

**Austin Jersild**



# **The Sino-Soviet Alliance**

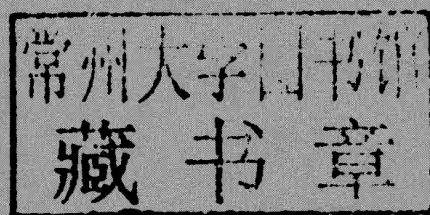
**AN  
INTERNATIONAL  
HISTORY**

# THE SINO-SOVIET ALLIANCE

An International History

AUSTIN JERSILD

The University of North Carolina Press *Chapel Hill*



© 2014 The University of North Carolina Press

All rights reserved

Manufactured in the United States of America

Designed and set in Arno and Calluna Sans types by Rebecca Evans

The paper in this book meets the guidelines for permanence and durability of the Committee on Production Guidelines for Book Longevity of the Council on Library Resources.

The University of North Carolina Press has been a member of the Green Press Initiative since 2003.

Complete cataloging information for this title is available from the Library of Congress.

ISBN 978-1-4696-1159-4 (cloth: alk. paper)

18 17 16 15 14 5 4 3 2 1

# **THE SINO-SOVIET ALLIANCE**



## **The New Cold War History**

ODD ARNE WESTAD, EDITOR

**FOR HEATHER**

## ILLUSTRATIONS

Chinese youth observe the sculpture *Ninotchka* in the Hall of Culture  
Soviet exhibit in Beijing, 1954 7

*The Signing of the Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance*,  
14 February 1950, mural 11

Nikita Khrushchev and Zhou Enlai at the opening ceremony of the  
Soviet exhibit in Beijing, October 1954 17

Soviet engineers in China 31

A Soviet mechanical engineer instructs Chinese observers at the  
Soviet exhibit in Beijing, 1954 39

A Soviet adviser explains the function of the E 505-A Excavator to  
Chinese observers at the Soviet exhibit in Guangzhou, 1955 42

Chinese examine agricultural equipment at the Soviet exhibit in  
Beijing, 1954 66

Soviet Film Festival in Guangzhou, 1955 83

A Soviet cultural adviser in China 89

Exhibit of Chinese Industry and Agriculture, Moscow, 1953 91

Advertisement for the 21st Party Congress of the CPSU in Moscow  
in January 1959 143

Chairman Mao listens to a Soviet pianist at the Soviet exhibit in  
Beijing, 1954 151

“Transform Railway Transportation; Work to Serve the Industrialization  
of the Nation” 180

Chairman Mao, Liu Shaoqi, and other officials inspect agricultural  
equipment at the Soviet exhibit in Beijing, 1954 209

## PREFACE

The specter of an emerging alliance of Russia and China in response to American unilateralism and “hegemony” in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union has attracted the attention of numerous observers of contemporary international affairs. The new “strategic partnership,” as it was called in the 1997 Treaty of Good Neighborliness, Cooperation, and Friendship, has since then featured border agreements, the growth of small-scale trade, arms sales, joint military exercises, exchange in the strategic and sensitive area of natural resources, and the emergence of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. The two countries again share common suspicions about America, the presumed maker and beneficiary of a unipolar world, and its promotion of NATO expansion, preventive war, the campaign in Iraq, and the abrogation of the 1972 Anti-ballistic Missile Treaty. Both countries are especially sensitive about what they perceive as intrusive American criticism of their supposed human rights violations.<sup>1</sup> This relationship, however, far from an alliance, is a far cry from what was known as the “Great Friendship” established by Joseph Stalin and Chairman Mao in Moscow on 14 February 1950. The two societies and economies in their current form cannot possibly reproduce anything close to the forms of collaboration and cooperation once characteristic of the socialist world. The shared perception of America as a threat is significant but less important than the shared hope of greater trade and participation in the global economy. If anything, the relationship borders on what both sides once denounced as the traditional diplomacy characteristic of the world of imperialism and capitalism, the antithesis of socialist “internationalism.” Minus the Chinese purchase of Russian oil, the current relationship is more reminiscent of the earlier history of the Sino-Russian frontier, with its series of treaties clarifying borders, regulating trade, and resolving settlement disputes.<sup>2</sup> The lofty rhetoric and complicated practices of “proletarian internationalism” belong to the past.

