

## *Original Paper*

# The Impact of Sino-Soviet Relations on the Evolution of China's Foreign Policy (1945-1956)

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### **Abbreviations**

CCP - Communist Party of China

CPSU - Communist Party of the Soviet Union

CPV - Chinese People's Volunteers

PLA - Chinese People's Liberation Army

PRC - People's Republic of China

USSR - Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

KMT - Kuo Min Tang

ROC - Republic of China

UN - the United Nations

USA - the United States of America

### **Abstract**

*"Sino-Soviet relations were pivotal in the diplomatic history of the PRC after its establishment. On one hand, the CCP received significant economic assistance and political support. However, like any alliance, it revealed conflicts between collective ideology and national interests. These tensions even drew the PRC into Korean wars that might have otherwise been avoided. Concurrently, the PRC developed a self-reliant and peaceful diplomatic policy soon after forming the Sino-Soviet alliance. The mutual relations between the CCP and CPSU closely influenced the emerging PRC's foreign policy.*

*This study aims to research how these ties between the CCP and CPSU impacted the evolution of the PRC's foreign policy from 1945 to 1956. Such research is essential for understanding the formation of the PRC's foreign policy through the lens of inter-party diplomacy, explaining the enduring principle of*

*an independent foreign policy focused on peace. This study employs historical research methods and archive analysis, drawing from declassified historical archives and primary and secondary sources, while critically analysing international relations theories based on historical facts.*

*The findings reveal that the USSR's primary concern was its national interest, while the CPC idealized it as a revolutionary party. As a result, the CCP developed an independent and self-reliant diplomatic approach based on different foundations.*

**Keywords**

*Chinese Communist Party, Sino-Soviet alliance, diplomatic policies, Korean War, Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence*

**1. Introduction**

*“We must bear in mind that the CCP government is a Marxist-Leninist regime. I have faith because the CCP is repeating some of the same mistakes that the Soviet Union made” (Pompeo, 2020, p. 1).*

On 23rd July 2020, the US Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, delivered a speech titled “Communist China and the Free World’s Future”. He reckoned that because China has the same ideology as the USSR, it will make the same mistakes. History shows that the PRC imitated the Soviet model indiscriminately and paid a heavy price for fully entering the USSR-led socialist camp (Shen, 2011). Following the establishment of the PRC, the USSR had an innate comradely and brotherly relationship with them (Li, 2011). Given the shared Marxist-Leninist ideology, Mao Ze Dong, at the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the CCP in March 1949, concluded that “Sino-Soviet relations are closely fraternal and that we and the USSR should stand on the same front and be allies” (Mao, 1949, p. 262). Therefore, the nascent PRC decided to “lean towards the side” and firmly participate in the USSR-led socialist camp (Wan, 2012, p. 23). Consequently, the new-born PRC signed the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship with the USSR in 1950 (Liu, 1996). However, the PRC upheld self-reliant and independent diplomatic thinking throughout this period, even proposing their Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence in 1953 (Mandinyenya, 2017).

Although a considerable body of literature has researched the PRC’s foreign policy and the Sino-Soviet Alliance, the perspective of bilateral relations between the CCP and the USSR influencing China’s diplomatic policies appears somewhat overlooked. Moreover, extant literature has not explained the contradiction between the Sino-Soviet Alliance and China’s clear self-reliance and independent foreign policy. Therefore, this study aims to analyse how China’s foreign policy was influenced by Sino-Soviet relations from 1945 to 1956. This period is considered due to the eruption of the KMT-CPC Civil War in 1945 (Kissinger, 2012) and the honeymoon period of the Sino-Soviet alliance, mostly ending in early 1958 (Shen, 2011). This period covers the PRC’s foreign policy from its initial establishment. It encapsulates the stages of early Sino-Soviet relations, from early suspicion of eventual alliance to a honeymoon.

This research depended on the primary archives and a review of secondary pertinent literature,

conducting archive analysis and historical methods based on international theory. In the literature review, this paper critically analyses the extant literature. It seeks to build an analytical framework in the international relations theory, subsequently introducing the historical method and the central archives in the second section. The following three chapters chronologically illuminate how the mutual ties between the CCP and the CPSU influence PRC foreign policy based on the archives and international relations theory. Finally, a conclusion based on previous discussions is given.

The significance of the historical study lies in the discovery of truth. Seventy years after establishing diplomatic relations between the PRC and the USSR, China re-established the China-Russia comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for a new era with Russia in 2019 (Shi, 2019). Exploring the influence of mutual relations between the CCP and the CPSU regarding PRC foreign policy could identify a root cause for China's independent peace policy and its forming process. It may offer a rationale behind the Sino-Soviet split, whereby the PRC pursued a policy of non-alignment.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1 Brief Introduction*

This literature review examines the international configuration of the Sino-Soviet alliance, the inherent factors sought by the CCP in favour of joining the established socialism camp, and the transformation of the PRC's foreign policy and its dominant factors. The goals of this literature review are identified in three key objectives as identified below. Succinctly, under the context of the Sino-Soviet Alliance, what was the influence of the first two factors on the PRC's foreign policy? Further, the third objective addresses the dualistic analytical structures of Sino-Soviet relations about ideology and national interest.

- 1) Identify the international contextual background and China's domestic environment towards Sino-Soviet relations.
- 2) Explain the PRC's foreign policy and evaluate critically decisive factors towards that policy and its transformation after the Korean War.
- 3) Define the theoretical perspective of national interest and the ideology of international relations.

After this crucial segment, this review critically uses the ideological standpoint and perspective of state interest to explain the PRC's foreign policy against the background of the Sino-Soviet Alliance. Thereby seeking to understand the theoretical framework of international relations and politics.

### *2.2 The Bilateral Ties between the CCP and the CPSU*

The formation of a Cold War pattern between the USSR and the USA following World War II was an external condition which fostered early Chinese-Soviet relations. The Yalta Agreement was secretly signed by powerful nations in February 1945, when plotting national interests after World War II (Harbutt, 2010). This agreement delineated the sphere of influence in the world based on distinctive ideology, comprising the socialist camp led by the USSR and the capitalist camp led by the USA (Liu, 2000). The American chargé d'affaires to the USSR, Kennan, proposed, in his long telegram. This

containment policy was eventually adopted by the U.S. Government in 1946 (Brinck-J & Clarke, 1995). This policy highlighted that the USA would use “resistance forces” to “contain” Soviet expansionist tendencies and its communist ideology until the end of the Cold War as an ideological basis of American strategy towards the USSR (Heer, 2018). The USA took steps to besiege the USSR’s influence through this policy. British Prime Minister Churchill’s “Iron Curtain” Speech in Europe was regarded as the outset of the Cold War (Muller et al., 1999). The Truman Doctrine impelled the USA to intervene in the Greek and Turkish Civil War when facing the threat of a guerrilla force led by the Communist Party (Jones & ProQuest, 1997). Additionally, the Marshall Plan proposed funding Western European countries in the post-war reconstruction in 1947 (Dulles & Wala, 1993). Meanwhile, China was gradually thrust into the limelight in the struggle for hegemony between the USA and the USSR in Asia. Both sides together were, to some extent, trapped in China’s Civil War, enabling it to become a proxy war. Since the founding of the CCP, it has become a branch of the Communist International and led by it (Zeng & Xiaolin, 2015). The Communist International, created by Lenin, was an internationalist organisation of communists and communist parties that existed from 1919 to 1943, aiming to overthrow the rule of capitalism and establish a worldwide proletariat dictatorship (Rees & Thorpe, 1999). Stalin’s strategic arrangement in bringing China into the Soviet-led socialist camp was to control and influence Asia against the United States (Shen, 2011). Based on ideological proximity, the USSR naturally wished to establish a nascent regime driven by the CCP. Therefore, the form of the Cold War structure was conducive to establishing close relations between the USSR and the CCP.

The CCP urgently needed help from the USSR to consolidate its power and the new regime in the face of impending victory in the civil war; this was the internal condition of the Sino-Soviet alliance. KMT retained absolute military power and controlled most of China’s territory immediately after the Sino-Japanese War (Dimitrakis, 2014). The USSR assisted the CCP during China’s Civil War, explicitly transferring funds and technology to the Northeast CCP Authority and even delivering Kwantung army equipment to the CCP (Shen, 2011). Manchuria soon became a CCP stronghold (Radchenko, 2015). This assistance effectively reversed the CCP’s disadvantageous situation in north-eastern China (Chen, 2008). The CCP lacked any ruling experience, funds or technical experts while confronting upcoming victory in the Civil War (Zhu, 2013). In January 1949, Mikoyan, who was Stalin’s special envoy, secretly visited Xi Bai Po, the temporary residence of the CCP Central Committee (Kim, 2010). It was the first time the USSR’s national leader set foot on Chinese territory (Chen, 1998). At this meeting, facing demands from the CCP leadership, Mikoyan promised that the USSR could provide \$300 million in aid and send experts to work in China (Yu, 2019). Subsequently, Liu Shaoqi, vice-chairman of the CCP, visited the USSR in June 1949. Stalin highly praised China’s Revolution led by the CCP, bringing Mikoyan’s promise into practice (Shi, 1993). He guaranteed that the USSR would assist China in building a modernised navy and air force and give diplomatic recognition to the newly born PRC (ibid.). Therefore, the CCP might imminently need the USSR’s help in anticipation of winning the Civil War with KMT and consolidating the new regime.

