An Analysis of the Early Diplomatic Policies of Soviet Russia and China on the Chinese Eastern Railway, 1917-1925

by

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Abstract

This thesis explores the evolution of Soviet diplomatic policies with respect to the disputed ownership of the Chinese Eastern Railway, and the responses of the three Chinese political authorities in Beijing, Guangzhou and Fengtian from 1917 to 1925. It restructures the analysis of available sources through horizontal analysis and comparison, in order to unveil a "parallel diplomacy" on the Soviet part, and the roles the three Chinese authorities played in this grand diplomatic game.

From the Revolution in 1917 until the death of Sun Yat-sen in 1925, Moscow's contacts with all three authorities were initiated almost simultaneously with three different purposes, political legitimacy, justification of ideology, and practical leverage respectively. In response, the Beijing government took a relatively active approach toward reclaiming the ownership of the Railway, whereas Sun in Guangzhou was somewhat passive in dealing with Soviet claims. Fengtian warlord Zhang Zuolin's approaches were quite ambiguous, as he had to balance the Japanese force in Manchuria as well. In general, the thesis reveals a balance between propaganda and national interests in Soviet diplomatic policy-making, and evaluates the effectiveness of Chinese politicians' responses to Soviet Russia.

To my parents.

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CER 1920: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica. *中俄关系史料：中东铁路，1920* [Historical Materials on Sino-Russian Relations: Chinese Eastern Railway, 1920]. Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Taiwan, 1959.

CER 1921: _____. *中俄关系史料：中东铁路，1921* [Historical Materials on Sino-Russian Relations: Chinese Eastern Railway, 1921]. Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Taiwan, 1974.

EZBYYBJS 1917-1918: _____. *中俄关系史料：俄政变与一般交涉，1917-1918* [Historical Materials on Sino-Russian Relations: The Russian Revolution and Sino-Russian Relations in General, 1917-1918]. Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Taiwan, 1960.

EZBYYBJS 1919: _____. *中俄关系史料：俄政变与一般交涉，1919* [Historical Materials on Sino-Russian Relations: The Russian Revolution and Sino-Russian Relations in General, 1919]. Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Taiwan, 1960.

YBJS 1920: _____. *中俄关系史料：一般交涉，1920* [Historical Materials on Sino-Russian Relations: Sino-Russian Relations in General, 1920]. Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Taiwan, 1968.

EZB 1921: _____. *中俄关系史料：俄政变，1921* [Historical Materials on Sino-Russian Relations: The Russian Revolution, 1921]. Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Taiwan, 1974.

YBJS 1921: _____. *中俄关系史料：一般交涉，1921* [Historical Materials on Sino-Russian Relations: Sino-Russian Relations in General, 1921]. Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Taiwan, 1973.

CBXBLY 1917-1919: _____. *中俄关系史料：出兵西伯利亚，1917-1919* [Historical Materials on Sino-Russian Relations: The Siberian Expedition, 1917-1919]. Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Taiwan, 1952.

VKP (b) 1920-1925: Akademia Nauk SSSR. *VKP (b), Komintern i natsional'no-revoliutsionnoe dvizhenie v Kitae: Dokumenty 1920-1925* [CPSU (b), the Comintern and the National Revolutionary Movement in China: Documents, 1920-1925]. Moscow: Institut Dal'nego Vostoka, 1994.

Comintern 1917-1925: 中共中央党史研究室 [Party History Research Centre of the CCP Central Committee] ed. *共产国际、联共（布）与中国革命文献资料选辑，1917-1925* [The Comintern, CPSU (b) and the Chinese Revolution: Documents and Materials, 1917-1925]. Beijing: Beijing Library Press, 1997.