The study of this past required fellowship support, advice, and intellectual camaraderie from a wide variety of institutions, friends, and colleagues, and I am grateful to have the opportunity to recognize some of them here. I began research on this project a decade ago, but it occupied some corner of my imagination many years before then. As part of an exchange between St. Olaf



College and East China Normal University, I taught English in Shanghai in 1986–87, where I had the opportunity to meet many Russian-speaking Chinese with distant memories of their experiences in the Soviet Union in the 1950s. As a graduate student at the University of Michigan and at the University of California, Davis, I was fortunate to learn about Chinese history and politics from Kenneth Lieberthal, Michael Yahuda, Donald Price, and Kwang-Ching Liu. More recently, I started archival work in Russia in the spring of 2004, with the support of the American Councils on International Education, and continued archival work in Moscow, Prague, Vladivostok, Berlin, and Beijing with additional support from the Fulbright Program in the Russian Federation, the Fulbright Program in the Czech Republic, the National Council on Eurasian and East European Research, the Old Dominion University Faculty Leave Program, and the ODU Summer Faculty Research Program.

This list of those I wish to acknowledge and thank is surely incomplete, but let me start with Karolína Šimůnková, Pavel Baudisch, and Jiří Bernas of the National Archive in Prague; Zuzana Pivcová of the Central Military Archive in Prague; the highly professional archival workers of the Russian Federation; Sylvia Gräfe of SAPMO in Berlin; the International Department of Far Eastern Federal University in Vladivostok; Anthony Koliha, Marina Bezrukova, Valentina Gruzintseva, Hanna Ramboukovska, and Muriel Joffe of CIEE and the Fulbright program; Graham Hettlinger of American Councils; Dean Charles Wilson, Vice Provost Chandra DeSilva, and former Department of History chair Annette Finley-Croswhite of Old Dominion University; Cui Yan of Beijing University; Dean Guo Yingjian of Minzu University of China in Beijing; Michael Carhart, Martha Daas, Kurt Gaubatz, Jin Hailstork, Maura Hametz, Erin Jordan, Lorraine Lees, Jane Merritt, Katerina Oskarsson, Kathy Pearson, Heidi Schlipphacke, Steve Yetiv, and Ren Zhongtang of Old Dominion University; Tomaš and Marketa Reiner in Prague; Lola Rakhimbekova and Elena Larina in Moscow; Detlef Pohontsch in Berlin; the Kuhn family in both Norfolk, Virginia (Sebastian and Kathrin), and Berlin (Susanne); and Zhihua Shen, Dai Chaowu, Ron Suny, Rex Wade, Willard Sunderland, and Brantly Womack. Conference presentations and seminars highly useful to the evolution of this book included those organized by Eric Lohr and the Russian History Workshop at Georgetown University; Charles King and the Center for Eurasian, Russian, and East European Studies of Georgetown University; Maura Hametz and the Associates Writing Group at Old Dominion University; Yoko Aoshima and the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies of Harvard University; and Priscilla Roberts and the University of Hong Kong.

I am grateful to Christian Ostermann of the Cold War International History Project for making possible my participation at this last event, dedicated to “Mao’s China, Non-communist Asia, and the Global Setting, 1949–1976.” In Hong Kong I was fortunate to meet Sergey Radchenko and Qiang Zhai, both of whom were extremely helpful and insightful readers of an earlier draft of this book. My thanks to them and to Yafeng Xia for encouraging me to go to China for research, and to work in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs archive in Beijing in particular. I am especially grateful for the scholarly inspiration and intellectual encouragement provided over the years by Odd Arne Westad. It was an honor to work with a series and a press that has taught me so much about the Cold War, and I am grateful for the insight and hard work of Chuck Grench, Sara Jo Cohen, Alison Shay, Paula Wald, Alex Martin, and their colleagues at the University of North Carolina Press.

