The other is that Sino-US relations have undergone a long-lasting paradigm shift. Although Dr. Kissinger answered tactfully but the conclusion was clear that the Sino-US relations have changed for good. He further touched upon China's development and the exchanges between these two countries in the past 40 years and added that due to a shift in the balance of power, the United States and China need to explore a fresh paradigm of interaction at a new level.

It will not be practical to think that Kissinger's persistent proposal for a stable Sino-US relationship was entirely due to his goodwill and support for China, because a fine diplomat is first and foremost a patriot. Therefore, Kissinger's foremost task would be to safeguard the US' interest and to maintain the US' supremacy in the world. As an eminent geopolitical expert and strategist, Kissinger viewed Sino-US relations from the perspective of great power rivalry.

During a talk at the National Committee on US-China Relations, in November 2019, Kissinger said, “there is no doubt that in many ways China’s development poses a challenge to the US.”



Kissinger visits Peking University, 2019
Source: english.pku.edu.cn/news

However, he always advocated to prevent Sino-US competition from turning into a great power rivalry. Moreover, based on his experience and vast understanding of international relations and history, he understood the importance and necessity of embracing each other’s interests when it comes to great powers. Kissinger, while interacting with the students at Peking University in November 2019, said, “the biggest challenge we face today in the Sino-US bilateral relationship is that it is going through an adverse phase.” He further said that if the situation persists it might escalate into a war-like situation compelling other countries to choose a side and dividing the world. He went on to conclude that misunderstandings lead to confrontations. Hence, in the following

years, he constantly advocated for better Sino-US relations and warned them of the risks if they fell into a confrontation.

Dr. Kissinger attended the annual dinner hosted by the National Committee on US-China Relations on 24 October 2023 in New York. In the video, he was seen giving a speech with a bandage on his hand which prompted a feeling among the audience that this could be his last public speech. During the speech, he said “He believed that the Sino-US relations are based on mutual understanding and these two countries have a unique ability to bring peace and progress as well as war and conflict to the world.” He further added that his half-a-century-old belief that these two countries would find a way out of the crisis, still persists.

Kissinger visited China in July 2023, two months after his 100th birth anniversary. During the visit, President Xi Jinping emphasised that China and the United States can achieve mutual success and common prosperity. The key is to follow the three principles of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence, and win-win cooperation. It is on this basis, China is willing to discuss with the United States the right way for the two countries to get along and steadily advance Sino-US relations. To which Kissinger replied that

“under the current circumstances, it is important to abide by the principles set out in the Shanghai Communiqué, understand the extreme importance of the one-China principle to China, and steer the development of US-China relations in a positive direction.”

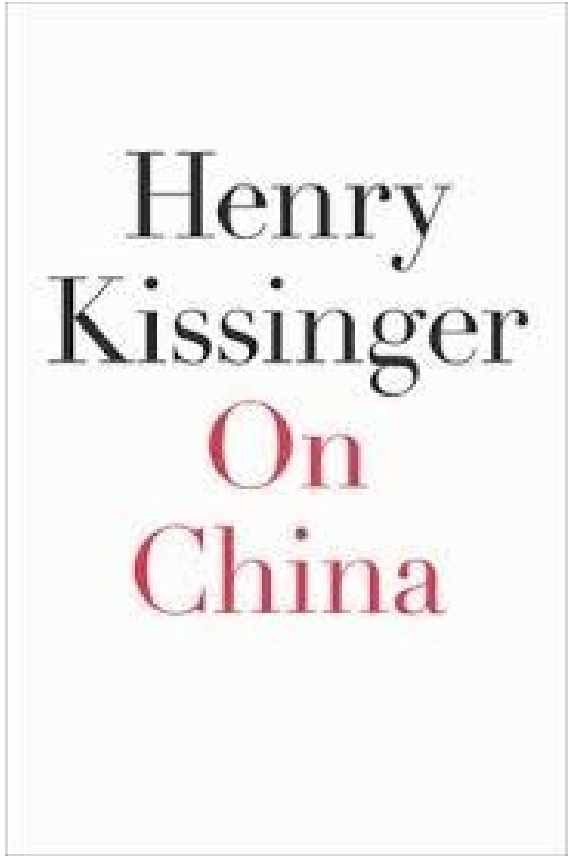


Zhou Enlai serves Peking Duck to Kissinger during his 1971 secret visit to China. The visit was code-named “Marco Polo.”
Source: globaltimes.cn

After his first secret visit to China in 1971 to initiate the process of establishing diplomatic relations between these two countries, he visited China over 100 times. However, the July visit turned out to be his last visit to China. In my opinion, what prompted him to visit China so frequently was his eagerness to know China better by constantly updating his understanding of China. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the United States, he visited China quite frequently, sometimes several times a year,

which helped him to establish contacts in China with senior leaders as well as ordinary citizens. He would meet with college students with the same enthusiasm after meeting with senior leaders and discuss the same ideas that he had discussed with them, the ideas were so mature that the students understood them only later in life and appreciated them. He liked to put problems in the endless stream of history and observe and analyse them from a long-term perspective. To put this in his own words: “looking at problems from a philosophical perspective”.

Dr. Kissinger has written a plethora of books in his lifetime; however, he dedicated the longest time and effort to writing, *On China*. The book is not only an interpretation of Chinese thought, culture, and philosophy from a unique perspective but also an exploration of China’s policies and the Chinese way of handling major events. This book has given the world a fresh perspective on understanding China. Dr. Kissinger can be listed as one of those few people in the US, who had closely observed China throughout his life and was not threatened by China’s progress. This is one of the reasons why he is regarded as an old friend by the Chinese people.



On China by Kissinger
Source: en.wikipedia.org

US relations. However, the challenges in their bilateral relations still exist and it will take time to establish a constructive relationship. Moreover, a plethora of books, articles, and advice left by Dr. Kissinger is worth reading and pondering upon. President Xi Jinping’s condolence message to President Biden over Kissinger’s demise that “both sides should work to carry forward friendship between the Chinese and American peoples, promote the healthy and steady development of Sino-US relations, benefit the people of both countries and make due contributions to world peace and development”. It is the best way we can remember Dr. Kissinger.

Shortly after Kissinger’s last visit to China, President Xi Jinping met with President Biden at the Filoli Estate in San Francisco on 15 November 2023. The two heads of state carried out in-depth exchanges to explore the right way for China and the United States to get along with each other as two great powers, further clarifying their shared responsibilities and formulating a future-oriented “San Francisco Vision”. Following a challenging period in Sino-US bilateral relations, Dr. Kissinger would be relieved to see stability in Sino-

Series Editor: **Hemant Adlakha**

Hemant Adlakha teaches Chinese at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, and is Vice-Chairperson, and Honorary Fellow, Institute of Chinese Studies, New Delhi.

Email: haidemeng@gmail.com

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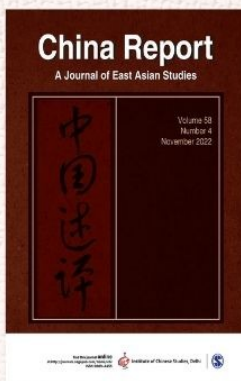


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INSTITUTE OF CHINESE STUDIES
B-371 (3rd Floor), Chittaranjan Park,
Kalkaji, New Delhi 110019
Landline: +91-11-40564823

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