### 2.3 China's Foreign Policy

The objective historical background at that time determined the PRC's three significant diplomatic policies. In his series of articles, Mao concretely articulated these significant foreign policies. The expression "lean to one side" employed a binary view of international relations in the context of the Cold War. This old Chinese saying meant that the new-born PRC would firmly stand with the Soviet-led socialist camp in the international struggle (Liu, 2000). Mao accentuated the importance of "lean to one side" in his article on the People's Democratic Dictatorship 1949. Modern Chinese history taught that China is either on the imperialist side or the socialist side. He said that China would unshakingly stand on the side of the Soviet-led socialist camp (Li & Pan, 2000). This extreme dichotomous thinking, which classified the world into an imperialist camp and a socialist camp, could be traced to China's humiliating century following the Opium War. Since 1840, Westerners deployed a gun-boat policy and opium to crack open the door to the Qing dynasty. After signing unequal treaties, China devolved into a semi-feudal and semi-colonial society (Maréchal, 2009). The PRC's first premier, Zhou Enlai (1949), described the founding of the new China concerning old China, which had been oppressed for a hundred years and was now standing up (Chen, 1990). This nationalist and anti-imperialist sentiment was critical in "leaning to one side". Similarly, based on this historical background, China enacted a "starting all over again" policy where the new regime would no longer recognise any old diplomatic relations established between the KMT government and other countries (Chen, 1998). Until China eliminated the remaining imperialist forces and revoked all their privileges, new foreign ties were built with those countries that conformed to peace, democracy, and equality (ibid.). This policy was the third PRC diplomatic policy entitled "cleaning the house before you treat" (Da Sao Gan Jing Wu Zi Zai Qing Ke)—aiming to change China's semi-colonial status and inaugurate independent diplomatic relations. These three foreign policy goals appeared to be a creature of the age. They were unavoidably influenced by strong Chinese nationalist sentiment, considering China's humiliating contemporary history.

Furthermore, realistic consideration markedly affected establishment of the PRC's foreign policy when it was founded. The CCP leadership, whose revolutionary mentality judged that Americans and other Western countries were likely to interfere in and undermine the process of China's revolution, blindly regarded the US-led capitalist camp as a hostile force. Because the USA aided and countenanced the KMT regime that had antagonised the CCP in China's Civil War (Liu, 2000), Mao and other CCP leaders jointly conjectured that imperialist countries must intervene in revolutionary countries (Niu, 1999). Mao repeatedly claimed that China should prevent direct American military intervention and expose and crush American plots to divide the revolutionary camp of China (Niu, 1996). This was an effort to protect revolutionary political power from external intervention following the CCP's collectivist victory. China was selective in leaning on the side of the Soviet-led socialist camp, completely purging forces of powerful nations, and did not admit to the previous unequal treaties in China (Wang, 2009). Therefore, China badly needed to participate in an international alliance based on

a similar ideology to consolidate its neonatal regime at the international level.

However, the PRC increasingly prioritised the independent foreign policy of peace after the Korean War. Compared to China's three ideologically driven significant foreign policies, this independent foreign policy of peace may be characterised by non-ideological factors. Furthermore, this policy was epitomised by the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence presentation. These encompassed countries who agreed to the following: to respect each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, not to invade each other's soil, not to interfere with each other's domestic politics, and that these ties should be equally based and mutually advantageous in peaceful coexistence between the two countries (Mandinyenya, 2017). On 31 December 1953, Premier Zhou systematically proposed these principles for the first time when he received the Indian negotiating delegation in Beijing, planning to assist China in maintaining a benign circumjacent environment (Fifield, 1958). Furthermore, the PRC leaders wished to publish the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence as a standard for addressing international relations generally. Most accepted these principles at the 1955 Bandung conference (Zhou, 2017). Besides these newly independent nations, many conventional capitalist nations with different ideologies also appeared to accept these principles as diplomatic rules. For instance, former British Labour Prime Minister Attlee, Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, and Myanmar Prime Minister U Nu visited China successively (Pei, 2014). The Chinese Government stated that the relationship between socialist countries should be premised on the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (Zhu, 2014). Accordingly, these principles may appear to transcend different institutions and ideologies, gradually being universally held by the international community.

#### *2.4 Analytical Framework to the Variation of PRC's Foreign Policy*

Ideology was an essential theoretical perspective that analysed international relations in the Cold War period. Ideology was defined as a logically consistent set of symbols that connect the cognitive and evaluative understanding of one's social situation within a problematic conception of history, mainly if it entails a collective action plan for the preservation, modification or change of society (Mullins, 1972). Firstly, ideology has an instrumental nature. The Marxist view on ideology is an analytical and critical tool for social reconstruction (Stuart, 1992). This feature manifests in the alliance rationalising its actions based on the same ideology (Liska, 1968). For instance, to augment its ideological appeal and cohesion, Marxism attempted to build a non-exploitative and just proletarian world (Marx & Engels, 1848); furthermore, ideology is a holistic belief system. Some scholars suggest that ideology is a set of ideas which defines how society should function and organise itself (Sartori, 1969). Many idealists claimed the Cold War was a struggle between two antagonistic ideologies: communism and capitalism (Herrmann, 2004). Morgenthau (2005) interpreted the essence of the power struggle in international politics as being camouflaged by ideological justification and rationalisation. Marxism regarded the relationship between capitalist countries and socialist countries as a hostile tie based on the class struggle theory (Flipo, 2014). For example, Lenin (1939) claimed that imperialism is the highest stage of capitalism and that the proletarian must replace it considering this antagonistic relationship. The

USSR and the US formed a situation in the context of the Cold War that contended for hegemony. Therefore, the ideological perspective appears to be the right angle to observe international relations between the camps.

Ideological factors certainly once influenced the CCP's foreign policy when it was founded with the assistance and guidance of the CPSU, which subsidised it (Lv & Gao, 2011). As a Marxist party, since its formation, the CCP has, de facto, been a branch organisation of Communist International, maintaining a leader-member relationship with the CPSU. (Wang, 2013). The communist ideology is characterised by absoluteness and hierarchy. Absoluteness was indicated in Lenin's proletarian government theory of the party. Lenin asserted the successful reason for a socialist revolution that established a Marxist political party with high consciousness, close organisation, and a sense of discipline (Rustam, 1989). In this highly hierarchical political order, the CCP appears to maintain correspondence with the CPSU's communist ideology. For instance, establishing the Sino-Soviet alliance was a predictable manifestation, given their Marxist ideologies. These examples reflect the CCP's ideological exclusiveness, which tilted them towards the side of the socialist camp as Marxist ideology keenly influenced China's foreign policy decisions.

The perspective of national interest may help to explain the PRC's independent foreign policy. In international relations, the theorist Morgenthau (2005) identified national interest as territorial integrity, national sovereignty, and cultural integrity. Keohane (2005), as representative of neoliberal institutionalism, interpreted national interest as the power and wealth of a nation. Moreover, the constructivist schools argue that national interests have four fundamental objectives: security, autonomy, economic well-being, and self-esteem (Wendt, 1999). In any discussion on foreign policies, national interest was perceived as a fundamental starting point. For instance, Keohane suggested that national interests are self-interests, determining the inevitable conflicts between countries (Keohane, 2005). Wendt (1999) had a similar viewpoint whereby an actor's diplomatic behaviour should be contingent on his national interest. Arguably, the Five Principles for Peaceful Coexistence presented by the CCP are no other than considering the PRC's national interest. After the Korean War, China was committed to defusing international tensions and promoting peaceful coexistence among surrounding countries while facing conciliatory tendencies at the international level (Li, 2010). Premier Zhou (1956) judged the world situation in most countries that their people wished for peaceful coexistence. The starting point of the new foreign policy was to safeguard China's national security and national interest, seeking to build a secure buffer zone in China's circumjacent area (Niu, 1999). Therefore, China's independent foreign policy of peace appears to be explained through a national interest perspective.

### *2.5 Summary and Emerging Issues*

A large and growing body of literature has investigated China's foreign policy and the Sino-Soviet Alliance. From the viewpoint of international relations, Sino-Soviet relations were the most pivotal and complex of bilateral ties, including relationships between two socialist countries and two parties and their leaders. This relationship was conflated with multiple elements of international relations, for

instance, ideology, national interest, and nationalism. The Sino-Soviet Alliance was a reciprocal need in which each took what they needed. As the Marshall Plan ushered in the Cold War period and to countervail capitalist ideology, the USSR hoped to incorporate the CCP into its socialist camp on account of ideological uniformity. The CCP also wished to consolidate and construct its regime with the help of the USSR, given the ideological proximity, thereby constructing three significant foreign policies that completely turned them towards the Soviet-led socialist camp. After a short period, the PRC was committed to the independent foreign policy of peace, proposing the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence after establishing the Sino-Soviet Alliance. The influence of national interest appears to have transcended joint ideology and began to impact the PRC's foreign policy.

