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MAO AND SINO-AMERICAN RELATIONS

Chen Jian

Whereas Weathersby focused most of her attention on the relationship between Stalin and Kim Il Sung, Chen Jian, in the excerpt that follows, examines the thinking and strategy of the Chinese Communist leader, Mao Zedong. Chen, a professor of history at the University of Virginia, is one of the world's foremost experts on the history of Chinese communist foreign policy. Using the limited archival materials that have become available in addition to memoirs and printed sources, Chen has reoriented our interpretations of Mao's motives and goals.

Like so many recent students of the international history of the Cold War, Chen emphasizes the importance of ideology, history, and culture. Foreign and domestic policy, Chen insists, are inseparable. Mao's actions must be understood in terms of his commitment to national liberation, his desire to restore Chinese grandeur, and his admiration of Chinese culture. Mao's decision to enter the Korean War in the autumn of 1950, therefore, was not only a reaction to General Douglas MacArthur's military offensive that brought American power to the shores of the Yalu River and to the borders of China. Mao, argues Chen, was not merely reacting defensively and strategically. Rather, Mao was also exploiting Korean developments to sustain and deepen his internal revolution. Fighting the Americans provided an opportunity to take the revolution to a new stage, to eradicate domestic foes, and to catalyze internal support for societal transformations of an unprecedented nature. Anti-American discourse could be used to harness the sentiment of the Chinese people in favor of thoroughgoing changes that would make China 'into a land of universal justice and equality.'

Chen reconfigures categories of analysis. Like revisionist scholars, Chen is very sympathetic to looking within nations to understand the dynamics of revolutionary change. Stalin was not responsible for Chinese policy. Mao himself was an agent of history, with aspirations of his own. His ideas not only encapsulated elements of Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism, but also incorporated key ingredients of traditional Chinese culture and national identity. Yet Chen, like generations of traditional scholars, also shows that Mao, of his own volition, initially did look to Stalin for guidance and inspiration and did want to support revolutionary forces throughout Asia. Mao, says Chen, was not merely reacting to American hostility, but to the internal logic of his revolutionary project. During the Korean War, his differences with Stalin grew, but his determination to defeat imperialism and assert Chinese

greatness did not wane. Chinese-American enmity would be an enduring legacy of the Korean War.

Readers will have much to ponder in Chen's account of Mao and the Korean War. Does Chen underestimate the role of American actions in shaping Mao's thinking and Mao's policies? Does he exaggerate the bonds that linked Mao to Stalin and to Kim and other Asian revolutionaries? Or does he properly illuminate the extent to which the foreign policies of revolutionary regimes are the inevitable consequence of their yearning for radical transformation at home, agendas that cannot be controlled by foreign powers, even those as powerful as the United States? How well did US officials understand the factors motivating Mao and Chinese foreign policy? What was the impact of US actions on Chinese attitudes and policies?

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Did there exist any chance in 1949–50 for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the United States to reach an accommodation or, at least, to avoid a confrontation? Scholars who believe that Washington "lost a chance" to pursue a nonconfrontational relationship with the CCP generally base their argument on two assumptions – that the Chinese Communists earnestly sought US recognition to expedite their country's postwar economic reconstruction, and that the relationship between the CCP and the Soviet Union was vulnerable because of Moscow's failure to offer sufficient support to the Communists during the Chinese civil war. These scholars thus claim that it was Washington's anti-Communist and pro-Guomindang policy that forced the CCP to treat the United States as an enemy.[1] This claim, though ostensibly critical of Washington's management of relations with China, is ironically American-centered on the methodological level, implying that the Chinese Communist policy toward the United States was simply passive reaction to Washington's policy toward China.

This chapter, with insights gained from newly accessible Chinese and, in some places, Russian materials, argues that the CCP's confrontation with the United States reflected the revolutionary essence of the party's perception and management of China's external relations, and that the CCP's alliance with the Soviet Union and confrontation with the United States must be understood in relation to the party's need to enhance the inner dynamics of the Chinese revolution after its nationwide victory. In the environment in which the Chinese Communists and the Americans found themselves in 1948–49, it was next to impossible for the two sides to establish a normal working relationship, let alone for them to reach an accommodation.

There is no doubt that Washington's continuous support of the Guomindang (GMD) during China's civil war played an important role in the CCP's adoption of an anti-American policy. But America's pro-Jiang policy alone does not offer a comprehensive explanation of the origins of the CCP-American crisis. In order to comprehend the CCP's policy toward the United States, we

must explore the historical-cultural environment in which it emerged, thus revealing the dynamics and logic underlying it.

The Chinese Communist revolution emerged in a land that was historically known as the Central Kingdom.[2] The Chinese during traditional times viewed China as civilization in toto. In modern times, this worldview had been severely challenged when China had to face the cruel reality that its door was opened by the superior forces of Western powers, and that the very survival of the Chinese nation was at stake. Mao's and his comrades' generation became indignant when they saw the West, including the United States, treat the "old," declining China with arrogance and a strong sense of superiority. They also despised the Chinese governments from the Manchu dynasty to the regimes of the warlords, which had failed to protect China's national integrity and sovereignty. An emotional commitment to national liberation provided the crucial momentum in Mao's and his comrades' choice of a Marxist-Leninist-style revolution.[3] For Mao and his comrades, the final goal of their revolution was not only the total transformation of the old Chinese state and society they saw as corrupt and unjust; they also wanted to change China's weak power status, proving to the world the strength and influence of Chinese culture. In the process, they would redefine the values and rules underlying the international system. In short, they wanted to restore China's *central* position in the international community.