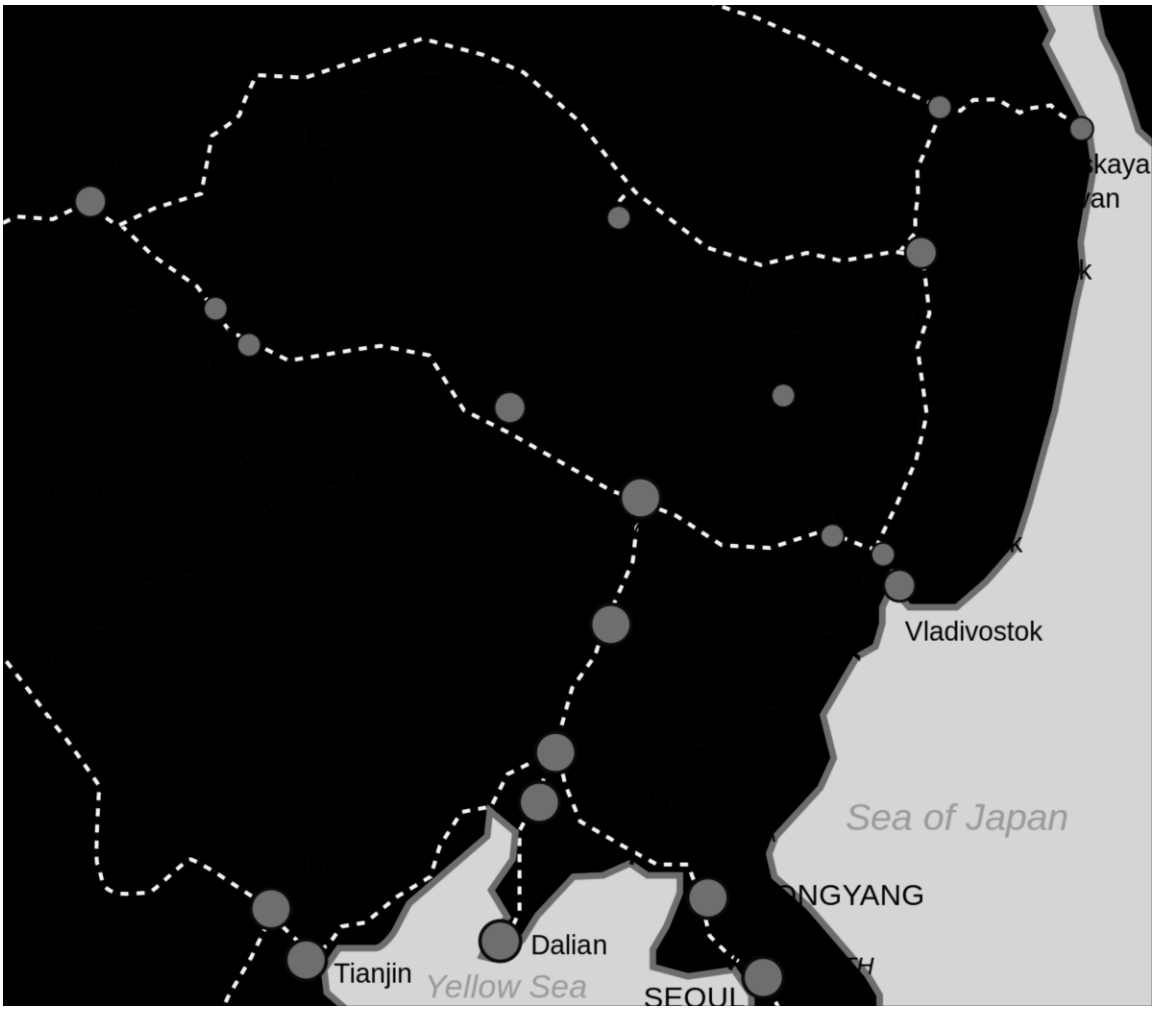
ZSGJGXSZLHB: 中国社会科学院 [Chinese Academy of Social Sciences] comp. *中苏国家关系史资料汇编，1917-1924* [Historical Documents on Sino-Soviet National Relations, 1917-1924]. Beijing: Chinese Social Sciences Press, 1993.

MLYDYCGGHZ: _____. *马林与第一次国共合作* [Maring and the First United Front]. Beijing: Guangming Daily Press, 1989.

TJWSZL: 天津文史资料委员会 [Tianjin Literature and Historical Materials Committee] ed. *天津文史资料选辑* [Tianjin Historical Document Collections], vol. 2. Tianjin: Tianjin People's Press, 1979.

JLWSZL: 吉林文史资料文员会 [Jilin Literature and Historical Materials Committee] ed. *吉林文史资料：张作霖的奉系军阀人物资料专辑* [Jilin Historical Document Collections vol. 4: Documents of Zhang Zuolin and other Fengtian Clique Warlords]. Changchun: Jilin People's Press, 1983.

SZSQJ: 广东社会科学院 [Academy of Social Sciences and History] ed. *孙中山全集* [Collected Works of Sun Yat-sen], 12 vols. Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1981.



1. The routing of the main line of the Chinese Eastern Railway today (Manzhouli to Harbin to Suifenhe), and its southern branch (Harbin to Dalian)
Source: Chinese Eastern Railway. February 2010. http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d7/Chinese_Eastern_Railway-en.svg (accessed May 19, 2014).