However, current literature often solely researches China's foreign policy and the Sino-Soviet Alliance rather than insightfully analysing the rationale behind the Chinese enacted diplomatic policies and what role the USSR played in the process. Little relevant literature is available in this regard; therefore, the analysis questions of this study can be summarised as follows:

- 1) From 1945 to 1949, why did Stalin support the CCP in China during the civil war? Did this choice influence the CCP's foreign policy?
- 2) After the establishment of the PRC, was China's "lean on one side" foreign policy conducive to the signing of the Sino-Soviet Alliance treaty?
- 3) As a meaningful bilateral relationship and as allies, why did the PRC propose the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence during the honeymoon period of Sino-Soviet relations? Were the two foreign policies contradictory?
- 4) In this process, how did bilateral ties between the CCP and the CPSU influence China's foreign policy?

To reach a profound understanding of this issue, the following section of this study will explain the research methods to be used to analyse the archival sources. These archives include first-hand declassified archives of the USSR, Chinese literature, archives supplied by China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Central Archives, the archives of the Party School of the CCP Central Committee, and US archives preserved in the American universities.

### **3. Methodology**

This study employs an archival analysis methodology to elucidate how bipartisanship between the CCP and the CPSU influenced the PRC's foreign policy from 1945 to 1956. Archival research analyses historical records (Mohr & Ventresca, 2002). Archives are historical records and other sources related to individuals, entities, or the activities of both. The research also includes claims to conserve reliable historical information and make it available for future use (Lexisnexis, 2020). This research utilises selections from declassified Russian archives and Sino-Soviet relations (1945-1991) as an essential archival resource concerning the USSR. These archives include 2,625 declassified documents released over the 20 years following the collapse of the USSR (Shen, 2015). They include cables, letters and



notes exchanged between the two parties' leaders and governments of the PRC and the CPSU. Meanwhile, coupled with Chinese archives, this research uses documents on relations between China and the USSR from China's perspective from 1949 to 1955. This compilation includes declassified documents supplied with archives of the PRC's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and even encompasses CCP leaders' speeches on foreign affairs of Sino-Soviet relations, and their letters and many witness diaries; for instance, *Memoirs of Shi Zhe*, who was Mao's Russian translator (Shi & Li, 2015). Therefore, primary archival works provide a relatively authentic and accurate basis for this historical study.

Except for these primary archives, secondary sources have not been neglected. Illinois University (2019) defined secondary sources as academic books and documents used in historical research projects and general sources of information such as encyclopaedias. Recently, many scholars conducted assiduous research into Sino-Soviet relations to delve into the different stages of Sino-Soviet relations multi-dimensionally. This study quotes recent academic research and discussion regarding Sino-Soviet relations. For instance, Yang Kuisong's book, *Feelings of Gratitude and Resentment between Mao Zedong and Moscow*, gives a fascinating account of events involving Mao's relations with Moscow and his character and disposition (Yang, 1999). Moreover, Alexander V. Pantsov's entitled *Mao: The Real Story* describes the achievements and setbacks of Sino-Soviet relations from 1949 to 1976 from the Russian perspective (Pancov & Levine, 2013). Hence, using secondary sources is instrumental in historical research as it supplements and reinforces the breadth of perspective.

To analyse how bipartisan relations affected the transformation of PRC's diplomatic policy from 1949 to 1956, this study consists of three chronological sections. The first chapter demonstrates how Stalin defended the privilege of the USSR in northeast China after World War II and even pressured the CCP and Mao regardless of their shared ideology. The second chapter portrays the conflicts between Mao and Stalin in negotiating the new Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship after the establishment of the PRC. Stalin's compromise directly gave rise to the eruption of the Korean War. Finally, the third chapter examines how the Korean War consolidated the Sino-Soviet Alliance and why the PRC proposed the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence on the honeymoon of Sino-Soviet relations.

#### **4. Chapter One: Historical Grudge between CCP and CPSU (1945-1949)**

*"Comrade Stalin made a grievous mistake at its most critical juncture, he denied us the revolution, opposed our revolution" (Mao, 1958, p. 388).*

1958, when Mao met with Eugene, the Soviet ambassador to China, he still felt aggrieved about Stalin's mistake. He compelled Mao to negotiate with Chiang Kai-shek in Chongqing in 1945. Mao mentioned Stalin's mistake and indicated that Stalin did not allow Mao to take power from Chiang Kai-shek by force (Yang, 1999). The broader context of these contradictions reverts to establishing the Yalta system. On the eve of World War II victory in February 1945, the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union held a summit in Yalta on the Crimean Peninsula (Harbutt, 2010). Stalin insisted that American President Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Churchill recognise the Russian privilege in

Manchuria as a condition for sending troops to fight the Japanese. The Yalta Secret Agreement on the Far East provided that:

- “(1) Outer Mongolia maintains independent status quo (People’s Republic of Mongolia).  
 (2) To restore the privileges and interests of the USSR that had been seized because of Japanese treachery. Lushun was deemed to be a Soviet naval base leasing status to maintain free trade at Dalian port status to safeguard the Soviet union’s preferential rights and interests in the port. The Middle East railway and the Manchuria Railway to Dalian to be made by both sides of a group of the joint venture company, superior rights should be a guarantee to the Soviet Union. In the meantime, China maintains sovereignty in Manchuria.  
 (3) The Sakhalin Islands and the Kuril Islands were transferred to the Soviet Union” (Qin, 1981, p. 541).



**Figure 1. The Distribution Diagram of Middle East Railway and the Manchuria Railway to Dalian and the Seaport of Dalian and Lvshun (Zhu, H. X., & Lv, F. 2017, 251)**

In return, the USSR should have participated in the war against Japan within two to three months of the end of the European fight (Kissinger, 2012). American President Roosevelt promised that the USA would take measures to coerce the ROC government to accept the Yalta secret agreement (Qin, 1981). After several months, Hurley, an American ambassador to China, semi-formally detailed the actual contents of the Yalta secret agreement to Chiang Kai-shek (Shen, 2011). The USSR Ambassador, Petrov, pressurised Chiang that “accepting the Yalta treatment was regarded as the prerequisite of it being signed by the ROC, USSR treaty of friendship and alliance” (Qin, 1981, p. 559). Under the tremendous stress of two established powers, Premier Song of the ROC arrived in Moscow and negotiated with Stalin and the USSR foreign minister, Molotov, about the conditions proposed in the Yalta agreement. Following the signature of the ROC, the USSR Treaty of Friendship and Alliance, the USSR captured

substantial prerogatives that regulated the Yalta agreement in China. In this negotiation process, the USSR publicly promised that “the USSR only supplied economic and military with the ROC, that is, the Republic of China led by KMT” (Qin, 1981, p. 652). This attitude means that Stalin even directly assisted the KMT that opposed the CCP. Accordingly, the toehold of the USSR’s foreign policy towards China was to protect its national interest and perquisite in China.



**Figure 2. Wang Shijie (Centre), the Representative of the KMT Government, Signed the Treaty of Friendship and Alliance between ROC and the USSR. Stalin (Second Right, Back Row) Witnessed the Signing of the Treaty (1945, Wang, 140)**

However, it is worth mentioning that Stalin highlighted the “CCP, we do not support them, nor assist them” when meeting with Premier Song of the ROC (Shen, 2015, p. 67). Stalin also described the CCP as “a type of margarine communist” when interviewing Hurley, an American ambassador to China (Shen, 2015, p. 27). The foreign minister of the USSR, Molotov, repeatedly claimed that the CCP could not be trusted (Xiang et al., 1994). Meanwhile, the archives indicate that Mao appeared not to have been aware of the remarks of USSR leaders when having an idealised concept of the USSR based on ideology. In a political report delivered by Mao to the Seventh National Congress of the CCP, he said, “The victory of the USSR is the Chinese victory” (Mao, 1945, p. 1030). Mao even unquestioningly felt sanguine about “the USSR must assist us in our revolutionary career; if the CCP cannot acquire international assistance, you can behind me”. Therefore, the CCP was seen as a bargaining chip when negotiating with KMT or the USA. Contrastingly, the CCP and Mao still had ideological proximity to the USSR. Therefore, this cognitive gap may have unavoidably brought conflicts between these two parties.