Mao and his comrades never regarded the Communist seizure of power in China in 1949 as the revolution's conclusion. Rather, Mao was very much concerned about how to maintain and enhance the revolution's momentum after its nationwide victory. Indeed, this concern dominated Mao's thinking during the formation of the People's Republic and would be a preoccupation during the latter half of his life. Consequently, Mao's approach toward China's external relations in general and his policy toward the United States in particular became heavily influenced by this primary concern. Throughout 1949–50, the Maoist political discourse challenged the values and codes of behavior attached to "US imperialism," pointing out that they belonged to the "old world," which the CCP was determined to destroy. While defining the "American threat," Mao and his fellow CCP leaders never limited their vision merely to the possibility of direct American military intervention in China; they emphasized long-range American hostility toward the victorious Chinese revolution, especially the US imperialist attempt to isolate the revolution from without and sabotage it from within.[4] Indeed, when Mao justified the CCP's decision not to pursue relations with the United States, his most consistent and powerful argument was that the decision would deprive the Americans of a means of sabotaging the Chinese revolution.[5]

It is also important to point out that while Washington's hostility toward the Chinese revolution offended Mao and his comrades, the perceived American disdain for China as weak and the Chinese as inferior made them angry. In the anti-American propaganda campaign following the publication of the *China White Paper*, Mao sought to expose the "reactionary" and

"vulnerable" nature of US imperialism and to encourage ordinary Chinese people's national self-respect. In other words, Mao used anti-American discourse as a means of mobilizing the masses for his continuous revolution, a practice that would reach its first peak in 1950–53, during the "Great War of Resisting America and Assisting Korea" (the Chinese name for China's participation in the Korean War).

The CCP's adoption of an anti-American policy in 1949–50 had deep roots in both China's history and its modern experiences. Sharp divergences in political ideology (communism versus capitalism) and perceived national interests contributed to the shaping of the Sino-American confrontation; and suspicion and hostility were further crystallized as the result of Washington's continuous support to the GMD. But, from a Chinese perspective, the most profound reason underlying the CCP's anti-American policy was Mao's grand plans for transforming China's state, society, and international outlook. Even though it might have been possible for Washington to change the concrete course of its China policy (which was highly unlikely given the policy's complicated background), it would have been impossible for the United States to alter the course and goals of the Chinese revolution, let alone the historical-cultural environment that gave birth to the event.

New Chinese and Russian evidence reveals that the relationship between the CCP and Moscow in 1949 was much more intimate and substantial than many Western scholars previously realized. While it is true that problems and disagreements (sometimes even serious ones) existed between the Chinese and Soviet Communists, as well as between Mao Zedong and Stalin (as in any partnership), the new evidence clearly points out that cooperation, or the willingness to cooperate, was the dominant aspect of CCP-Soviet relations in 1949.

During China's civil war in 1946–49, the CCP's relations with Moscow were close but not harmonious.[6] When it became clear that the Chinese Communists were going to win the civil war, both the CCP and the Soviet Union felt the need to strengthen their relationship. From late 1947, Mao actively prepared to visit the Soviet Union to "discuss important domestic and international issues" with Stalin.[7] The extensive telegraphic exchanges between Mao and Stalin culminated in two important secret missions in 1949. From 31 January to 7 February, Anastas Mikoyan, a politburo member of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, visited Xibaipo, the CCP headquarters at that time. Mao and other CCP leaders had extensive discussions with him, introducing to him the CCP's strategies and policies. In particular, Mao explained to Mikoyan the CCP's foreign policy of "making a fresh start" and "cleaning the house before entertaining guests."[8] From late June to mid-August, Liu Shaoqi, the CCP's second in command, visited Moscow. During the visit, Stalin apologized for failing to give sufficient assistance to the CCP during the civil war and promised that the Soviet Union would give the Chinese Communists political support and substantial assistance

in military and other areas. Moreover, the Soviets and the Chinese discussed a "division of labor" to promote the world revolution, and they reached a general consensus: the Soviet Union would remain the center of the international proletarian revolution, and promoting revolution in the East would become primarily China's duty. Liu left Moscow accompanied by ninety-six Russian experts who were to assist China's military buildup and economic reconstruction.[9]

On 30 June 1949, Mao Zedong issued his famous "lean-to-one-side" statement. In a long article titled "On People's Democratic Dictatorship," he announced Communist China's special relationship with the Soviet Union. He said that revolutionary China must "unite in a common struggle with those nations of the world that treat us as equal and unite with the peoples of all countries – that is, ally ourselves with the Soviet Union, with the People's Democratic Countries, and with the proletariat and the broad masses of the people in all other countries, and form an international united front . . . We must lean to one side."[10]

Why did Mao choose these extraordinary terms? The statement was obviously linked to the longtime revolutionary policy of the Chinese Communist Party of attaching itself to the international "progressive forces" led by the Soviet Union. By the late 1940s, CCP leaders clearly perceived the postwar world as divided into two camps, one headed by the Soviet Union and the other by the United States, and regarded their revolution as a part of the Soviet-led international proletarian movement.[11]

The lean-to-one-side approach also grew out of the CCP's assessment of the serious nature of the threat from Western imperialist countries, especially from the United States, to the completion of the Chinese revolution. As the CCP neared final victory in China's civil war in 1949, Mao and his fellow Chinese Communist leaders became very much concerned about the prospect of direct US intervention in China.[12] Although the American military did not intervene directly during the latter phase of the civil war, the CCP chairman and his comrades, given their belief in the aggressive and evil nature of Western imperialism, continued to view the Western capitalist countries in general and the United States in particular as dangerous enemies.[13] In the eyes of Mao and his comrades, "it was the possibility of military intervention from imperialist countries that made it necessary for China to ally itself with other socialist countries."[14]

Mao's lean-to-one-side decision cannot be viewed in terms of these ideological commitments and security concerns only, though. It also must be understood in the context of his determination to maintain and enhance the inner dynamics of the Chinese Communist revolution at the time of its nationwide victory.

