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"Theorizing Economic Diplomacy: The Case of China (1949-2015)"

Abstract

There is a lack of proper analytical framework for explaining economic diplomacy. A new conceptualization of economic diplomacy is made, defining economic diplomacy as a two-way conversion between wealth and power. A theory of economic diplomacy is to explain the direction, effectiveness and efficiency of the wealth-power conversion. I take China as a case study and review the evolution of China's economic diplomacy from Mao Zedong to Xi Jinping (1949-2015) with an aim to identifying the major factors that prompt the shifts in China's economic diplomacy in different historical periods. Several such factors are identified, namely ideology, leaders' perception of domestic and international situation, leader-bureaucracy interactions, as well as bureaucratic competition.