Following the broad context of the ROC, the USSR Treaty of Friendship and Alliance, Stalin told Mao decisively that the CCP should seek a compromise with the KMT. In August 1945, Japan’s Mikado declared an unconditional surrender to the Allied forces after the Soviet Red Army destroyed the Japanese army in northeast China (Jowett, 2016) to monopolise the right to accept Japan’s surrender and seize the fruits of victory of the Sino-Japanese war. From one perspective, Chiang Kai-shek

urgently ordered the KMT troops to “actively advance and not to relax a bit”. However, at the same time, he ordered the Eighth Route Army “in situ garrison standby” (Mao, 1945, p. 1141). From another perspective, in preparation for the civil war, Chiang Kai-shek sanctimoniously invited Mao to Chongqing to discuss jointly “important national plans” and to resolve “various important issues at home and abroad” (Zhuo, 1982, p. 6). In reply to Chiang Kai-shek’s invitation, Mao publicly proclaimed that “Chiang Kai-shek’s invitation was a complete deception in Yan’an” (Mao, 1945, p. 3). He immediately advanced that “CCP troops must take over Beijing, Tianjin, and Shanghai from surrendered Japanese troops” (Yang, 1999, p. 185). Nevertheless, the CCP Central Committee and Mao received Stalin’s telegram. The content of this telegram ordered Mao to receive Chiang’s invitation in harsh rhetoric, warning that “if civil war breaks out, half of the Chinese nation will be destroyed” (Institute of Party History of the CCP Central Committee, 1981, p. 78). According to Mao’s translator, Stalin also promised that “the USSR could guarantee Mao’s security within the period of Chongqing” (Shi & Li, 1995, p. 308). Mao felt particularly disgruntled at Stalin’s pressure (ibid.). However, finally, Mao was to modify CCP’s radical military strategy and left for Chongqing (Shen, 2011). This resentment appeared to have influenced Mao for some time. After ten years, Mao still felt dissatisfied with Stalin’s telegram. He repeatedly said that Stalin would not permit our revolution in 1945 (Yang, 1999). These words mean that Stalin pressurised Mao as he aimed to protect the vested privilege of the USSR in northeast China and did not wish the CCP to clash with the KMT. Some scholars claimed that Stalin wanted the CCP to follow the path of the French communist party, join parliamentary elections, and peacefully compete with the KMT (Li, 2000). However, Stalin’s springboard of foreign policy was aimed at strengthening the prerogative in northeast China rather than truthfully assisting the CCP during this period.

However, American forces began encroaching on northeast China, whereas Stalin squared his foreign policy to the CCP. Moreover, the CCP and KMT promoted the Chongqing negotiations under the pressure of the USSR and USA, and both parties resonated with each other regarding ceasefire issues. However, the truce agreement does not include northeast China (Liu, 1998). Therefore, many CCP troops were dispatched to northeast China and occupied many places, using the Soviet Red Army’s sympathy based on their shared ideology and belief (Chen, 2014). Moreover, the KMT took corresponding measures in that many KMT troops were consigned to northeast China by American planes and warships (Zhou, 2015). In this background, Chiang Ching-Kuo, who was Chiang Kai-shek’s son, visited the USSR as a special envoy of the ROC at the end of 1945 (Xiao, 2012). Stalin underscored that northeast China was under the USSR’s sphere of influence. At this meeting, Stalin laid the USSR’s cards on the table:

*“The USSR disallowed any third party to enter northeast China; this bottom line will be the precondition that the USSR respects ROC’s sovereignty in northeast China and Xin Jiang” (Shen, 2015, p. 107).*

Chiang Ching-Kuo took the “tit-for-tat” strategy at the meeting when facing Stalin’s stress. He asserted

that:

*“[The] Americans would assist KMT in building modernised forces, while the ROC and KMT devised the open-door policy that gave economic dominance only to the USSR in northeast China” (Shen, 2015, p. 105).*

This declaration demonstrated that the KMT planned to import American forces and funds into northeast China. Stalin would never accept American power penetrating northeast China, which the USSR regarded as its sphere of influence. However, on 11 February 1946, the USA and Britain unveiled the contents of the Yalta secret agreement, which exposed the privilege of the USSR in northeast China. This series of unequal treaties triggered anti-Soviet demonstrations around China (Zhu, 2008). Facing the possibility of confrontation with the USA, Stalin evacuated Soviet red armies from northeast China and transferred this area to CCP troops. At Stalin’s behest, the representative of the Soviet Army informed the Northeast Bureau of the CCP that “the Soviet Red armies will withdraw from northeast China; they hoped CCP troops would occupy these areas as soon as possible (Yang, 1999, p. 210)”. According to USSR statistics, the Soviet armies offered a plentiful supply of arms to the CCP troops, including 700,000 rifles, 14,000 machine guns, 4,000 guns of all kinds, 600 tanks, 2,000 cars, 679 ammunition depots, and over 800 aircraft and gunboats (Ageenko et al., 1975). Undeniably, this assistance vigorously aided the CCP’s armaments expansion and building base areas within the comprehensive industrial system in northeast China. Stalin appeared to fear the threat of an alliance between KMT and the USA, prioritising the USSR’s interest in northeast China. Therefore, the USSR fostered CCP forces in this area against KMT being bolstered by the Americans.

A shared interest in opposing American and KMT control of the northeast resulted in a strategic relationship between the CCP and the CPSU. As a result of the military conflict between the CCP and KMT in northeast China, the civil war began on a full scale. This signal marked the collapse of Moscow’s coalition government policy in China. Stalin had hoped that the CCP would execute a policy of parliamentary struggle (Shen, 2007). His original intention was to support the KMT and use the CCP to secure the USSR’s national security and interests in northeast China by facilitating a unified coalition government. Nevertheless, KMT opted to rely on American assistance (Wei, 2006). To protect its privilege in northeast China, Stalin chose to help the CCP build a buffer zone there rather than confront the Americans. In Europe, Stalin was prompted to establish the Communist Information Bureau as a response to the Marshall Plan led by the USA. This incident signalled the onset of the Cold War (Zubok & ProQuest, 2007). The establishment of the US-Soviet confrontation objectively and continuously intensified the support of the USSR for the CCP.

The PLA continued to be successful in the civil war, and Mao generated the idea of independent and peaceful diplomacy. The apparent manifestation was the intermediate zone theory proposed by Mao in 1946. When an American journalist, Louise Strong, interviewed Mao, he said:

*“In the intermediate zone were many capitalist countries, colonies and semi-colonial countries separated by the USA and the USSR, such as Europe, Asia and Africa. The Americans would not attack*

*the Soviet Union before controlling these countries” (Mao, 1946, p. 1184)*

Mao emphasised the CCP’s long-held policy of independence and autonomy. He supplemented the intermediate theory in 1947, saying:

*“All anti-imperialist countries and people in the world are our friends. But with our emphasis on self-reliance, we can defeat our enemies with our strength” (Mao, 1947, p. 1243).*

The attitude of the USSR towards the Chinese Communist Party was an essential reason for Mao’s “intermediate zone” theory. After World War II, Stalin did not positively assist the CCP but compelled Mao to negotiate with Chiang Kai-shek, which disappointed Mao (Luo, 2000). Therefore, Mao initiated an independent and self-reliant approach while attempting to win USSR aid for the Chinese revolution in northeast China.

When the PLA achieved victory, Stalin still took precedence over protecting the prerogative of the USSR in China. Based on this consideration, from one perspective, Stalin greatly assisted the CCP in the Chinese Civil War, frequently deferring the date of Mao’s visit to the USSR (Wu, 2007). From another perspective, Stalin sought to maintain relatively congenial relations with the KMT, repeatedly demonstrating that the USSR was willing to mediate in the civil war (Chen, 2008). For instance, at the beginning of 1949, when the PLA occupied the area north of the Yangtze River entirely and almost exterminated the main KMT forces, Mao told the Chinese people, “We would carry out the revolution till its victory” (Mao, 1948, p. 1243). Stalin surprisingly sent a telegram urging Mao to agree to negotiate with the KMT. In this telegram, he claimed:

*“Past and present, the USSR always countenanced to achieve truce peace in China; we do not know whether the CCP was willing to accept the USSR as an accommodator in the Chinese Civil War.” (Shen, 2015a, p. 346).*

Mao directly refuted Stalin’s initiative about the negotiation of truce peace in. Mao replied to Stalin’s telegram:

*“Now we had a just excuse to refuse KMT’s peace negotiations, which was KMT’s fraud; accepting peace talks did more harm than good.” (Shen, 2015a, p. 350).*

However, when Mikoyan visited China, the CCP worked out the “lean to one side” foreign policy and wholly entered the USSR-led socialist camp. Stalin’s foothold remained consistent in protecting the exclusive rights of the USSR in China, even intervening in the Chinese Civil War.