It was primarily for the purpose of creating new momentum for the Chinese revolution that the CCP leadership made three fundamental decisions on Communist China's external relations, what Zhou Enlai referred to as "making a fresh start," "cleaning the house before entertaining guests," and

"leaning to one side."[15] These three decisions were closely interconnected. While the first two represented CCP leaders' determination not to be influenced by the legacy of "old" China's diplomatic practice, the last one reflected their conviction that an alliance with the Soviet Union would help destroy any remaining illusions among the Chinese people, especially the intellectuals, of the utility of assistance from Western capitalist countries. Because the Soviet Union had been the first socialist country in the world and had established the only example for building a socialist state and society, Mao's continuous revolution had to follow the example of the Soviet experience. In this regard, the argument of Zhang Baijia, a leading Chinese scholar in Chinese diplomatic history, certainly makes good sense: "Contrary to the prevalent view, Mao treated the 'lean-to-one-side' concept as a grand strategy to influence the party's foreign *and* domestic policies. The key question Mao tried to answer by introducing the lean-to-one-side approach was how to define the *general* direction of New China's development."[16]

The Chinese Communist efforts to achieve a strategic alliance with the Soviet Union culminated in December 1949–February 1950 when Mao personally visited the Soviet Union. The CCP chairman's experience during the visit, however, was uneasy. During his first meeting with Stalin on 16 December, the Soviet leader asked him what he hoped to achieve from the visit. The CCP chairman, according to his interpreter's recollections, first replied that he wanted to "bring about something that not only looked nice but also tasted delicious" – a reference to his wish to sign a new Sino-Soviet treaty.[17] However, Stalin greatly disappointed Mao by initially emphasizing that it was neither in Moscow's nor in Beijing's interest to abolish the 1945 Sino-Soviet treaty the Soviet Union had signed with the GMD.[18] Mao's visit then hit a deadlock for almost three weeks before the Soviets relented.[19] Chinese premier Zhou Enlai arrived in Moscow on 20 January to negotiate the details of the new alliance treaty, which was signed finally on 14 February 1950. The Chinese, however, had to agree to allow the Soviets to maintain their privileges in China's Northeast and Xinjiang[20] ; in exchange, the Soviets agreed to increase military and other material support to China, including providing air-defense installations in coastal areas of the People's Republic.[21]

The Sino-Soviet alliance treaty would greatly enhance the PRC's security, and, more important, it would expand the CCP's capacity to promote the post-victory revolution at home. With the backing of the Soviet Union, Mao and his comrades would occupy a more powerful position to wipe out the political, economic, social, and cultural legacies of the "old" China and carry out "new" China's state-building and societal transformation on the CCP's terms. It was not just rhetoric when the CCP chairman, after returning to Beijing, told his comrades that the Sino-Soviet alliance would help the party cope with both domestic and international threats to the Chinese revolution.[22]

On the other hand, however, Mao could clearly sense that divergences persisted between Stalin and himself. Stalin's raw use of the language of power put off Mao. Mao's wish to discuss revolutionary ideals and the

Communists' historical responsibilities came to nothing. The CCP chairman never enjoyed meeting Stalin face to face, and he was extremely sensitive to the way Stalin treated him, the revolutionary leader from the Central Kingdom, as the inferior "younger brother."[23]

The first major test for the Sino-Soviet alliance came just eight months after it had been established, when, in October 1950, the CCP leadership decided to dispatch Chinese troops to enter the Korean War. From Beijing's perspective, such a test not only allowed Mao and his comrades to define more specifically the alliance's utility for China's national security; it also provided them with a valuable opportunity to achieve a better understanding of how the alliance would serve Mao's revolutionary projects. China's Korean War experience, consequently, would profoundly influence both Mao's concerns about the prospect of the Chinese revolution and the future development of the Sino-Soviet alliance.

Mao and the CCP leadership faced a dilemma on the Korean issue. Mao and his comrades were reluctant to see a war break out in Korea because they worried that that might complicate the situation in East Asia and jeopardize the CCP's effort to liberate Taiwan, which was still occupied by Nationalist forces.[24] Yet, because Mao and his comrades were eager to revive China's central position on the international scene through supporting revolutionary movements in other countries (especially in East Asia), and because profound historical connections existed between the Chinese and North Korean Communists, it would have been inconceivable for Mao to veto Kim's plans to unify his country through a revolutionary war.[25] From 1949 to 1950, in meetings with North Korean leaders (including Kim Il Sung in mid-May 1950), Mao made it clear that the CCP supported the Korean revolution but hoped that the Koreans would not initiate the invasion of the South until the PLA had seized Taiwan.[26] In the meantime, during Mao's 1949–50 visit to the Soviet Union, the CCP chairman shared with Stalin his belief that it was unlikely for the United States to involve itself in a revolutionary civil war in East Asia, thus enhancing Stalin's determination to back Kim's plans to attack the South.[27] Furthermore, from summer 1949 to spring 1950, the Chinese sent 50,000 to 70,000 ethnic Korean PLA soldiers (with weapons) back to Korea.[28] As a result, Mao virtually gave Kim's plan a green light.