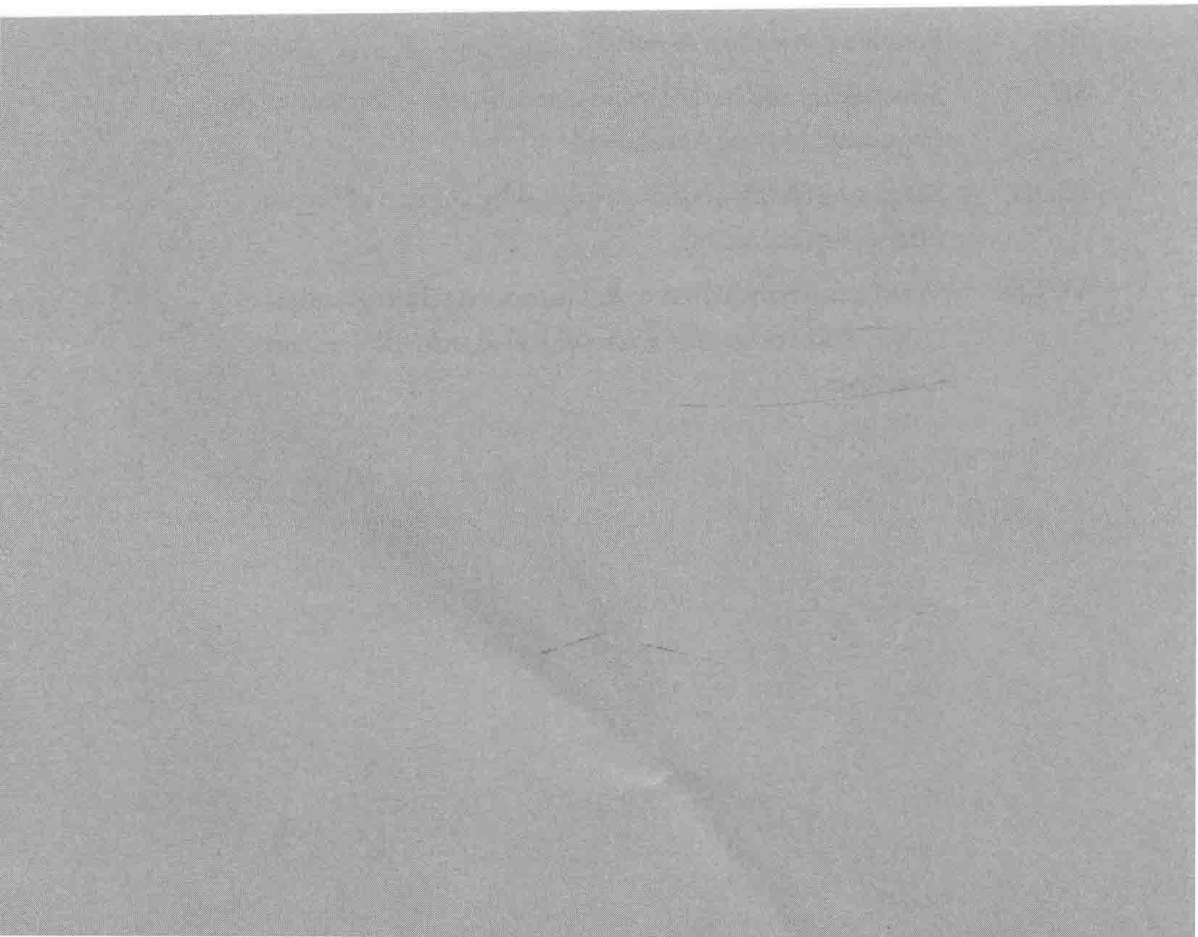
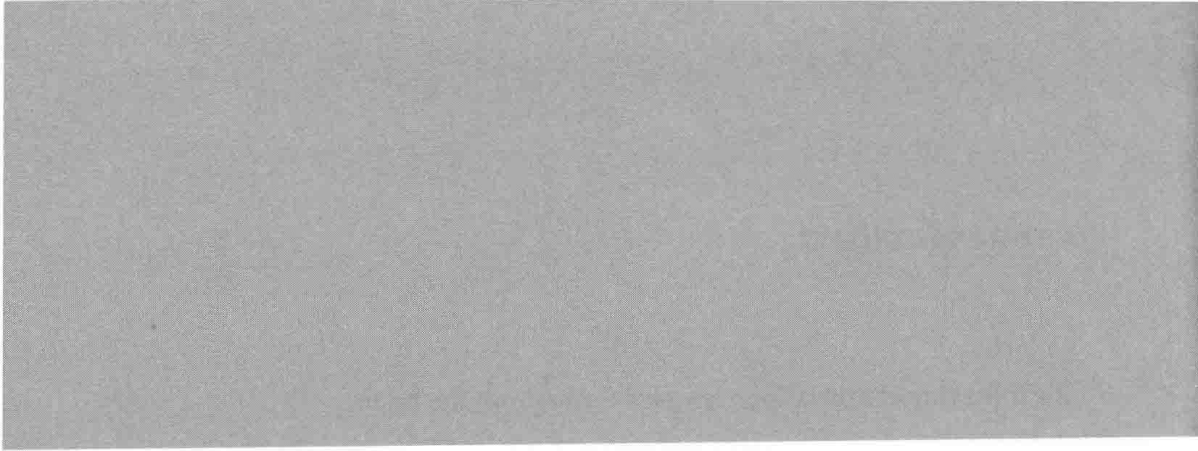
My deepest thanks go to my family—my parents, Paul and Marilyn Jersild; my children, Annika and Kira; and my wife, Heather. I was fortunate to have my father read an entire draft of this book, part of an ongoing conversation that extends back as far as I can remember. Annika and Kira are especially brave, and they taught both of their parents quite a bit about the virtues of resilience and flexibility in response to the challenges of travel and dislocation. And finally, this book is dedicated to Heather, whose spirit of adventure and curiosity has inspired not just this book but so much more in our shared lives.