Above: 2. The Chinese Eastern Railway today
Below: 3. Hengdaohezi (横道河子) Station, one of the major and heavily militarized stations on the Chinese Eastern Railway in the late 1910s and 1920s
(Photos taken by the author on August 16, 2013)

Introduction

This thesis is an analysis of the evolution of policies with respect to the Chinese Eastern Railway of Soviet Russia and three Chinese authorities in Beijing, Guangzhou, and Fengtian from 1917 to 1925. During this time, Sino-Russian interactions on the diplomatic level were quite extensive; therefore, focusing on one major issue allows for a deeper examination of the subject matter. In this case, the thesis takes up the disputes over the ownership of the Chinese Eastern Railway (中国东省铁路, hereafter referred to as the CER) with the Beiyang government (北洋政府) in Beijing, the self-proclaimed Sun Yat-sen government (孙中山政府) in Guangzhou, as well as the semi-independent Fengtian autonomous government (奉天自治政府) in Manchuria vis-à-vis Soviet Russia to some extent represented the diplomatic tendencies of both sides.

This thesis will argue that there is no universal "Chinese Railway diplomacy", but three parallel lines; that is to say, Moscow's contacts with all three entities were initiated almost simultaneously with different purposes, and, naturally, elicited different responses. Specifically, in order to get the most out of the CER, Moscow approached Beijing, for it was the only legitimate government of China. Beijing reacted relatively actively in defending national sovereignty, and, at least initially, held a firm position against the Soviets' demands regarding the CER. Comparatively, Guangzhou was much more compromising, since cooperation with Moscow was crucial to its own existence and the realization of Sun's political ideals. Moscow chose Sun mainly because he was considered the symbolic leader of the Chinese democratic revolution; by establishing contacts with him, Moscow attempted to fulfill its internationalist mission. The Fengtian-

Soviet relationship was much more practical. Moscow was well aware that the Manchurian warlord Zhang Zuolin was deeply intertwined in CER matters, and Zhang agreed to cooperate with Moscow in order to consolidate his rule in Manchuria by balancing out the Japanese forces there.

The Soviet "parallel diplomacy" on the CER is also the major finding of this thesis. Although Moscow concentrated its attention on Beijing, the other two negotiation partners should not be underestimated because, as will be demonstrated in the thesis, these two were important components of Soviet strategic planning. Therefore, this restructuring of the analysis of Sino-Soviet struggles over the CER further proves that in the early Soviet diplomacy, national interests played a significant role, but the role of its communist internationalism propaganda should not be ignored. Although Sun Yat-sen had no direct connection with the CER, Soviet Russia still included him as an important component of its overall CER policy, mainly to serve ideological purposes.

The CER provided a shortcut for the world's longest railroad, the Trans-Siberian Railway, from near the Siberian city of Chita to the Russian port of Vladivostok. The Railway, centred in Harbin (哈尔滨), reached as far as Suifenhe (绥芬河) in the east, west as far as Manzhouli (满洲里), and south as far as Dalian (大连). It was constructed by Russia on Chinese territory in 1897, completed in 1903, and was managed by Russian staff thereafter. The *Contract Regulation of the Chinese Eastern Railway Bureau Administration Partnership* was signed in 1896, and the Railway was put under the control of a joint stock company.

The reason why the Railway was so crucial was that upon building the railway in

1903, Russia brought a large army along with the construction team, and declared Northern Manchuria to be within its sphere of influence. Its completion marked one further step of Russia's advancement in Manchuria. In fact, Russia's desire to set foot in China dated back to the post-Crimean War period in the late 1850s, when the tsarist government started to pay more attention eastwards after the defeat in the war. The setback was a crucial turning point in Russia's expansion strategies because it prompted the empire to re-establish its devastated national prestige after the terrible loss. After his father's death, Alexander II became increasingly convinced that the sparsely inhabited regions in Asia were the empire's new hope. The imperial interests were mainly around the Amur and Ussuri areas in the Far East. During Alexander II and Alexander III's reigns, the signing of several Sino-Russian unequal treaties ceded approximately one million square kilometres of Chinese territories in Manchuria and numerous privileges, including the construction right of the CER, to the Russian Empire. Besides territorial expansion, economic expansion was gradually extended to China through the CER as well during Nicholas II's time.[1]

After the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, Russia yielded to Japan both the Liaodong Peninsula and much of the South Manchurian branch of the Railway (南满铁路), extending from Harbin and leading all the way to Dalian. The Russian defeat ended its monopoly in this region and made Japanese intervention possible. In 1917, the Russian Empire met its end and a new political force, the Bolsheviks, overthrew the short-lived Provisional Government and rose to power. Right after the October Revolution, the Bolsheviks started to face the challenge of reconciling the need to spread world

[1] S.C.M. Paine, *Imperial Rivals: China, Russia, and Their Disputed Frontier* (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1996), 39-42.

revolution and anti-imperialism, and to guarantee the survival of the regime, as they attempted to redefine their foreign policies.[2]

