OPEN PEER REVIEW

Explanation of the Factors Influencing China's Foreign Policy toward the United States from a Geopsychological Perspective

Ghasem Ahmadi[1], Rahmat Hajimineh[2*], Nozar Shafiee[3]

1. Department of International Relations, NT.C., Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran
2. Department of Law, ET.C., Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran
3. Associate Professor, Department of International Relations, Faculty of Law and Political Science, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran

*** Corresponding author email address:** Rahmat.Hajimineh@iau.ac.ir

Received: 2025-06-01	**Revised:** 2025-10-15	**Accepted:** 2025-10-23	**Initial Publish:** 2025-11-18	**Final Publish:** 2026-06-01

EDITOR:
Richard Dodder
Emeritus Professor of Sociology and of Statistics, Oklahoma State University Stillwater, Oklahoma, USA. Email: rdodder@hotmail.com
REVIEWER 1:
Mrinalini Puranik
National Health Mission, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, India. Email: MriPuranik@gmail.com
REVIEWER 2:
Thanuja Kulasooriya
Department Soil Science, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna, Mapalana, Kamburupitiya, Sri Lanka. Email: thkulasooriya@soil.ruh.ac.lk

1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the section describing complex interdependence (Introduction, paragraph 4), the authors reference the term but do not explain how it differs from traditional IR theories. A clearer articulation of how geopsychology complements or challenges complex interdependence would strengthen theoretical grounding.

In Research Background, paragraph 1, the authors cite several studies but do not clearly show how their study advances the literature. The review reads as a list rather than a synthesis. It would help to explicitly compare the present study's contribution to each referenced work.

In the section "Geopsychological Analysis and China's Foreign Relations", paragraph 3 jumps abruptly from the Opium Wars to the Taiping and Boxer rebellions without transitional explanation. Strengthening chronological coherence would enhance readability.

The statement in Geopsychological Analysis, paragraph 2 that "this humiliation stemmed from the 'unequal treaties,' through which Western powers… victimized China" is accurate but presented in an emotionally charged manner. As an academic article, it should adopt more analytical and less expressive language.

In paragraph 3 of the same section, the authors write that China developed "a deep sense of inferiority." This is a broad psychological claim applied to an entire civilization. Please provide empirical or historiographical support, or rephrase to avoid untestable generalizations.

The Strategic Culture section claims China promotes pacifism but also behaves aggressively. This contradiction is hinted at but not analytically resolved. The authors should clearly outline whether they view strategic culture as primarily rhetorical, instrumental, or identity-driven.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In The Middle Kingdom Perception, paragraph 2, the authors write: "Those who were not Chinese were either 'barbarians' or, at best, tributary subjects." This is historically true but oversimplifies multiple tributary-system eras. Consider elaborating on distinctions between different periods (Han, Tang, Ming, Qing) to add academic accuracy.

The quote attributed to Xi Jie in the Middle Kingdom section is lengthy and breaks analytical flow. Summarizing the quote while retaining its conceptual meaning may improve cohesion.

In the Tianxia section, paragraph 6, the authors state: "No Western expert has yet provided a fully convincing explanation of why Tianxia should be so relevant…" This is too sweeping. Several scholars have offered partial explanations. Replace this with more nuanced critique and cite specific shortcomings.

In Nationalism, paragraph 5, the article states: "China today is a 'rising economic and military power' that carries within it a long-standing record of grievances…" This claim mixes contemporary and historical elements without explaining how the grievances manifest in modern policymaking. Clarification is needed.

The description of PLA actions during Xi's India visit (Strategic Culture section) reads as anecdotal. The article should contextualize this within China's broader strategic behavior rather than presenting a single case study as representative evidence.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor's decision: Accepted.
Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.