



The Diplomacy of Migration: Transnational Lives and the Making of U.S.-Chinese Relations in the Cold War (The United States in the World)

By Meredith Oyen



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During the Cold War, both Chinese and American officials employed a wide range of migration policies and practices to pursue legitimacy, security, and prestige. They focused on allowing or restricting immigration, assigning refugee status, facilitating student exchanges, and enforcing deportations. *The Diplomacy of Migration* focuses on the role these practices played in the relationship between the United States and the Republic of China both before and after the move to Taiwan. Meredith Oyen identifies three patterns of migration diplomacy: migration legislation as a tool to achieve foreign policy goals, migrants as subjects of diplomacy and propaganda, and migration controls that shaped the Chinese American community.

Using sources from diplomatic and governmental archives in the United States, the Republic of China on Taiwan, the People's Republic of China, and the United Kingdom, Oyen applies a truly transnational perspective. *The Diplomacy of Migration* combines important innovations in the field of diplomatic history with new international trends in migration history to show that even though migration issues were often considered "low stakes" or "low risk" by foreign policy professionals concerned with Cold War politics and the nuclear age, they were neither "no risk" nor unimportant to larger goals. Instead, migration diplomacy became a means of facilitating other foreign policy priorities, even when doing so came at great cost for migrants themselves.



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Editorial Review

Review

"Oyen makes a brilliant effort to bridge diplomatic history and Chinese migration history by bringing into sharp focus the diplomacy of migration and its impact on the triangular relationship between the United States, Nationalist China, and Communist China."?Mao Lin, *H-Net Reviews* (April 2016)

"In *The Diplomacy of Migration*, Meredith Oyen takes an in-depth look at the issue of citizenship for Chinese Americans, particularly around questions of national belonging and dual citizenship, as well as the changing domestic politics of migrant communities in the United States and Southeast Asia. Oyen's book is extremely well researched; particularly impressive is her deep investigation of Chinese archives in both the PRC and ROC and her extensive use of Chinese-language primary and secondary sources throughout the work."?Mary Lui, Yale University

"Meredith Oyen's *The Diplomacy of Migration* is a 'must-read' for scholars of migration and U.S.-Sino relations. Impeccably researched and compellingly written, the book demonstrates how migration, foreign policy, and domestic politics were interwoven into the relationship between the United States, China, and Taiwan. In telling this story, Oyen urges us to reconsider what we know about the evolution of the United States' relationship with China."?Carl Bon Tempo, University at Albany, author of *Americans at the Gate: The United States and Refugees during the Cold War*

"This is a compelling, well-crafted book that significantly widens and deepens our understanding of U.S.-China relations during the Cold War. Meredith Oyen breaks new ground by revealing how the use of migration policy for diplomatic goals was woven into the very fabric of the alliance between Nationalist China and the United States from the early 1940s through the early 1970s. Wide-ranging, meticulously researched and based on archives from several continents, *The Diplomacy of Migration* skillfully dissects the multiple ways in which both countries used policies ranging from the wartime repeal of exclusion, immigrant selection criteria, deportation and repatriation, and the politics of refugee resettlement to send positive or negative signals to one another, bolster their international prestige and support, and even remake the community of Chinese Americans in ways that both governments sought."?Glen Peterson, University of British Columbia, author of *Overseas Chinese in the People's Republic of China*

About the Author

Meredith Oyen is Assistant Professor of History at University of Maryland Baltimore County.

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