The Korean War erupted on 25 June 1950, and US president Harry Truman promptly decided to come to the rescue of Syngman Rhee's South Korean regime and to dispatch the Seventh Fleet to "neutralize" the Taiwan Strait, a decision that turned the Korean War into an international crisis. Chinese leaders quickly decided to postpone the invasion of Taiwan and to focus on dealing with the crisis in Korea.[29] On 13 July the CCP leadership formally established the Northeast Border Defense Army (NEBDA), assigning it with the task of preparing for military intervention in Korea in the event that the war turned against North Korea.[30] On 18 August, after over a quarter million Chinese troops had taken up positions along the Chinese-Korean

border, Mao set the end of September as the deadline for these troops to complete preparations for military operations in Korea.[31]

Beijing based its handling of the Korean crisis on the assumption that if China entered the Korean War, the Soviet Union would honor its obligations in accordance with the Sino-Soviet alliance treaty and provide China with all kinds of support, including supplies of ammunition, military equipment, and air cover for Chinese land forces. Early in July, when the Chinese leaders informed Stalin of the decision to establish the NEBDA, Stalin supported the plan and promised that if the Chinese troops were to fight in Korea, the Soviet Union would "try to provide air cover for these units."[32] In the following weeks the Soviets accelerated military deliveries to China, and a Soviet air force division, with 122 MiG-15 fighters, entered China's Northeast to help with air defense there.[33]

When the course of the war reversed after US troops landed at Inchon on 15 September, however, Stalin's attitude regarding Soviet military assistance changed. He became more determined than ever to avoid a direct military confrontation with the United States. In a telegram to Chinese leaders dated 1 October, Stalin pointed out that the situation in Korea was grave and that without outside support, the Korean Communist regime would collapse. He then asked the Chinese to dispatch their troops to Korea. He did not mention what support the Soviet Union would offer China, let alone touch on the key question of Soviet air support.[34]

At this moment, serious differences in opinions already existed among top Chinese leaders on whether or not China should enter the war. Mao favored dispatching troops to Korea, and on 2 October he personally drafted a long telegram to respond to Stalin's request, informing Stalin that the Chinese leadership had decided "to send a portion of our troops, under the name of [Chinese People's] Volunteers, to Korea, assisting the Korean comrades to fight the troops of the United States and its running dog Syngman Rhee." Mao summarized the reasons for this decision, emphasizing that even though China's intervention might cause a war between China and the United States, it was necessary for the sake of the Korean and Eastern revolutions. Mao also made it clear that in order to defeat the American troops in Korea, China needed substantial Soviet military support.[35] He used plain language to ask Stalin to clarify "whether or not the Soviet Union can provide us with assistance in supplying weapons, can dispatch a volunteer air force into Korea, and can deploy large numbers of air force units to assist us in strengthening our air defense in Beijing, Tianjin, Shenyang, Shanghai, and Nanjing if the United States uses its air force to bombard these places."[36]

Mao, however, apparently did not dispatch this telegram, probably because the opinions among top CCP leaders were yet to be unified and he also realized the need to bargain with Stalin on the Soviet air support issue.[37] According to Russian sources, Mao met with Nikolai Rochshin, the Soviet ambassador to China, later on 2 October, informing him that because dispatching Chinese troops to Korea "may entail extremely serious consequences," including

"provoking an open conflict between the United States and China," many leaders in Beijing believed that China should "show caution" in entering the Korean War. Mao told Stalin that the Chinese leadership had not decided whether to send troops to Korea.[38]

Over the ensuing two weeks, the Sino-Soviet alliance underwent a major test. Before October (when Stalin informed Kim of Mao's communication), the Soviet leader cabled the Chinese leadership, advising Beijing that for the sake of China's security interests as well as the interests of the world proletarian revolution, it was necessary for China to send troops to Korea. Stalin warned Mao and his comrades that Beijing's failure to intervene could result in grave consequences first for China's Northeast, then for all China, and then for the entire world revolution. Stalin again failed to mention how the Soviet Union would support China if Chinese troops did enter operations in Korea.[39]

From 3 to 6 October the CCP leadership held a series of strictly secret meetings to discuss the Korean issue. Although most CCP leaders had opposed, or at least had reservations about, entering the war in Korea, Mao used both his authority and his political insights to secure the support of his colleagues for the decision to go to war.[40] On 8 October Mao Zedong formally issued the order to establish the Chinese People's Volunteers (CPV), with Peng Dehuai as the commander,[41] and informed Kim Il Sung of the decision the same evening.[42]

In order to strengthen China's bargaining position in pursuing Soviet military support, Mao found it necessary to "play tough with" Stalin.[43] On 10–11 October, Zhou Enlai met with Stalin at the latter's villa on the Black Sea. Zhou, according to Shi Zhe, Mao's and Zhou's Russian-language interpreter, did not tell Stalin that China had decided to send troops to Korea but persistently brought the discussion around to Soviet military aid, especially air support, for China. Stalin finally agreed to provide China with substantial military support but explained that it was impossible for the Soviet air force to engage in fighting over Korea until two to two and a half months after Chinese land forces entered operations there.[44]

Stalin's ambiguous attitude forced Mao again to order Chinese troops to halt preparations for entering operations in Korea on 12 October.[45] The next day the CCP politburo met again to discuss China's entry into the Korean War. Pushed by Mao, the politburo confirmed that entering the war was in the fundamental interests of the Chinese revolution as well as the Eastern revolution.[46] Mao then authorized Zhou Enlai, who was still in Moscow, to inform Stalin of the decision. At the same time, Mao instructed Zhou to continue to "consult with" the Soviet leaders, to clarify whether they would ask China to lease or to purchase the military equipment that Stalin agreed to provide, and whether the Soviet air force would enter operations in Korea at all.[47]

On 17 October, the day Zhou returned to Beijing, Mao again ordered the troops on the Chinese-Korean border to halt their movements to give him time to learn from Zhou about Stalin's exact position.[48] The next day, when

Mao was convinced that the Soviet Union would provide China with all kinds of military support, including air defense for major Chinese cities and air cover for Chinese troops fighting in Korea in a later stage of the war, he finally ordered Chinese troops to enter the Korean War.[49]

The concerns over China's physical security certainly played an important role in convincing Beijing's leaders to enter the war. Yet factors more complicated than these narrowly defined "security concerns" dominated Mao's conceptual world. When Chinese troops entered the Korean War, Mao meant to pursue a glorious victory over the American-led United Nations (UN) forces. The triumph, he hoped, would transform the challenge and threat posed by the Korean crisis into added political energy for securing Communist control of China's state and society as well as promote the international prestige and influence of the People's Republic.