Generally, this chapter reflected that, from the end of World War II to the establishment of the PRC, for both Stalin and Mao, pragmatic interests were the primary consideration in allying the USSR and the CCP; ideology was a secondary factor. From 1944 to 1945, Stalin coerced Mao to negotiate with Chiang Kai-shek in Chongqing after signing the ROC and the USSR Treaty of Friendship and Alliance, aiming to protect the privilege of the USSR exploited by the Yalta secret agreement. From 1946 to 1948, Stalin gradually chose to help the CCP in northeast China, still considering the prerogative of the USSR in China rather than the ideological proximity with the CCP while facing the alliance between the KMT and the USA. Until 1949, Stalin publicly bolstered the CCP in the Chinese Civil War, trying

to mediate the war for the sake of the USSR's national interest in China.

Although Mao once had an impractical imagination about the assistance of the USSR, Stalin continued to give priority to consolidating the national interest of the USSR in the Far East. These situations enabled Mao and the CCP to produce a budding independent foreign policy; for instance, the theory of intermediate zones emphasised self-reliance. Because the CCP could acquire the recognition of Moscow and its vassal countries (Westad, 2018), further obtaining economic and political assistance. As Bagdasaryan (2016) claimed, ideology is an instrument of foreign policy. Based on their practical interest, Mao needed ideology as a tool to enter the socialist camp, thereby learning that the Soviet socialist model of development appeared to be accepted and emulated. Internally, the CCP selected "lean to one side" due to possessing a relatively safe external environment for its domestic construction. However, the Yalta secret agreement was de facto to the detriment of China's national interest, and this unequal treaty led to the formation of barriers between the CCP and the CPSU after the establishment of the PRC.

##### **5. Chapter two: The Founding of PRC and the Sino-Soviet Alliance Treaty (1949-1950)**

*"Mao shouted at Kovalev, who was Mao's Russian translator, 'Stalin invited me to Moscow but had nothing to do, why am I coming? Why am I staying here to spend the whole day just eating, sleeping, and shitting?'" (Pancov & Levine, 2013, p. 370).*

These words reflected Mao's mentality after his proposal regarding the signing of a new Sino-Soviet Treaty Alliance was refused by Stalin. Since the inception of the PRC, the CCP crafted a policy of "lean to one side" that completely turned towards the socialist camp led by the USSR. Therefore, Mao decided to visit the USSR, superficially offering birthday greetings to Stalin but signing a Sino-Soviet Alliance that could replace the old KMT agreement (Cohen, 2002).

Although the USSR quickly recognised the PRC after its establishment, China's bud of independence and self-reliance may have collided with the USSR. The new PRC had three foreign policy linchpins, two of which were "start all over again" and "clean the house before you treat". "Start all over again" meant the PRC would not recognise any ROC's diplomatic relationships established with other countries but would establish new and equal diplomatic relations with other states on a new basis (Yao, 2011). "Cleaning the house before you treat" referred to how the CCP would remove the remnants and privileges of imperialism in China and all unequal treaties before establishing diplomatic relations with Western countries (Zhang, 2013). These two essential foreign policies illustrated a stronger tendency for independence and self-reliance than the "theory of intermediate zone" proposed by Mao in 1946 did, as he explained in the founding ceremony of the state.

*"Our government is ready to establish diplomatic relations with any foreign government willing to abide by the principles of equality, mutual benefit and mutual respect for territorial sovereignty" (Mao, 1949, p. 3).*

Against this background, the content of the ROC and USSR Treaty of Friendship and Alliance, derived

from the Yalta secret agreement, appeared incompatible with the PRC's self-reliant and independent foreign policy. Furthermore, for an ancient nation that experienced aggression and bullying from imperialist powers yet has had a splendid culture for thousands of years, its revival would inevitably be integrated with a revolution of nationalism (Yang, 1999). The Chinese people and the CCP wished to remove that disgrace in history by signing a new treaty. Accordingly, Mao intended to sign a new agreement of the Sino-Soviet Alliance when visiting the USSR, which was likely to collide with Stalin's thoughts that sought to protect the national interest of the USSR in northeast China.



**Figure 3. Mao Zedong and Stalin at a Conference Celebrating Stalin's 70th Birthday in Moscow on 21<sup>st</sup> December, 1949. (Yang, 1999, 251)**

At the first meeting between Mao and Stalin in December 1949, Stalin was reluctant to touch the Yalta system, which defended the USSR's prerogative and disappointed Mao. When Mao mentioned the sign of the new Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Stalin politely refused by saying:

*"As we all know, the ROC and USSR Treaty of Friendship and Alliance were based on the Yalta agreement. It does mean that America and Britain permitted the signing of this old treaty. In light of this situation, we decide that we provisionally do not revise any terms of this treaty, because even if we amend any terms, it would be likely to supply juristically excuses with the USA and Britain pertaining to the Sakhalin islands and Kuril Islands"* (Shen, 2015b, p. 175).

Stalin euphemised a solution, in proposing:

*"Considering the desire of Chinese comrades, we may keep a pro forma treaty but slightly revise some pertinent contents."* (*ibid.*).

This declaration appears to reject Mao's desire to re-sign a new treaty. However, Mao still wished tentatively to ask Stalin to re-sign the new Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship. Mao inquired:

*"Whether is it necessary to invite Premier Zhou Enlai to Moscow to discuss the new Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship?"* (Shen, 2015b, p. 176)

Stalin also politely rejected Mao's inquiry, saying:

*"This question should be determined by yourself, and you may need Zhou to solve other problems"* (*ibid.*).



These words meant that even if Zhou Enlai came to Moscow, he intended to solve other questions rather than sign a new treaty. Mao was disappointed with Stalin's words. Over the next few days, according to Kovalev, Mao's mood was morose (Shen, 2001). At the second meeting between Stalin and Mao a few days later, Stalin deliberately did not mention the signing of a new treaty but discussed the international communism of Vietnam, India, and Japan (Pei, 1994). After the second meeting, Mao appeared angry about Stalin's attitude. He shouted at his Russian translator and uttered the opening sentences of this chapter. Thus, Mao "decided to do nothing but fall asleep in dacha" (Pancov & Levine, 2013, p. 371). This attitude clearly expressed dissatisfaction with Stalin's delay in discussing the new treaty. The standoff between Mao and Stalin lasted more than one week. There was no news of Mao in the USSR media for a long time, which aroused much suspicion. For example, Reuters took this opportunity to spread the news that Mao was under house arrest by Stalin, which made the USSR nervous (Zhou & Qin, 2010). Mao tactically disclosed to Roshen, the USSR Ambassador to the PRC, that "China set out to establish diplomatic relations with Britain and the British Commonwealth of Nations" (Shen, 2015, p. 207). To dispel these rumours, Stalin had to propose a compromise towards Mao considering these situations. On the one hand, Stalin dispatched Molotov, who was minister of foreign affairs, and Mikoyan, who was the first deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, to visit Mao, demonstrating that the "USSR agreed to sign a new agreement with the PRC" (Mao, 1950, p. 211). On the other hand, Stalin wished Mao to publicly claim that his primary purpose of visiting Moscow was to sign a new Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship in response to the Ita-Tass reporter's question (Shen, 2004). Mao "immediately arranged for Zhou to visit Moscow to negotiate the new treaty" (Shen, 2015, p. 213). It appears that Mao successfully enabled Stalin to compromise on the issue of a new treaty after a lengthy stalemate.

However, Stalin's compromise was calculated as being intended to maintain vested interests and privileges in the Far East. Versions of the new treaty drafted by the USSR marked that "both sides altogether acknowledged that the old treaty signed in 1945 was still in place" (Shen, 2015, p. 215). This clause meant that the USSR still regarded the old treaty signed with KMT as the basis of negotiation. The sixth and seventh drafts of the treaty, drafted by the USSR, continued reiterating the old treaty signed in 1945 as the foundation of the negotiation between the USSR and the CCP (Shen, 2000). On 22 February 1950, Mao had to take it upon himself to negotiate with Stalin. At this meeting, Mao triumphantly persuaded Stalin to concede to the signing of a new treaty. However, the archives of this meeting still complain about Stalin. Stalin's previous pretence was that changing the Yalta agreement might provoke interference from the contracting parties, Britain and the US. Mao implied:

*"Revising a new treaty between the PRC and the USSR might be involved with the terms of the Yalta agreement" (Shen, 2015b, p. 266).*

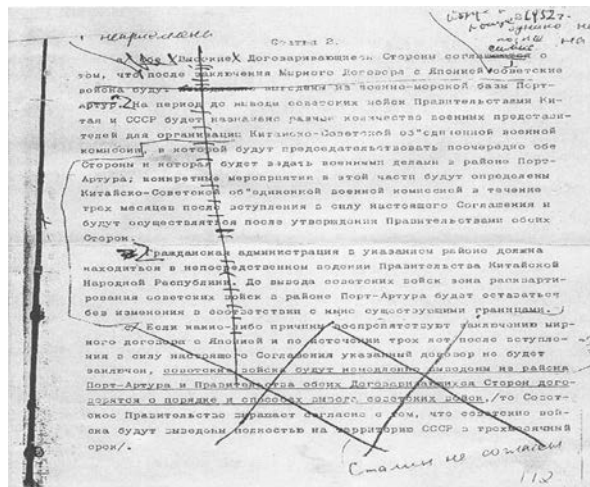
Stalin could only say:

*"Yes, it may implicate the Yalta agreement, but let it go to hell! Now that we decide to modify the treaty, we no longer care about it" (ibid.).*

Based on the consensus between Mao and Stalin, Zhou and the other Chinese representatives redrafted China's draft agreement on Lushun Port, Dalian and the Middle East Railway and the Manchuria Railway to Dalian. The new Chinese draft almost overturned the USSR position, stunning the USSR side. This new draft explicitly proposed:

*"The USSR stated that it abandoned the right to rent Lv Shun Port as a naval base and gave up all the rights and interests in the Dalian and Middle East Railway and Manchuria Railway to Dalian. China will receive all assets that the USSR temporarily owned or rented in Dalian and Lv Shun. Three years after the entry into force of this agreement, the USSR would immediately transfer all assets to China in the Middle East Railway and Manchuria Railway to Dalian gratis." (Shen, 2015b, p. 279).*

The declassified archives infer that Stalin was enraged by the new agreement drafted by the Chinese side as he crossed out and made many remarks on the agreement text.