Portions of this work appeared as part of an article titled “The Soviet State as Imperial Scavenger: ‘Catch Up and Surpass’ in the Transnational Socialist Bloc, 1950–1960,” published in February 2011 in the *American Historical Review*. I would like to thank the editor of the journal for permission to include the relevant material from the article in this book. The illustrations are reproduced with the permission of the Russian State Economic Archive and the State Archive of the Russian Federation in Moscow. In the text and the notes, the transliterations from Chinese conform to the pinyin system, and those from Russian follow the Library of Congress system, except in the case of a few names that are generally familiar to English readers (for example, Mikoyan rather than Mikoian).

## ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used throughout the book.

AUS-VN	Armádního uměleckého souboru Víta Nejedlého (Vita Nejedlého Army Cultural Group)
CC	Central Committee
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
GDR	German Democratic Republic
GMD	Guomindang
GUES	Glavnoe upravlenie po vneshnim ekonomicheskim sviaziam soveta ministrov (Main Administration of External Economic Ties of the Soviet of Ministers)
OKSD	Obshchestvo kitaisko-sovetskoi družby (Society for Chinese-Soviet Friendship)
OVS	Otdel vneshnikh snoshenii (Department of External Relations)
PLA	People's Liberation Army
SEV	Sovet ekonomicheskoi vzaimopomoshchi (Committee on Economic Mutual Assistance)
SSOD	Soiuz sovetskikh obshchestv družby (Union of Soviet Friendship Societies)
VOKS	Vsesoiuznoe obshchestvo kul'turnoi sviazi s zagranitse (All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries)