However, the Bolshevik reign in Moscow was not very stable. Only a few months later, a civil war between the Reds and the so-called "Whites", who were a loose confederation of anti-Bolshevik forces, including land-owners, conservatives, reactionaries, liberals, imperial army generals and so on, broke out in almost all parts of the country. During the Civil War, much of eastern Siberia came under the administration of the White Army. It attempted to re-organize with the help of Japan, Russia's longtime enemy, and greatly endangered the stability of the new communist regime. As anti-Red forces were mobilizing themselves in Siberia, the Western powers also decided to intervene militarily against the Bolsheviks. The Siberian Intervention by the Entente powers occurred in 1918, aiming at pushing back the Bolsheviks in support of the White Army. Among the intervening powers, Japan played the largest role in the Entente Expeditionary Force. Its troops deployed along the Manchurian border and occupied all ports and major towns in the Russian Maritime Province. The Japanese army remained in the region until 1922, two years after all the other powers had evacuated, and its presence in the Maritime Province and northern Manchuria caused a huge threat to the Soviet government because of its support for the White troops.[3]

In the early 1920s, the Bolsheviks, who found themselves fighting against all the major western powers almost as soon as they seized power, seemed eager to make some new friends. One of the primary targets of Moscow was its neighbour in the east, China,

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[2] Gabriel Gorodetsky, "The Formulation of Soviet Foreign Policy: Ideology and *Realpolitik*," in *Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917-1991, A Retrospective*, ed. Gabriel Gorodetsky (London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1994), 30-1.

[3] See Paul E. Dunscomb, *Japan's Siberian Intervention, 1918-1922: "A Great Disobedience against the People"* (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2011), 211-224.

which at that time was still surrounded by the "imperialist powers" from almost all directions. China in the late 1910s and early 1920s was in political chaos, because the imperial regime had collapsed and the new government had been established only five years prior to the October Revolution. The Beijing Government, also known as the Beiyang Government, was the internationally-recognized official government of the Republic of China. It was initially controlled by Yuan Shikai (袁世凯), and fell into the hands of Yuan's generals after his death in 1916. These generals, who were later called the Beiyang warlords, had different political views and certain factions of foreign powers to support their rule. After a long two-year political struggle between the Zhili (直隶) and the Anfu (安福) warlords, the 1918 election saw the triumph of Duan Qirui[4] (段祺瑞) and his Anhui-based clique, which had strong Japanese support behind it. A Zhili-Anfu War followed in 1920, and Duan stepped down after two years' rule. The new power, Wu Peifu (吴佩孚), the Zhili leader, was well-known for his anti-Japanese position, and enjoyed greater popularity among the western powers.

Meanwhile, the Nationalist Party leader Sun Yat-sen struggled to run his revolutionary movement in Guangzhou. Sun had been declared the Provisional President of the newly-founded Republic of China in late 1911, and helped frame the Provisional Constitution. However, his presidency did not last long. In March 1912, Sun stepped down and yielded the position to the head of the Beiyang Army, Yuan Shikai. Sun established his own political party, the Chinese Revolutionary Party, (later renamed the Chinese Nationalist Party 中国国民党, hereafter the KMT) in 1912, and kept promoting his "Three People's Principles" (三民主义, Nationalism, Democracy, and Livelihood of

[4] Duan was elected as the premier, but he was the actual "power behind the throne"; besides, the president at the time, Xu Shichang, also belonged to the Anfu clique.

the People). In April 1921, after several years of political exile, Sun started a self-proclaimed military government in Guangzhou based on the KMT and was elected Grand Marshal, and then assumed the presidency on May 5, 1921. The main components of the government included a Ministry of Finance headed by Liao Zhongkai (廖仲恺), a Ministry of the Army headed by Chen Jiongming (陈炯明), the Chief of the General Staff Li Liejun (李烈钧), and a Ministry of Foreign Affairs headed by Wu Tingfang (伍廷芳). Sun's most important political philosophy during the Guangzhou period was the Three People's Principles, and a Five-Power Constitution (五权宪法), which included legislative, executive, judicial, examination (the right to administer the selection of candidates for the bureaucracy) and censorate (mainly the right to impeach) rights.[5] He attempted to promote an autonomous system, and take the eventual unification of China as his goal.[6] Despite its political structure, Guangzhou was by no means a political parallel to Beijing. No other country beside Soviet Russia recognized its status as a government, and its influence before 1927 barely extended beyond Guangdong.