These plans explain why, at the same time Mao and his comrades were considering entering the Korean War, the CCP leadership started the "Great Movement to Resist America and Assist Korea," with "beating American arrogance" as its central slogan. The party used every means available to stir the "hatred of the US imperialists" among common Chinese, emphasizing that the United States had long engaged in political and economic aggression against China, that the declining capitalist America was not as powerful as it seemed, and that a confrontation between China and the United States was inevitable.[50] When the Chinese troops were crossing the Yalu River to Korea late in October 1950, a nationwide campaign aimed at suppressing "reactionaries and reactionary activities" emerged in China's cities and countryside.[51]

Stalin's behavior of always putting Moscow's own interests ahead of anything else demonstrated to Mao the limits of the Soviet leader's proletarian internationalism. Meanwhile, Mao's decision to rescue the Korean and Eastern revolution at a time of real difficulties inevitably heightened the CCP chairman's sense of moral superiority – he was able to help others out, even if the Soviet "elder brother" could not. As a result, in conceptual and psychological terms, the seed for the future Sino-Soviet split was sown.

During the three years of China's intervention in Korea, Mao consulted with Stalin on almost all important decisions. In December 1950 and January 1951, when Mao and his comrades were deciding to order Chinese troops to cross the 38th parallel, Beijing maintained daily communication with Moscow and received Stalin's unfailing support.[52] In May–June 1951, when Beijing's leaders were considering shifting their policy emphasis from fighting to negotiation to end the war, they had extensive exchanges of opinions with Stalin and did not make the decision until Moscow fully backed the new strategy.[53] After 1952, when the armistice negotiations at Panmunjom hit a deadlock on the prisoner-of-war issue, Beijing consulted with Moscow and concluded that the Chinese/North Korean side would not compromise on this issue until its political and military position had improved.[54]

Mao's decision to send Chinese troops to Korea seemed to have boosted Stalin's confidence in his comrades in Beijing as genuine proletarian

internationalists. During the war years, the Soviet Union provided China with large amounts of ammunition and military equipment. Units of the Soviet air force, based in Manchuria, began to defend the transportation lines across the Chinese-Korean border as early as November 1950 and entered operations over the northern part of North Korea in January 1951.[55] In the meantime, Stalin became more willing to commit Soviet financial and technological resources to China's economic reconstruction – during the war years, as a consequence, the Soviet Union's share in China's foreign trade increased from 30 percent (in 1950) to 56 percent (in 1953).[56] In retrospect it would have been virtually impossible for China to have fought the Korean War without the strategic alliance with the Soviet Union.

Soviet support also played a crucial role in bolstering Mao's plans for continuing the revolution at home. Indeed, China's involvement in the Korean War stimulated a series of political and social transformations in the country that would have been inconceivable during the early stage of the new republic. In the wake of China's entrance into the war, the Communist regime found itself in a powerful position to penetrate almost every area of Chinese society through intensive mass mobilization under the banner of "Resisting America and Assisting Korea."[57] During the three years of war, three nation-wide campaigns swept through China's countryside and cities: the movement to suppress counterrevolutionaries, the land reform movement, and the "Three Antis" and "Five Antis" movements.[58] When the war ended in July 1953, China's society and political landscape had been altered: organized resistance to the new regime had been destroyed; land in the countryside had been redistributed and the landlord class had been eliminated; many of the Communist cadres whom Mao believed had lost the revolutionary momentum had been either "reeducated" or removed from leading positions; and the national bourgeoisie was under the tight control of the Communist state and the "petit-bourgeoise" intellectuals had experienced the first round of Communist reeducation. Consequently, the CCP effectively extended and deepened its organizational control of Chinese society and dramatically promoted its authority and legitimacy in the minds of the Chinese people.

These domestic changes were further facilitated by the fact that during the war, Chinese troops successfully forced the US/UN forces to retreat from the Chinese-Korean border to the 38th parallel, a development that allowed Beijing to call its intervention in Korea a great victory. Mao and his comrades believed that they had won a powerful position from which to claim that international society – friends and foes alike – had to accept China as a Great Power.[59] This position, in turn, would allow Mao, as the mastermind of the war decision, to enjoy political power inside China with far fewer checks and balances than before.

Yet, on another level, the Chinese experience during the Korean War also ground away at some of the cement that kept the Sino-Soviet alliance together. The extreme pragmatism Stalin had demonstrated in his management of the Korean crisis, especially in his failure to commit Soviet air support to China

during the key weeks of October 1950, revealed the superficial nature of the Soviet dictator's proletarian internationalism. What really offended Mao and his comrades, however, was the Soviet request that China pay for much of the military support Beijing had received during the war, which added to China's long-term economic challenges.[60] To the Chinese, Stalin's stinginess made the Soviets seem more like arms merchants than genuine Communist internationalists.

Consequently, although China's Korean War experience made Beijing more dependent on Moscow, psychologically Stalin's attitude bolstered Mao's and his fellow Chinese leaders' sense of moral superiority in relation to their Soviet comrades. Stalin's death in March 1953 further hardened this feeling. This subtle change in Mao's and his comrades' perception of themselves and their comrades in Moscow would leave a critical stamp upon the fate of the Sino-Soviet alliance.