## **THE SINO-SOVIET ALLIANCE**



# CONTENTS

PREFACE ix

ABBREVIATIONS xiii

## INTRODUCTION **The Imperial Question Transformed** 1

The Socialist Bloc as International History

### PART 1

#### **Mao's First Visit to Moscow**

December 1949–January 1950

## CHAPTER ONE **Proletarian Internationalism in Practice** 27

Pay, Misbehavior, and Incentives under Socialism

## CHAPTER TWO **Learning from the Central Europeans** 58

Authority and Expertise in the Era of Reform

## CHAPTER THREE **Interpreting the Red Poppy** 82

Practical Learning, Spiritual Pollution

### PART 2

#### **Mao's Second Visit to Moscow**

The November 1957 Conference

## CHAPTER FOUR **China's Conditional Affirmation of Soviet Leadership, 1956–1957** 109

## CHAPTER FIVE **The Socialist Bloc Comes to Its Senses** 132

Responding to the Great Leap Forward

## CHAPTER SIX **China's Outreach to a World Betrayed** 156

The Response to Soviet "Revisionism," 1958–1964

## CHAPTER SEVEN **Friends, Neighbors, Enemies** 177

The Chinese Transformation of the Friendship Society

## CONCLUSION **Frustration and Betrayal** 208

Russian Imperialism, Chinese Ambition, Central European Pragmatism

NOTES 227 BIBLIOGRAPHY 283 INDEX 321

## INTRODUCTION

### The Imperial Question Transformed

#### The Socialist Bloc as International History

At the present time the [Chinese] government is experiencing an extraordinarily large need for civilian cadres, which we have not been able to meet because of the circumstances of the war.

—Liu Shaoqi to Nikolai V. Roshchin, October 1949

[The Chinese are suspicious of us because] the Chinese people suffered more than 100 years from foreign imperialism and therefore distrust foreigners, and because . . . the people do not understand the nature of the Soviet Union, not understanding the fundamentals of the new type of relations among socialist countries.

—Nikolai G. Sudarikov to Nikolai T. Fedorenko et al., February 1958

#### Pavel Iudin and the Soviet Empire in Eurasia

Soviet ambassador to China Pavel Iudin liked to talk, usually about obscure matters of Marxist theory and history. In part this was his job, as before he became ambassador he was well known within the bloc for his expertise in matters of official ideology and the related question of potential deviation from official ideology. He enjoyed the patronage of Joseph Stalin and Andrei Zhdanov through the 1930s and 1940s as he worked for the Central Committee (CC), directed the Institute of Red Professors, and served on the editorial board of the theoretical journal *Bol'shevik*. Zhdanov, of course, was the presenter of the famous “two-camp” speech to describe the developing Cold War at the Cominform conference in Poland in September 1947, and Iudin remained his close assistant until his death in 1948. Iudin’s career in sensitive Belgrade, where he edited the Cominform newspaper *For Lasting Peace, For People’s Democracy*, presumably prepared him well for the China post, the culminating episode of his long diplomatic career.<sup>1</sup>

China was simultaneously promising yet dangerous to the socialist bloc countries and their many advisers who worked there through the 1950s. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) had successfully combined revolution, victory in a civil war against the Guomindang (GMD) and its American ally, and success in the struggle against the invading Japanese. Their victory in 1949 and the signing of the Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance with the Soviet Union in February 1950 placed China squarely in the world of socialist bloc exchange and collaboration, and subject to a vast advising program. Unlike the Central and Eastern European parties, the CCP was not beholden to the Soviet Union, or dependent on the successes of the Red Army. The Chinese communists had substantial Soviet support, especially in the Northeast, but their experience left them feeling far more confident about the indigenous sources of their revolution than did their Eastern and Central European counterparts. Could Chairman Mao be trusted? In 1956, Iudin conceded to Mao himself that rumors about him as a “Chinese Tito” were common in 1950.<sup>2</sup> This was a sensitive charge, of course, as it raised a host of issues pertaining to insubordination and betrayal that were politically unacceptable in the early years of a Cold War struggle that demanded bloc “unity” against the “imperialist” threat. Iudin’s role was to ensure that this difficult history would not be repeated, and in part the task at hand was perceived to be one of maintaining Marxist-Leninist ideology. Before he became ambassador, Iudin was in China in 1950 and 1951 working on the production, publication, and translation of Mao’s *Collected Works*.<sup>3</sup>