In addition, throughout the late 1910s and early 1920s, the Fengtian (奉天, modern-day Liaoning Province) clique led by Marshal Zhang Zuolin (张作霖) dominated southern Manchuria. Although he had not yet declared the region's independence at this time, he would soon be of great importance to Moscow, because his "sphere of influence" contained the CER area. He rose to fame during the 1911 Wuchang Uprising when the Manchurian People's Peacekeeping Council was established with the help of his troops. By 1920, Zhang had become the supreme ruler of Manchuria. The Beijing Government

[5] Sun Yat-sen, "The Principle of Democracy (1924)", Primary Source Document with Questions, University of Columbia, 2009. Asia for Educators (http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/sun_yatsen_democracy.pdf).
[6] 尹诚善、冯雅春 [Chengshan Yin and Yachun Feng], *孙中山与中国国民党* [Sun Yat-sen and the Chinese Nationalist Party] (Changchun: Jilin Literature & History Press, 1991), 326-30.

acknowledged this by appointing him Governor-General of the Three Manchurian Provinces in 1920. His forces consisted of about 100,000 men and included a naval unit. He was a great threat to the Beijing government, and openly declared independence in spring 1922. Although not a single political entity recognized his regime, his control of Manchuria was firm, and he was nicknamed "King of Manchuria" (东北王).

Accordingly, the structure of this thesis is divided horizontally along the three lines. The first and second chapters deal primarily with the Russian/Soviet-Beijing interactions. After the October Revolution, instead of the Bolsheviks who were thousands of kilometres away, Beijing came into direct contact with the White forces that withdrew into Siberia after being defeated by the Reds. The CER under Sino-White joint administration was no less chaotic than it had been during the imperial era, with the Imperial General Director Dmitrii Horvath still in charge. After two years of struggle with the Whites, the Beiyang government eventually decided to cut off all relations with them and responded to the Soviets' appeal to negotiate. Moscow's intention in initiating contacts was to restore its control over the CER through Beijing, the only internationally-recognized government, and it eventually managed to achieve its goal.

The third chapter focuses on the Soviet-Guangzhou communications. The new Soviet government clearly knew not to put all its eggs in one basket, and sent envoys to approach Sun Yat-sen almost simultaneously. Although the Guangzhou government was not the official Chinese government, Sun Yat-sen himself was influential as the founder of the Republic of China in 1912. The Soviet delegation attempted to convince Sun that the only way to accomplish national unification was to expel the "imperialists" and that the Soviet government would be willing to help. Having been convinced, Sun agreed to a

coalition with Soviet Russia in 1923. The publication of the Sun-Ioffe Declaration in January 1923 marked the beginning of cooperation between the Guangzhou Government and the Soviets. This declaration basically justified the Soviet existence in Manchuria by accepting the current situation on the Railway and the fact that re-organization of the Railway administration would happen "only at the appropriate time".

The fourth chapter briefly introduces the Fengtian-Soviet contacts. Although Zhang Zuolin was only a local warlord at the time, he was the one directly involved in Manchurian affairs and the CER administration. Moscow was aware of this, and in order to secure its gain in Manchuria, it began to send Comintern envoys to Zhang in 1923. The signing of the Fengtian-Soviet Treaty in the following year marked the cooperation between the Soviet government and a local semi-independent warlord regime.

In general, the main research questions are centred on defining what Moscow's intentions were in communicating with these entities, in order to reveal the relationship between the Soviet ideological propaganda and its national interests. An additional question, naturally, would be assessing the effectiveness of the three political entities' CER policies, and the results of the interactions with Moscow.

Historiography

The existing historiography of this topic describes both Soviet Russia and China's positions on the dispute over the CER. The secondary sources about Soviet Railway policy can be categorized along the line of the debate over whether *Realpolitik* or ideology constitute the dominant drive in Soviet foreign policy. After the October Revolution in 1917, Soviet Russia's railway diplomacy was trapped between its

internationalist propaganda and its actual interests on the Railway. Some historians believe that communist doctrine played no active role in shaping Soviet decisions, whereas others see Marxism-Leninism as the blueprint providing guidance to the Soviet policies, and, as a result, argue that they were quite distinctive from pre-revolutionary ones. The other main interest concerns the responses of the Chinese politicians. Such debate poses questions about the incompetence of Chinese political entities and the link between political leaders and external powers.[7]

Chinese historians' idealization of Soviet Russia in the earlier accounts reflected the country's own need to justify its communist regime. Marxist historians in the 1980s, such as Jitang Li, argued that the tsarist government and the Soviet government had very distinctive characteristics. The Russian expansion in China was closely connected to the capitalist powers' exploitation of the colonies in the late nineteenth century. Its building of the Railway was motivated by the Russian state monopoly capitalism's drive to snatch raw material from China and dump its commodities there. The establishment of the new Soviet regime marked the triumph of the socialist revolution and the nation would witness a renovation of all its internal and external policies, manifested by its involvement in the revolutionary movements of the third world countries.[8] Many others asserted that although traditionally Russian foreign policy was dominated by geopolitical concerns and lack of border security, communist ideology did play a big role in shaping the Soviet policy-making process. For example, Xue Xiantian's 1988 work stressed the