**Figure 4. On January 26, 1950, Stalin Personally Made Many Deletions and Corrections on the Russian Draft Translation. The Picture Shows a Copy of the Russian Archives. (2011, Shen, p. 160)**

However, the revision supplied by the USSR retained the content as proposed by the Chinese side. The compromise of the USSR did not appear to reduce contention with the Chinese side. Concerning the possibility that the USSR could dispatch its troops through the Chinese railway, both sides again had an intense discussion. Premier Zhou discussed the possibility that China also hoped to transport troops by rail through the Soviet Union (Zhou & Qin, 2010). Zhou's attitude again astonished Mikoyan, the Soviet negotiator who said:

*"As an ally, the USSR transferred huge assets to China without compensation, giving China all rights in the Dalian, Lv Shun, Middle East Railway and the Manchuria Railway. China even disagrees with the USSR to dispatch its troops through a Chinese railway. If China cannot even make such a concession, what kind of ally are we?" (Shen, 2015b, p. 298).*

After the long-term seesawing battle, the USSR reluctantly consented to China's opinion. This negotiation about the Sino-Soviet Alliance da qui cos ended; the USSR made practical concessions. Stalin's concession had profound consequences. Because the USSR de-facto placed China's pledge into the socialist camp led by the USSR, the confrontation between the socialist and capitalist camps forged an antagonistic relationship (Fan, 2009). In September 1947, the communist intelligence agencies were founded. They declared that the world had formed a democratic anti-imperialist camp led by the USSR and an imperialist camp led by the US (Niu, 1999). Under the bipolar shape of these two camps, the USSR naturally wanted to subsume China into its camp rather than solely protecting its prerogative in northeast China. Stalin's strategic consideration needed the PRC as an ally because it controlled Asia against the US. This calculation was Stalin's starting point in agreeing to establish an alliance with the PRC. Indeed, Stalin did not wish to have a neighbour with a quarter of the world's population as a geopolitical enemy. Therefore, compared to the USSR's privilege in China, national interest and security assumed a leading role in Stalin's strategic decision.

Through this, China further strengthened its independent and peaceful diplomacy. In this Sino-Soviet Alliance Treaty, Mao revoked the USSR privilege bestowed in the Yalta secret agreement (Shen & Goncharov, 1998) and ensured an independent and peaceful diplomacy effort enshrined in this treaty as a guiding principle. For instance, in the final draft of the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, the Fifth Article demonstrated:

*“Based on the principle of equality, mutual benefit and mutual respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states and non-interference in each other's internal affairs, contracting states undertake to do in a spirit of friendly cooperation, consolidating and developing the economic and cultural connection of Sino-Soviet, giving each other all possible economic assistance and engaging in necessary economic cooperation” (Shen, 2015b, p. 285).*

Furthermore, the individual conflicts between Mao and Stalin intensified Mao's sense of independence. Mao, ex post facto, compared this negotiation to snatching food from the jaws of a tiger (Shen, 2010). The same ideology did not automatically bring a “warm feeling” of friendship, but behind the toasting of “cheers to friendship” was the struggle and cold contentions of national interest calculations (Mastny, 1998, p. 12). On the eve of Mao's visit in December 1949, Stalin called Mao the “cave Marxist” in private (Pancov & Levine, 2013, p. 367). Khrushchev recalled that Stalin never had a good word to say about Mao during his visit to the USSR (Taubman, 2003). Although Stalin compromised in negotiating the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship many years later, Mao was still angry at Khrushchev's reference to Stalin's attempt to create a semi-colony in China by forcing China to make concessions in the negotiation (Kissinger, 2012). Therefore, China's thought of independent and peaceful diplomacy was further strengthened by the contents of the Sino-Soviet Treaty, and mutual distrust between Mao and Stalin also exacerbated Mao's independent consciousness.



**Figure 5. In February 1950a, Mao Zedong and Stalin Attended the Signing Ceremony of the Treaty of Friendship and Alliance between China and the Soviet Union. The Picture shows Zhou Enlai and Vishinski Signing the Treaty on Behalf of Their Respective Governments'. (2009a, Editorial Committee, 18)**

This chapter describes how, from the establishment of the PRC to the signing of the Treaty of Friendship between China and the Soviet Union, under the appearance of national interest and ideological conflict, Sino-Soviet bilateral relations had profound structural contradictions. From one perspective, all socialist countries are led by communist parties, installing one-party rules in their countries. International communism was regarded as the goal of their foreign policies (Rees & Thorpe, 1999). In these one-party states, the communist party is the endpoint of all the principles and policies, substituting for the government. Under the broader context of the antagonistic relationship between the two camps, the foreign policy of communist states with a totalitarian system may have a degree of revolutionary spirit (Chen & Zhou, 2012). This feature means that communist countries seek to output Marxism and Leninism and build more socialist countries (Burton & Carlen, 1979). Therefore, in these socialist countries, inter-party relationships guided international relations, and ideology overrode national interests to a certain extent. Sovereignty and equality were unavoidably subject to “communist internationalism”. These features appear to conflict within new communist countries which have just achieved national independence and liberation because these newly emerging independent nations need to consolidate their national independence and safeguard state sovereignty (Chen, 1998). The ideological expansion may encounter difficulties with the claim of emerging states that were eager to protect their national interests. For example, Mao and Stalin, respectively, were the leaders of the CCP and the CPSU, and they could decide their countries’ foreign policy individually as communist party leaders. Although both the CCP and the CPSU were Marxist-Leninist political parties, Mao’s pursuit of independence and self-reliance as a leader of a newly independent state may have been incompatible with the USSR’s dominance of ideology. Therefore, this relationship highlighted the fragility and

instability of the socialist alliance under the context of the Cold War.

From another perspective, strongly hierarchical relations between the countries in the socialist camp triggered Mao's escalating independent and egalitarian consciousness. According to the liberalism of international relations, countries tend to "externalise" or transplant domestic political, economic, social, and other institutional arrangements for cognitive consistency (Alker, 2005). Wendt (1999) described this externalised behaviour as projective identification whereby some countries unfurl their domestic political systems and sentiments towards other countries and seek recognition and control. In these authoritarian communist countries, Lenin established democratic centralism. The organisational principle emphasises that the lower level is subordinate to the higher level and that the entire party is subordinate to the Central Committee (Mayer, 2010). This hierarchical system was externalised to the entire socialist camp, strengthening the hierarchical nature of the Soviet-led socialist camp and endowing society with a hierarchy within the socialist camp based on legitimacy. Stalin attempted to influence the CCP's foreign policy through this hierarchical order to protect the USSR's privilege in northeast China. This Stalinist approach was unlikely receptive to Mao, who claimed to establish a new China with an independent foreign policy of peace. Coupled with Stalin's numerous interventions in the Chinese Civil War, Mao and other CCP leaders naturally generated independent thinking when encountering the chauvinism of the USSR. Accordingly, Mao still stubbornly added independence and peaceful diplomacy provisions to the Sino-Soviet Alliance Treaty.

In this treaty, Stalin made significant concessions, naturally unwilling to lose the privilege of ice-free ports and marine outfall in northeast China. Based on this hierarchical system of the socialist camps, Stalin appeared sure to maintain authority and strategic objectives and interests in the Far East. The core of this project was to compensate for lost privileges in the Sino-Soviet Treaty, transforming policy on the Korean Peninsula. Consequently, the strategic adventures on the Korean Peninsula directly resulted in the eruption of the Korean War, as discussed in the next chapter.