Abbreviations

CCFP	Zhang Shuguang and Chen Jian, eds., *Chinese Communist Foreign Policy and the Cold War in Asia: New Documentary Evidence, 1944–1950* (Chigago: Imprint Publication, 1996)
CWIHP*B*	Cold War International History Project *Bulletin*
DZJJG	Han Huaizhi *et al.*, *Dangdai Zhongguo jundui de junshi gongzuo* (The Military Affairs of the Contemporary Chinese Army), 2 vols. (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue, 1989)
JMZW	*Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao* (Mao Zedong's Manuscripts since the Founding of the People's Republic of China), 13 vols. (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian, 1987–97)
MZN	*Mao Zedong nianpu* (A Chronological Record of Mao Zedong), 3 vols. (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian and Renmin, 1993)
MZW	*Mao Zedong wenji* (A Collection of Mao Zedong's Works), 8 vols. (Beijing: Renmin, 1993–97)
MZX	*Mao Zedong xuanji* (Selected Works of Mao Zedong), 5 vols. (Beijing: Renmin, 1965 and 1977)
ZEWW	*Zhou Enlai waijiao wenxian* (Selected Diplomatic Papers of Zhou Enlai) (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian, 1990)

Notes

1 For a recent symposium focusing on reconsidering the "lost chance" issue, see John Garver, Michael M. Sheng, Odd Arne Westad, and Chen Jian, "Rethinking the Lost Chance in China," with an introduction by Warren I. Cohen, *Diplomatic History* 21 (Winter 1997): 71–115.

2 I believe that "Central Kingdom" is a more accurate translation for "Zhong Guo" (China) than "Middle Kingdom." The term "Middle Kingdom" does not imply that China is superior to other peoples and nations around it – China just happens to be located in the middle geographically; the term "Central Kingdom," however, implies that China is superior to any other people and nation "under the heaven" and that it thus occupies a "central" position in the known universe.

3 For Mao's own statement on this issue, see Edgar Snow, *Red Star over China* (New York: Random House, 1938), 118–19; for a good discussion about how Mao adopted the restoration of China's historical glory as one of the top goals of the Chinese

Communist revolution, see Mark Mancall, *China at the Center: 300 Years of Foreign Policy* (New York: Free Press, 1984), ch. 9.

4 In actuality, after the People's Liberation Army occupied Shanghai, Qingdao, and China's other major coastal cities in the summer of 1949, Mao and the CCP leadership no longer regarded direct American military intervention as a real danger, although in open propaganda, the CCP would continue to call the Chinese people's attention to it.

5 Mao Zedong, "Report to the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee," *MZX*, 4:1425–26, 1428; *MZN*, 3:410–11.

6 For a more detailed discussion, see Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War: The Making of the Sino-American Confrontation*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 65–69; see also Niu Jun, "The Origins of the Sino-Soviet Alliance," in *Brothers in Arms: The Rise and Fall of the Sino-Soviet Alliance, 1945–1963*, ed. Odd Arne Westad (Washington, D.C., and Stanford, Calif.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press and Stanford University Press, 1998), 47–89, esp. 61–69.

7 Andrei Ledovsky, "Mikoyan's Secret Mission to China in January and February 1949," *Far Eastern Affairs*, no. 2 (1995): 72–94, esp. 75–77; Westad, *Brothers in Arms*, 298–300; Shi Zhe, *Zai lishi juren shenbian: Shi Zhe huiyilu* (At the Side of Historical Giants: Shi Zhe's Memoirs), rev. edn (Beijing: Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao, 1998), 326–27.

8 See Shi Zhe, "With Mao and Stalin: The Reminiscences of a Chinese Interpreter, Part I," trans. Chen Jian, *Chinese Historians* 5 (Spring 1992): 45–56. For a Russian account of the visit, see Ledovskv, "Mikoyan's Secret Mission to China," 72–94. Chinese and Russian accounts of this visit are highly compatible.

9 For a detailed account of Liu's visit to Moscow, see Shi Zhe, "With Mao and Stalin: The Reminiscences of Mao's Interpreter, Part II: Liu Shaoqi in Moscow," trans. Chen Jian, *Chinese Historians* 6 (Spring 1993): 67–90; Zhu Yuanshi, "Liu Shaoqi's Secret Visit to the Soviet Union in 1949," *Dangde wenxian*, no. 3 (1991): 74–81; and Jin Chongji et al., *Liu Shaoqi zhuan* (A Biographyof Liu Shaoqi) (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian, 1998), 646–54; see also Sergei Goncharov, John W. Lewis, and Xue Litai, *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, anf the Korean War* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1993), 61–75.

10 Mao Zedong, "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship," *MZX*, 4:1477.

11 See, for example, Lu Dingyi, "Explanations of Several Basic Problems Concerning the Postwar International Situation," *Jiefang ribao* (Liberation Daily), 4 January 1947; Liu Shaoqi, "On Internationalism and Nationalism," *Renmin ribao* (People's Daily), 7 November 1948; and Mao Zedong, "Concluding Remarks at the Second Plenary Session of the CCP's Seventh Central Committee," 13 March 1949, *MZW,* 5:261–62.

12 Mao Zedong, "The Current Situation and the Party's Tasks in 1949," 8 January 1949, and "Plans for Advancing on the Whole Country," 23 May 1949, *Mao Zedong junshi wenxuan* (Selected Military Papers of Mao Zedong) (Beijing: Zhanshi, 1981), 328, 338.

13 See, for example, Mao Zedong, "Casting Away Illusion, Preparing for Struggle" and "Friendship or Aggression," *MZX*, 4:1487–94, 1509–12.

14 Xue Mouhong et al., *Dangdai zhongguo waijiao* (Contemporary Chinese Diplomacy) (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue, 1989), 4.

15 Zhou Enlai, "Our Diplomatic Policies and Tasks," *ZEWW*, 48–51; see also Xue Mouhong et al., *Dangdai zhongguo waijiao*, 4–5; and Pei Jianzhang, *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo waijiao shi*, *1949–1956* (A Diplomatic History of the People's Republic of China, 1949–1956) (Beijing: Shijie zhishi, 1994), 2–4.