[7] Sow-Theng Leong, *Sino-Soviet Diplomatic Relations, 1917-1926* (Honolulu: the University Press of Hawaii, 1976), xix.
[8] 李济棠 [Jitang Li], *中俄密约和中东铁路的修筑* [Sino-Russian Secret Treaty and Construction of the China Eastern Railway] (Harbin: Heilongjiang People's Press, 1989), 5-7, 42.

importance of the Bolshevik party organization in Harbin and the Moscow government's later CER policies, which manifested its insistence on the "proletarian foreign policy" toward China. The Red Army mobilization in Manchuria was caused by "Lenin's lack of understanding of the situations in the Far East, and was totally understandable".[9] Over the years, there have been fewer of these accounts that highlight the anti-imperialistic feature of the Soviet foreign policies. As is shown below, works that portrayed a better balance between *Realpolitik* and ideology appeared in the late 1990s and 2000s.

Historians belonging to the English-speaking world also stressed the importance of the ideological factor in the making of Soviet foreign policy. Henry Kissinger once suggested that unlike the Western states, the Soviet Union perceived itself "not as a nation but as a cause, beyond geopolitics, impelled by faith, and held together by arms."[10] During the tsarist period, Russian expansion was mainly motivated by either the messianic Pan-Slavism or the triad of autocracy, Orthodoxy and nationality.[11] After the Revolution, this passionate sense of mission was transferred to Communist internationalism. Similarly, Adam Ulam indicated the Soviet policy bore a very pronounced ideological character as it did during Nicholas I's reign. Moreover, the communist feature in Soviet foreign policies had an indirect impact on its neighbouring "underdeveloped" nations, and would bear fruit after the World War II.[12]

On the other hand, China's position and its reactions to the Soviet actions were also discussed. In most of the Chinese works in the early 1980s, the word "warlordism"

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[9] See 薛衔天 [Xiantian Xue], "十月革命与中国收回中东铁路主权的斗争," [The October Revolution and the Struggle over the Sovereignty of the Chinese Eastern Railway] in *近代史研究* [Modern China Research] No. 4 (1988): 207-208.
[10] Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 143.
[11] Robert Donaldson and Joseph Nogee ed., *Foreign Policy of Russia: Changing Systems, Enduring Interest* (New York and London: M. E. Sharpe, 2009), 32-33.
[12] Adam B. Ulam, *Expansion and Coexistence: Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917-73* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1968), 124-5.

usually appeared with reactionary and backward connotations, for it represented the warlords' oppression of the lower class and concessions to foreign powers. Indeed, many Chinese historians stated that the Beijing government was weak diplomatically against Soviet Russia throughout its existence. Beijing would constantly accuse the Soviets of trying to "bolshevize" the CER Company and was very resentful of the Russian presence, but the actual effectiveness of the Beijing government's Russia policy would often be challenged by historians.[13] Their works show that although Beijing managed to reclaim some of the lost sovereignty, its efforts were pushed by the May Fourth Movement in 1919; instead of acting actively, it merely gave in to domestic pressure. To a large extent, Beijing's diplomatic policy was manipulated by both domestic and foreign powers, and barely any active measures were taken.[14] By contrast, Sun Yat-sen's collaboration with the Soviets was often analyzed in a positive light, for the United Front produced by this collaboration made the Chinese Communist Party (中国共产党, hereafter the CCP) an active player in Chinese politics for the first time. Sun's turn to Soviet Russia was sometimes portrayed as the "great turn", and it clarified his revolutionary goals and purposes.[15] Interestingly, the concession of the CER in the Sun-Ioffe Declaration was not the focus of discussion at this time. Similarly, there would be changes over time in the portrayal of both the Beiyang warlords and Sun Yat-sen in many Chinese works, along with the appearance of the third generation of the *Realpolitik* historians discussed below.

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[13] Leong, *Sino-Soviet Diplomatic Relations, 1917-1926*, 278.

[14] See 薛 [Xue], "十月革命与中国收回中东铁路主权的斗争," [The October Revolution and the Struggle over the Sovereignty of the Chinese Eastern Railway] 205-208, 才家瑞 [Jiarui Cai], "1917-1924 的苏俄中东铁路政策," [Soviet Russia's Chinese Eastern Railway Policy, 1917-1924] in *历史研究* [Historical Research], No. 4 (1993): 113-122, and 李新、李宗一 [Xin Li and Zongyi Li] eds., *中华民国史：北洋政府统治时期* [A History of the Republic of China: The Reign of the Beiyang Government] (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1987), 575-85.

[15]尹、冯 [Yin and Feng], *孙中山与中国国民党* [Sun Yat-sen and the Chinese Nationalist Party], 372-6.