### **6. Chapter three: The Korean War and the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (1950-1956)**

*"It is in China's interest, North Korea's interest, East's interest and world's interest that we send troops to Korea. Nevertheless, if we do not send in troops and let the American imperialists oppress us along the Amrok River, the domestic and international reactionary arrogance bluster will increase and be to all parties' disadvantage" (Mao, 1950, p. 556).*

These words, spoken by Mao, decided that the PRC would send the CPV to fight the American armies face-to-face on the Korean battlefield in October 1950, withstanding the tremendous internal and external strains. Furthermore, the Korean War consolidated and developed the political foundation of the Sino-Soviet Alliance (Hua & Meng, 2014). However, the eruption of the Korean War was attributed to the signing of the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship.

The new Sino-Soviet Agreement resulted in the USSR losing its privileges in the northeast. Stalin made concessions in negotiating the Sino-Soviet Agreement that the Lv shun seaport and the Da Lian seaport

would be handed over to China. This treaty would have led to the Soviet Union losing its only outlet to the Pacific Ocean and an ice-free port, which would undoubtedly have been a significant strategic loss. This damage would have led to the Soviet Union losing its strategic position in Asia (Shen, 2012). Since the era of Tsarist Russia, Russians have invariably regarded a marine outfall and an ice-free port as a desideratum, expanding access to the southern coast and building a hegemony that spanned Eurasia (Wang, 2012). After World War II, the USSR once controlled the Da Lian and Lv Shun seaport through the old Sino-Soviet Treaty with KMT. However, under Mao's pressure and realistic calculations, Stalin was compelled to transfer the Lv Shun and Da Lian seaports to China in the Sino-Soviet Agreement. Stalin's disgruntled sentiment toward the Sino-Soviet Agreement contributed to the outbreak of the Korean War. On the eve of the CCP's victory in the Chinese Civil War, Kim Il-sung, the leader of the Workers' Party of Korea, repeatedly asked Stalin to help reunify North Korea and South Korea (Shen, 2004). In his telegram to Kim Il-sung, Stalin always highlighted that "the comrades of North Korea have not prepared to unify South Korea yet both politically and militarily" (Shen, 2015b, p. 139). Stalin promised to "prioritise Chinese comrade's help in liberating Taiwan" when negotiating with Mao for the first time (Shen, 2015b, p. 176). However, Stalin's attitude towards unifying Korea shifted in the negotiation of the Sino-Soviet Alliance when he was forced to compromise with Mao. Stalin urgently needed to keep his strategic interests in the Far East in a supplementary manner when losing privileges in northeast China—for example, obtaining a marine outfall and ice-free port in the Korean Peninsula. As the leader of the socialist camp led by the USSR, Stalin never made such a massive concession as in the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Alliance (Li & Wen, 2015). However, simultaneously signing the Sino-Soviet Alliance, Stalin secretly sent a telegram to Kim Il-sung indicating that he was ready to help Comrade Kim Il Sung solve the South Korean problem (Shen, 2015). Since China, as the USSR's new ally, did not know of this, Stalin reneged on his promise to help China unify Taiwan and countenanced Kim Il-Sung's military adventure in the Korean Peninsula. Therefore, Stalin modified his foreign policy regarding the Korean Peninsula to offset the loss of national interest in the Sino-Soviet Alliance Treaty. The newly born PRC made considerable sacrifices for the unbeaten result on the Korean battlefield. Although Kim Il-Sung's military operation achieved an early series of victories, in the wake of the US armies' Inchon landing, the Korean People's Army suffered a crushing defeat (Leckie, 1963). Stalin had no option but to ask the PRC for help and suggested that "China dispatched troops to assist in North Korea" (Shen, 2015c, p. 72), promising that the USSR would satisfy China's demand for advanced weapons (Shen, 2015c, p. 91). Regarding the international and domestic situation, Mao prevailed over all dissenting views and resolutely decided to send troops into Korea (Goncharov et al., 1993). Therefore, Mao uttered the opening words of this chapter at a politburo meeting of the CCP Committee. It can be inferred from these words that when Mao finally sent troops to North Korea, his focus shifted from fulfilling his internationalist obligations to safeguarding China's security interests, including the Sino-Soviet Alliance, for future considerations. About the great sacrifice of the Chinese army, by 1953, the battle line was a tug of war along the 38th Parallel of North Latitude, approximately maintaining

the territory of the two Koreas before the Korean War (Qi, 2010). Statistics show that approximately 180,000 CPV soldiers died in the war in resisting the United States and assisting North Korea (Xu, 2010). Nevertheless, the military assistance of the USSR not only buttressed the CPV and achieved a series of victories but also played a pivotal role in the PRC's economic rehabilitation (Shen, 2011). For instance, such assistance included the provision of military loans, selling of weapons and equipment, providing technical assistance, military training, and personnel and so forth (Xue, 2007). Stalin reneged on the commitments of the USSR to aid China in their goal to unify Taiwan, thereby resulting in China failing to realise national reunification. During the Korean War, the US dispatched the Seventh Fleet into the Taiwan Strait, consequently postponing China's pace of unification with Taiwan (Liu, 1996). Mao (1956, cited in Yang, 1999) ex post facto asserted that the decision to begin the Korean War was a great mistake. However, he had total support when meeting with the central delegation of the CPSU. Consequently, being forced into involvement in the Korean War resulted in China suffering massive casualties and the loss of an opportunity for complete unification.



**Figure 6. 'On October 1950, The Chinese People's Volunteers crossed the Amrok River and Entered Korea'. (Shen & Yang, 2009, 69)**

Mao dispatched troops to Korea in consideration of the Sino-Soviet Alliance. At a meeting of the Politburo, he stressed that the main reason why China sent troops was not to resolve a military problem; however, even if the Chinese troops had been defeated and the Americans returned, China would still send troops (Shen, 1999). Superficially, the PRC and the USSR were aligned after the signing of the Sino-Soviet Agreement in 1960. This agreement was due to historical reasons and Stalin's compromise in negotiating the Sino-Soviet Alliance. However, Stalin always appeared suspicious of and showed disgruntled sentiments towards the PRC. Therefore, Mao was insistent on sending troops to Korea to win Stalin's trust, thereby eliminating, to a certain extent, his doubt regarding the Sino-Soviet Alliance. As expected, Stalin rejoiced at Mao's decision. He told Kim Il-Sung in his telegram: "I was glad that the Chinese comrades have finally decided to send troops to Korea because this decision was in the interests of Korea and the socialist camp." (Shen, 2015c, p. 99). Accordingly, Mao's bold decision to send CPV to Korea may have consolidated the political base of the Sino-Soviet Alliance and won

Stalin's trust. Therefore, the Sino-Soviet Alliance was established after Mao sent troops to Korea. Domestically, the PRC being propelled into an unnecessary war became an opportunity for the CCP to re-examine foreign relations and ultimately to decide to readjust themselves to the outside world. The Korean War was particularly economically burdensome to China. Considering the development of the domestic situation, the Chinese leaders implemented the first five-year plan in 1953, gradually transitioning to the country's large-scale economic construction (Meng & Zhou, 2012) because the Korean War compromised China's economy. The archives of Premier Zhou's meeting with Stalin on 3 September 1952 report that Zhou claimed that the military budget for the Korean War accounted for 44 per cent (1.2 billion roubles) of China's fiscal budget in 1950, 52 per cent (8 billion roubles) of China's budget in 1951, and 27.9 per cent (6.6 billion roubles) in 1952 (Shen, 2015d, p. 278). This wartime economic model adversely affected the economic reconstruction of China. China needed a benign external environment to bolster its economic development to change the unfavourable situation of national internal construction. Driven by the domestic situation, foreign policy adjustments were imperative. The signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement in July 1953 encouraged the Chinese leaders. They believed the current situation was particularly favourable to China and that they should increase national and economic construction (Literature Research Office of the CCP Central Committee, 1998). Therefore, the Korean War enabled China to revise its foreign policy towards implementing economic construction.

Internationally, the CCP adjusted its foreign policy to "lean to one side" to improve the surrounding environment and maintain national security. The Korean War resulted in a hostile relationship between China and the USA, deteriorating China's surroundings because the USA began to see China as its main adversary in the Far East and applied a containment policy (Lin, 2000). For example, among the 28 countries that established diplomatic relations with China after the Korean War, few developed capitalist countries with different ideologies (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, 2000). Therefore, the Chinese leaders' recognition of diplomacy began to shift. Zhou (1952) stressed at the conference on diplomatic work that China's diplomacy was aimed at state-to-state relationships and should be conducted in this format. This statement showed that China's diplomacy began as an act of state with faded ideological colour. At this stage, the new PRC regime was further entrenched with the unbeaten result of the Korean War. Thus, maintaining a secure external environment and constructing the regime were the paramount questions the CCP needed to address.