Preoccupied with Marxism-Leninism, the Soviet ambassador was oblivious to a heritage of empire in Russian history that continued to complicate relations within the supposedly new world of socialism. Iudin was characteristic of a confident and even arrogant Soviet officialdom in the bloc, and his long theoretical digressions illustrated a Soviet obliviousness to the contemporary events that mattered in China.<sup>4</sup> Most essential to the Chinese was the very history of European colonialism that Iudin even in his personal life was unable to address. Longtime embassy official V. P. Fedotov described the appointment of Iudin, the “well-known philosopher and academic,” as a “colossal mistake.” He was excessively preoccupied with rank and hierarchy in a way that reminded the Chinese of precisely what bothered them about the Soviet system. Iudin the “Soviet baron,” recalls Fedotov, had expectations about service and servants that impressed even European colleagues in China.<sup>5</sup>

Such a bearing was likely to bother the Chinese, whose long struggle against European colonialism was fresh in the minds of builders of the new revolu-

tionary state. This was the central issue of modern Chinese history, and the rise of the CCP was one aspect of the broader response to years of frustration marked by losses to the British in the Opium Wars, the French and the British jointly from 1856 to 1860, the French in 1884, and the Japanese in 1894–95. In response, reformers sought to transform traditional China so it could compete with more advanced foreign powers and end an era of poverty, backwardness, and national humiliation.<sup>6</sup> China is in “imminent peril,” warned scholar Kang Youwei in a discussion of the “Society for the Study of Self-Strengthening.” “The Russians are spying on us from the north and the English are peeping at us on the west; the French are staring at us from the south and the Japanese are watching us in the east.”<sup>7</sup> The slogan to “save the nation [*jiuguo*]” first emerged in the wake of the concessions granted Japan in 1895, and anti-Japanese frustration and sentiment was further inflamed by the Twenty-One Demands presented by the Japanese in 1915. The May Fourth Movement (named for the student demonstrations in Beijing on 4 May 1919), gave voice to numerous radical sentiments in culture, personal life, and politics but above all emerged from the competition between China and the outside world, and the related dilemma of foreign imperialism in China.<sup>8</sup> Reformers, nationalists, and revolutionaries, among them Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao, Sun Yatsen, Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek), Chen Duxiu, and Mao Zedong, shared a belief in the necessity of a Chinese “awakening” that would end the special privileges and concessions enjoyed by the imperial powers and restore China to its rightful place in the world.<sup>9</sup> Socialist bloc advising, or the system of *komandirovka* (work-related travel) that serves as the background to this book, was but the most recent episode in China’s long history of unequal interaction with foreign powers.<sup>10</sup>

Like many other Soviet officials and advisers in China, Iudin believed Soviet experience and revolutionary internationalism made the painful history of European colonialism irrelevant. In early 1955, in total seriousness, Iudin approached Chinese foreign minister Zhou Enlai about the absence in Lüshun (Port Arthur) of a monument to General Stepan Makarov, the prerevolutionary explorer and conqueror of the Russian Far East. The Soviets after all, had placed a large statue of Makarov prominently looking over the bay in Vladivostok, which still stands today.<sup>11</sup> That Iudin could be so insensitive about such symbolism in a strategically valuable warm-water port, historically host to Russian rivalry with the Japanese over control over Northeast China, is astonishing. The question of Soviet influence in the Northeast was highly sensitive, yet alone coupled with a tendentious and explicit reference to a pre-revolutionary Russian conqueror of the Far East. The Soviets were reluctant to