Most contemporary western historians, including some Russian ones, believe that the Moscow leaders were concerned mainly with Soviet national interests. This "*Realpolitik* view" originated in the early Cold War, the Russophobic period, and among the earliest works was Allen Whiting's 1953 work, *Soviet Policies in China, 1917-1923*. He believed that the measures Soviet Russia applied to the problems existing along the border could only be characterized as imperialistic in aim, for they sought to establish Russian power in areas under Chinese sovereignty. The privileges and treaties it renounced weighed far less than the power it gained in Manchuria.[16] Generally, in the 1950s and 1960s, historians tended to assert that there was no sincerity in the Soviet government's railway policy under the Communist façade because the Soviet leaders had to concern themselves with their own military and political security, and the policy was an effective combination of "communist imperialism".[17] Their interpretation put little emphasis on the redefinition of the new regime's diplomatic ideology; the main concern was the actual territory Soviet Russia acquired from China and China' powerlessness against it.

As for the outcome, Whiting described a one-sided victory of Soviet diplomacy. By concluding the first so-called equal treaty between Beijing and Moscow, Soviet Russia became the champion of the Republic of China. Taking advantage of the weakness of China, Soviet Russia fostered its expansionist policy by means of the Chinese Eastern Railway.[18] Similar Soviet success occurred in Soviet-Sun interactions. Moscow wooed Sun and rebuilt the ideological foundation as well as the structure of his government,

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[16] Allen S. Whiting, *Soviet Policies in China, 1917-1924* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1953), 249-256.
[17] See Henry Wei, *China and Soviet Russia* (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company Inc., 1956), Peter S. H. Tang, *Russian and Soviet Policy in Manchuria and Outer Mongolia, 1911-1931* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1959), and George Kennan, *Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917-1941* (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company Inc., 1960).
[18] Tang, *Russian and Soviet Policy in Manchuria and Outer Mongolia, 1911-1931*, 266-7.

hoping to expel all non-Russian influence.

The second generation of the *Realpolitik* view continued to develop in the 1970s and 1980s, and Sow-Theng Leong's *Sino-Soviet Diplomatic Relations, 1917-1926* was one of the leading works. While continuing the line of "communist imperialism", Leong's major point was that China's ineptness against Soviet Russia had been overestimated. In fact, the Chinese carried out a very valiant attempt to roll back Russia's interests and rights in China. According to him, China's major effort at reasserting rights in the former tsarist sphere in northern Manchuria produced some permanent results. The designation of a Chinese director of the railway's board of directors, Guo Zongxi, enabled the Chinese to begin removing Russian encroachment upon Chinese sovereign rights.[19] Nevertheless, the portraits of Soviet-Sun contacts stayed more or less the same. O. Edmund Clubb stated that in 1922, having been betrayed by the Guangzhou warlord Chen Jiongming, Sun was in a much more receptive frame of mind. Eventually, Sun helped to create a favourable atmosphere by proclaiming a new party platform, which was partly derived from the Soviet principles.[20] Now in his mid-fifties, Sun knew time was running out. He desperately wanted his Northern Expedition and was eager to enter into this relationship with Moscow.[21] This generation of historians also conducted a more subtle analysis of Zhang Zuolin. Instead of his notorious tendency to affiliate with Japanese interests, the focus of discussion shifted to the fact that he was the *de facto* ruler of Manchuria. In fact, he was far from subservient when the Japanese made persistent demands regarding northern Manchuria and the CER, while doing his best to keep Soviet influence out of his

[19] Leong, *Sino-Soviet Diplomatic Relations, 1917-1926*, xvii, 93-5.
[20] O. Edmund Clubb, *China & Russia: The "Great Game"* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 230.
[21] See Dan N. Jacobs, *Borodin: Stalin's Man in China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 112-3.

domain.[22]

The most remarkable event dividing the second and the third generation of the *Realpolitik* view was the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, and thus new access to confidential Soviet archives. Two of the representative works were S.M.C. Paine's *Imperial Rivals: China, Russia, and Their Disputed Frontier* in 1996 and Bruce Elleman's *Diplomacy and Deception: The Secret History of Sino-Soviet Diplomatic Relations, 1917-1927* in 1998. In her book, Paine gave a very detailed interpretation of the significance of the CER to Russia. Instead of the previously-discussed expansion of territories and economic profits, she put forward the idea that the main driving force of Russia behind its construction of the CER was strategic considerations. The construction of the Railway permitted rapid troop deployments as well as the militarization of the Russian borders, and this advantage did not vanish as the Russian Empire collapsed.[23] Indeed, scholars reached a consensus that maintaining the regional security of the Russian Far East was a crucial reason for the Russian Empire to construct the Railway, and this continued to matter when China, Soviet Russia and Japan were all very keen on obtaining its ownership after the October Revolution. Therefore, the desire to maintain regional security and to play a role in Chinese internal affairs through the CER had not changed since tsarist times.