16 Zhang Baijia, "The Shaping of New China's Diplomacy," *Chinese Historians* 7 (1994): 62.

17 Shi Zhe, *Zai lishi juren shenbian: Shi Zhe huiyilu* (At the Side of Historical Giants: Shi Zhe's Memoirs), rev. ed. (Beijing: Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao, 1998), 389. In the Russian minutes of this conversation, this statement was not included (see "Conversation between Stalin and Mao, Moscow, December 16, 1949," CWIHP*B*, nos.

6–7 [Winter 1995–96], 5–7). I believe that a possible reason for this discrepancy lies in the cultural differences between Chinese and Soviet interpreters. For a discussion, see Chen Jian, "Comparing Russian and Chinese Sources: A New Point of Departure for Cold War History," CWIHP*B*, nos. 6–7 (Winter 1995–96): 21.

18 Telegram, Mao Zedong to Liu Shaoqi, 18 December 1949, *CCFP*, 128, and "Conversation between Stalin and Mao, Moscow, December 16, 1949," CWIHP*B*, nos. 6–7 (Winter 1995–96): 5–7.

19 Telegrams, Mao Zedong to the CCP Central Committee, 2, 3, and 5 January 1950, *CCFP*, 131–34. See also "More on Mao in Moscow," CWIHP*B*, nos. 8–9 (Winter 1996–97): 223–36.

20 Telegram, Zhou Enlai to Liu Shaoqi and the CCP politburo, 8 February 1950, in Jin Chongji, ed., *Zhou Enlai zhuan, 1949–1976* (A Biography of Zhou Enlai, 1949–1976) (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian, 1998), 1:35–39. For plausible discussions of the signing of the Sino-Soviet alliance, see Goncharov, Lewis, and Xue Litai, *Uncertain Partners*, ch. 4; see also *Pei Jianzhang, Zhonghua renmin gongheguo waijiao shi, 1949*–1956, 16–27.

21 During Mao's visit to the Soviet Union, China ordered 586 planes from the Soviet Union, including 280 fighters, 198 bombers, and108 trainers. From 16 February to 5 March 1950, a mixed Soviet air-defense division, following the request of the PRC government, moved into Shanghai, Nanjing, and Xuzhou to take responsibility for the defense of these areas. From 13 March to 11 May, this Soviet division shot down five GMD planes in the Shanghai area, greatly strengthening Shanghai's air-defense system (*DZJJG*, 2: 161; Wang Dinglie, *Dangdai zhongguo kongjun* (Contemporary Chinese Air Force) (Beijing: Jiefangjun, 1989), 78–79, 110.

22 Mao Zedong's address at the Sixth Session of the Central People's Government Council, 11 April 1950, *JMZW*, 1:291.

23 Mao later recalled that during his meetings with Stalin from December 1949 to February 1950, Stalin did not trust him and failed to treat him equally. See, for example, his statements to the Soviet ambassador in Beijing in 1956 and 1958, in CWIHP*B*, nos. 6–7 (Winter 1995–96), esp. 155–56, 165–66.

24 Mao Zedong, however, did not believe that the Americans would directly intervene in a revolutionary civil war in Korea. For a more detailed discussion, see Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War*, 88–90.

25 For a more detailed discussion of the relationship between Chinese and North Korean Communists prior to the Korean War, see ibid., 106–13.

26 For discussions, see Shen Zhihua, *Zhongsu tongmeng yu chaoxian zhanzheng yanjiu* (Studies on the Sino-Soviet Alliance and the Korean War) (Guilin: Guangxi shida, 1999), 238–42

27 For a more detailed discussion, see Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War*, 87–88.

28 See ibid., 110–11; see also Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990), 2:363.

29 He Di, "The Last Campaign to Unify China: The CCP's Unmaterialized Plan to Liberate Taiwan, 1949–1950," *Chinese Historians* 5 (Spring 1992): 12–16; Xiao Jinguang, *Xiao Jinguang huiyilu* (Xiao Jinguang's Memoirs) (Beijing: Jiefangjun, 1990), 2:8, 26.

30 Letter, Mao Zedong to Nie Rongzhen, 7 July 1950, *JMZW*, 1:428; *DZJJG*, 1:449–50.

31 Telegram, Mao Zedong to Gao Gang, 18 August 1950, *JMZW*, 1:469; see also telegram, Mao Zedong to Gao Gang, 5 August 1950, ibid., 454.

32 Telegram, Stalin to Soviet ambassador in Beijing (N. V. Rochshin) with message for Zhou Enlai, July 1950, CWIHP*B*, nos. 6–7 (Winter 1995–96): 43.

33 See Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korea War*, 156; see also telegram, Filippov [Stalin] to Zhou Enlai, 27 August 1950, CWIHP*B*, nos. 6–7 (Winter 1995–96): 45.

34 Telegram, Stalin to Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai, 1 October 1950, CWIHP*B*, nos. 6–7 (Winter 1995–96): 114. Stalin dispatched this telegram after UN forces crossed the 38th parallel and Kim Il Sung requested direct Soviet and Chinese intervention in the war.