As an ally, the series of great-nation chauvinism by Stalin and his successors grossly violated Mao and the other Chinese leaders' national emotions after they had signed the Sino-Soviet Alliance Treaty. Apart from enabling China to be implicated in the Korean War, Stalin proposed some unreasonable requirements that annoyed Mao. According to Khrushchev's memoirs, Stalin wanted to build a pineapple cannery in China. A few days later, Stalin received a rejective telegram from the Chinese (Khrushchev & Crankshaw, 1970). Numerous examples can be given, and in the accessory to the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, China and the Soviet Union signed three joint-stock companies



involved in Xinjiang Petroleum and non-ferrous metals (Zhuang, 1995). Superficially, Mao accepted these terms; however, cancelling these joint ventures soon became an inevitable agenda item. On 22 July 1958, when he talked with the Soviet Ambassador to China, Eugene, Mao admitted:

*“Under Stalin’s pressure, we established several joint ventures in two spheres of influence, northeast China and Xinjiang” (Mao, 1958, p. 323).*

Mao used his sphere of influence to describe joint ventures, mirroring his aversion, as he compared the USSR to imperialism. Khrushchev also recalled that when he led a Soviet Government delegation to Beijing in 1954, he proposed using China’s surplus labour to help develop Soviet Siberia (Zhang, 2007). Mao immediately refuted this proposal and stated:

*“This proposal was insulting to the Chinese people because the Western powers for many years saw China as a backward country, overpopulated, unemployed, and a source of cheap labour. If we take your advice, Chinese people will get the wrong idea about Sino-Soviet relations, and they would think that the Soviet Union sees China in the same way as the capitalist West did” (Khrushchev, 1956, p. 387).*

Because of China’s humiliating contemporary history, CCP leaders and Mao had a compassionate attitude towards the issue of national sovereignty and national sentiment. Therefore, such chauvinistic behaviour appeared to stimulate the Chinese leaders’ nationalist sentiment eager to pursue equalitarianism in Sino-Soviet relations. As such, China adjusted its foreign policy and proposed the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.

The idea of China’s independent and self-reliant diplomacy was formally established when the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence were proposed. Waltz, the representative of neo-realism (2010), claimed that systematic structures constrained the behaviour of state actors in the international political system. This international political system encourages specific actions of the state and punishes those who do not respond to encouragement. Some international relations theorists define this process as state socialisation, referring to a positive mechanism to make new norms in the international system. States would accept such norms through physical punishment and partner pressure, like international systems (Katzenstein et al., 1999). The state socialisation concept implies that the PRC, as a new regime with the characteristics of Marxism-Leninism from inception, was little socialised in the international political system; being excluded from the international system determined China’s strategic preferences and the definition and cognition of national interests. The PRC’s early foreign policy was still inevitably impacted and restricted by the revolutionary ideology of the world. Therefore, Mao needed to select the “lean to one side” approach that positioned itself in the socialist camp led by the USSR. However, the USSR had a relatively higher degree of state socialisation when managing the CCP and PRC. It was always prioritising national interest as a linchpin. In negotiating the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Mao’s ideological closeness towards the Soviet Union seemed to conflict with the USSR, which preferred their national interest because of the different extent of state socialisation. Following the transformation of the home and abroad situation after the Korean War, China’s more

significant degree of state socialisation emphasised greater national interest and incrementally focused on state-building. Maintaining good relationships with neighbours and seeking to project an air of rational diplomacy complied with China's national interest. Thereupon, the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence was proposed by Zhou when meeting with Indian Prime Minister Nehru and his Burmese counterpart U Nu (Clymer & Richardson, 2011). At the April 1955 Bandung Conference, Premier Zhou Enlai further promoted the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence as the basis of how countries with different ideologies and social systems should cooperate. The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and Friendly Cooperation established by the conference later incorporated the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (Shimazu, 2014). Following the Polish and Hungarian incidents in 1956, China extended this principle to socialist countries, believing that mutual relations between socialist countries should be built according to the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (Huang, 1996). Therefore, the proposal of these principles was the concrete manifestation of China's degree of state socialisation increases.



**Figure 7: 'On 1<sup>st</sup> November 1954, Mao Zedong and Khrushchev Celebrated the Fifth Anniversary of the PRC at National Day'. (2009b, editorial Committee, 16)**

In this chapter, the synchronisation of the proposal of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and the greater closeness of Sino-Soviet relations appeared to be decipherable. An intimate Sino-Soviet Alliance was in the national interest of the PRC immediately following the Korean War. The USSR was still the sole socialist superpower willing to assist the PRC. China urgently needed this assistance to create the post-war recovery and economic construction. During the construction period of the first five-year plan for socialist industrialisation, particularly after the shift of the work centre to the economic construction that was proposed by the Eighth National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 1956, the economic and cultural construction of PRC was in urgent need of the assistance of the USSR (Chen, 1998). From the USSR's perspective, Stalin died in 1953 at the end of the negotiation of the Korean War (Wang, 2013). Following an internal power struggle, Khrushchev became the last winner in this communist authoritarian regime (McCauley, 1995). To strengthen his political power and status, Khrushchev needed the recognition and support of the CCP because this was the most

significant ruling party among all the communist countries (Yang, 1999). Therefore, Khrushchev vigorously advanced aid to China and strived to expand the scale of construction aid projects regardless of the contrary opinions of the CPSU. In October 1954, Khrushchev led a delegation to visit China, signing binding agreements and directly promoting an aid programme with 156 projects. He even cancelled many unequal treaties which Stalin had burdened on Mao (Wang & Chen, 2013). According to the archives of the USSR, the total export value of Soviet construction projects to China was 9.4 billion roubles, among which the export value of the equipment was 8.4 billion roubles. The export value of technology was one billion roubles, accounting for approximately 7 per cent of the Soviet national income in 1959 (Westad, 1998). The USSR even supplied cutting-edge nuclear weapons and missile technology to China, helping the country to build a modernised and comprehensive industrial system based on almost one thousand aid projects (Shen, 2011). Based on this mutual need, bilateral relations between the CCP and the CPSU strengthened and reached a zenith in 1956 when Mao again visited Moscow.

## 7. Conclusion

This study analysed the influence of bilateral relations between the two parties on the PRC's foreign policy variation from 1945 to 1956. This article chronologically separated the analysis into three timeframes by analysing primary archives and secondary academic articles. During the Chinese Civil War, in the period between 1945 and 1949, contrary to popular belief, Stalin did not begin by choosing to support the CCP but signed a ROC-USSR treaty of friendship and alliance with KMT to protect the prerogatives of the USSR as detailed and agreed under the Yalta system. With the gradual formation of the Cold War, Stalin needed to work with the CCP when encountering and confronting the USA. In this process, Stalin invariably deployed the ideology and goals of world revolution as tools, even ordering the CCP's concession in the civil war, thereby intending to maintain its national interest in northeast China. Consequently, such behaviour triggered Mao's thoughts towards independence and self-reliance. Based on the realistic consideration of the international situation and the assistance of the CPSU in the Chinese Civil War, the CCP decided to enact a foreign policy to "lean to one side" and firmly joined the socialist camp led by the USSR. During this phase, the CCP, still transitioning from a revolutionary group to the ruling party, appeared to place revolutionary ideology above national interest.

From the establishment of the PRC in 1949 to early 1950, structural contradictions between the CCP and the CPSU resulted in the conflicts observed during the negotiation of the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, further strengthening the PRC's independent foreign policy of peace. From one perspective, the initial contradiction was in the socialist camp, where interparty relations led to national policy becoming incompatible with the newly independent countries, which demanded national independence and equity. From another perspective, the hierarchical order of the socialist camp ran counter to Mao's growing foreign policy of peace and democracy. These structural conflicts determined the fragile characteristics of the social alliance. Although Stalin eventually compromised in the Sino-Soviet treaty,

considering the national interest of the USSR, this concession directly embroiled the PRC in the Korean War.

Following the outbreak of the Korean War in late 1950 to the Moscow conference in 1956, the PRC began to implement a dual-track foreign policy. On the one hand, Stalin aimed to offset the loss in the Sino-Soviet Treaty by instigating North Korea to attack South Korea. Mao determinedly dispatched troops to Korea, which genuinely cemented the Sino-Soviet alliance. However, when Khrushchev came to power, he was anxious to solidify his political power; consequently, he expanded the scale of assistance to the PRC. The PRC gradually achieved state socialisation, highlighting the national interest from the regime's consolidation to the construction of the country, needing the assistance of the USSR to build the nation. Therefore, the two parties struck the correct balance at this point, and the Sino-Soviet Alliance entered a honeymoon period. On the other hand, to improve the surrounding environment and national security, the PRC proposed the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and promoted peaceful foreign policy, considering the massive losses incurred during the Korean War. These policies served the PRC's national interest after improving the socialisation of state politics. However, these two tracks could not change the structural conflicts in the socialist camps. After Khrushchev consolidated power, the Sino-Soviet split began in the 1960s, vying for leadership of the socialist camp, even resulting in a border war. To conclude, Machiavellian Stalin always had an eye on the USSR's national interests and privileges rather than ideology when dealing with foreign relations with China. From this process, Mao and CCP's self-reliant and independent thinking were strengthened through Sino-Soviet relations and finally formed a distinct, peaceful, and independent diplomatic thinking inch by inch.

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