35 Telegram, Mao Zedong to Stalin, 2 October 1950, *JMZW*, 1:539–40. The text of the telegram published in this volume is an abridged version.
36 The quotations in this paragraph, which are not included in the telegram's published text in *JMZW*, are from Mao's original text.
37 Since the Chiense Central Archives, Beijing has provided me with a xerox copy of the telegram's original text in Mao's own handwriting, there is no doubt that this is a genuine document, and that its contents reflected Mao's thinking. But the fact that this telegram is not found in Russian archives and that another version of Mao's message to Stalin does exist points to the possibility that although Mao had drafted the telegram, he may not have dispatched it. Also, most of Mao's telegrams carry Mao's office staff's signature indicating the time when the telegram was dispatched, but this telegram does not. For a discussion, see Shen Zhihua, "The Discrepancy between the Russian and Chinese Versions of Mao's 2 October 1950 Message to Stalin on Chinese Entry into the Korean War: A Chinese Scholar's Reply," trans. Chen Jian, CWIHP*B*, nos. 8–9 (Winter 1996–97): 237–42.
38 Telegram, Nikolai Rochshin in Beijing to Stalin, October 1950, conveying 2 October 1950 message from Mao to Stalin, CWIHP*B*, nos. 6–7 (Winter 1995–96): 114–15.
39 Letter, Fyn Si [Stalin] to Kim Il Sung [via Shtykov], 8 [7] October 1950, CWIHP*B*, nos. 6–7 (Winter 1995–96): 116. Stalin cited the text of his message to Beijing in this telegram.
40 For a detailed discussion of these meetings, see Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War*; ch. 5; see also Zhang Xi, "Peng Dehuai and China's Entry into the Korean War," trans. Chen Jian, *Chinese Historians* 6 (Spring 1993): 8–16.
41 "Mao Zedong's Order to Establish the Chinese People's Volunteers," 8 October 1950, *JMZW*, 1:543–44.
42 Telegram, Mao Zedong to Kim Il Sung, 8 October 1950, ibid., 545; see also Chai Chengwen and Zhao Yongtian, *Banmendian tanpan* (The Panmunjom Negotiations) (Beijing: Jiefangjun, 1989), 84.
43 This is the phrase Shi Zhe, Mao Zedong's and Zhou Enlai's Russian-language interpreter, used in describing how Mao was dealing with Stalin in October 1950 (author's interviews with Shi Zhe, August 1992).
44 For a more detailed discussion based on Shi Zhe's recollections, the validity of which were checked against other Chinese sources, see Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War*, 197–200.
45 Telegram, Mao Zedong to Peng Dehuai and others, 12 October 1950, *JMZW*, 1:552.
46 For a more detailed discussion, see Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War* 200–202.
47 Telegram, Mao Zedong to Zhou Enlai, 13 October 1950, *JMZW*, 1:556. The telegram published in *JMZW* is abridged. The citation here is based on the original of the telegram, kept at CCP Central Archives in Beijing.
48 Telegram, Mao Zedong to Peng Dehuai and Gao Gang, 17 October 1950, *JMZW*, 1:567.
49 Telegram, Mao Zedong to Peng Dehuai, Gao Gang, and others, 17 October 1950, and telegram, Mao Zedong to Deng Hua, Hong Xuezhi, Han Xianchu, and Xie Fang, 18 October 1950, *JMZW*, 1:567–8.
50 General Chinese Association of Resisting America and Assisting Korea, comp., *Weida de kangmei yuanchao yundong* (The Great Movement to Resist America and Assist Korea) (Beijing: Renmin, 1954), 7–8.
51 See State Council and Supreme People's Court, "Instructions on Suppressing Reactionary Activities," issued on July 23, 1950, in CCP Central Institute of Historical Documents, comp., *Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian* (A Selection of Important Documents since the Founding of the People's Republic) (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian, 1992–98), 1:358–60; and "Fifteen Telegrams and Documents on Suppressing Reactionary Activities during the Early Stage of the People's Republic," and Zhang Min, "A Survey of the Struggle to Suppress Reactionaries in the Early Years of the PRC," *Dangde wenxian* (Party History Documents, Beijing), no. 2 (1988): 31–41.

52 For documentary evidence on this issue, see "New Russian Documents on the Korean War," CWIHP*B*, nos. 6–7 (Winter 1995–96): 47–53.
53 Stalin approved Beijing's decision to come to the negotiation table at a meeting with Gao Gang and Kim Il Sung in June 1951. For a more detailed discussion, see Shi Zhe, *Zai lishi juren shenbian*, 451–54; Nie Rongzhen, *Nie Rongzhen huiyilu* (Nie Rongzhen's memoirs) (Beijing: Jiefangjun, 1984), 742–43; and "New Russian Documents on the Korean War," CWIHP*B*, nos. 6–7 (Winter 1995–96): 59–66.
54 For examples of these communications, see "New Russian Documents on the Korean War," CWIHP*B*, nos. 6–7 (Winter 1995–96): 66–84.
55 See Tan Jinqiao et al., *Kangmei yuanchao zhanzheng* (The War to Resist America and Assist Korea) (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue, 1990), 201.
56 Xue Mouhong et al., *Dangdai zhongguo waijiao*, 28–30; Pei Jianzhang, *Zhong-hua renmin gongheguo waijiao shi*, 40–41.
57 Zhou Enlai, "The Enemy's Defeat and Our Victory," 11 December 1952, *ZEJW*, 4:297–98.
58 The Three Antis movement was designed to oppose corrupt Communist cadres; the Five Antis movement was aimed at the national bourgeoisie class "who should not be destroyed at this stage but who needed to be tightly controlled by the power of the people's state." For discussions of these movements, see Frederick C. Teiwes, "Establishment and Consolidation of the New Regime," in *The Cambridge History of China*, ed. Denis Twitchett and John K. Fairbank (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 14:88–91.
59 See Mao Zedong, "The Great Victory of Resisting America and Assisting Korea," 12 September 1953, *MZX*, 5:101–6, esp. 103–4, and Zhou Enlai, "The Enemy's Defeat and Our Victory," 292–307.
60 During the war years, the Soviet Union provided China with military equipment for sixty-four army divisions and twenty-two air force divisions, which placed China 3 billion old rubles (about US $60 million) in debt. China did not pay off this debt (plus interest) until 1965. See Xu Yan, *Diyici jiaoliang* (The First Test of Strength) (Beijing: Zhongguo guangbo dianshi, 1990), 31–32.