The novelty in Elleman's research is his very specific analysis on the Soviet Union's power politics and its "deceptive diplomacy", as he called it. By manipulating the wording of the two Karakhan Manifestos, as well as the separate agreement reached with

[22] Leong, *Sino-Soviet Diplomatic Relations, 1917-1926*, 294.
[23] S.M.C. Paine, "The Chinese Eastern Railway from the First Sino-Japanese War until the Russo-Japanese War," in *Manchurian Railways and the Opening of China*, ed. Bruce Elleman and Stephen Kotkin (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2010), 28-9.

the Manchurian warlord Zhang Zuolin, Moscow managed to renounce its former promise of returning the CER to China, and eventually restore the majority of its former Railway administrative rights. From his point of view, the Soviet success depended to a large extent on the diplomatic skills of the Moscow diplomats.[24] Not only did this action go against the Soviet claim in 1919 that "the Russian working class and the Red Army were China's only allies and brothers in its struggle for liberation from imperialism", it also violated the territorial and political integrity of China.[25]

The historiography on Chinese responses differed. Some maintained that the Beiyang government was diplomatically ineffective, and its interactions with Soviet Russia were less than active. Eventually, the questionable ability of Beijing to deliver on its commitments in Manchuria pushed Moscow to negotiate separately with the Manchurian warlord Zhang Zuolin, according to G. Patrick March.[26] Similarly, Paine's argument in her book continued this line of discussion. She believed that Russia successfully incorporated Chinese territories into its empire, not because of its own national strength, but because of Chinese weakness. Through territorial aggrandizement, Russia, and later, the Soviet Union, hoped to maintain the empire, and later, the communist bloc.[27] Therefore, it was the weakness of the Chinese central government that allowed for Soviet extension of influence in northern Manchuria and Outer Mongolia. Elleman, however, argued against China's diplomatic weakness. Despite its social and political instability, China managed to score some victories, including eliminating the

[24] Bruce Elleman, *Diplomacy and Deception: The Secret History of Sino-Soviet Diplomatic Relations, 1917-1927* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1998), 130-1, 138.
[25] Bruce Elleman, "Sino-Soviet Tensions and the Soviet Administrative Control over the Chinese Eastern Railway, 1917-1925," in *Manchurian Railways and the Opening of China*, 61.
[26] G. Patrick March, *Eastern Destiny: Russia in Asia and the North Pacific* (Westport: Praeger, 1996), 204-6.
[27] Paine, *Imperial Rivals: China, Russia, and Their Disputed Frontier*, 352.

Boxer indemnity, retaking control over many territorial concessions to Russia and abolishing extraterrioriality.[28]

Iurii Garushiants' interpretation of the Soviet-Sun cooperation centred on Sun's unwillingness to work with Moscow. Moscow's intention to work with Sun was driven by the desire to lend legitimacy to the presence of Red Army units in Outer Mongolia, and throughout the cooperation it attempted to organize the KMT's political agenda along Soviet lines. One of the most obvious signs of Sun's reluctance was his rejection of an inter-party coalition with the CCP; instead, an intra-party coalition was adopted.[29] On the contrary, Marie-Claire Bergère depicted Sun as receptive and content to react to the proposals made to him, in exchange for Soviet aid. The purpose of the Soviet-Sun cooperation was to attain national unification and independence. He was well aware that the aid was conditional upon the services he and the political force he represented could perform for Moscow.[30]

Moreover, starting from the post-Soviet period, historians began to examine more closely the coalition between Zhang Zuolin and Sun Yat-sen and the role of Moscow in this unlikely coalition. Partly because of Sun's personal relationship with Zhang, the one who was directly concerned with the CER, Moscow acquiesced to this alliance in order to develop this relationship and drag Zhang to the Soviet side. By establishing contact with Sun's revolutionary government, Zhang was more deeply intertwined in this railway diplomacy.[31]

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[28] Elleman, *Diplomacy and Deception: The Secret History of Sino-Soviet Diplomatic Relations, 1917-1927*, 138.
[29] Iurii M. Garushiants, "The Comintern and the Guomindang," in *The Chinese Revolution in the 1920s: Between Triumph and Disaster*, ed. Roland Felber, A.M. Grigoriev, Mechthild Leutner, M.L. Titarenko (London: Routledge Curzon, 2002), 46.
[30] Marie-Claire Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 305-311.
[31] Elleman, "Sino-Soviet Tensions and the Soviet Administrative Control over the Chinese Eastern Railway, 1917-1925," 67.

Compared to those of the previous generation, many of the more recent Chinese works in the late 1990s and 2000s shifted their tone in describing Soviet foreign policy as well. Following the trend of political modernization throughout the 1980s and 1990s in China and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the nostalgia for Soviet-style communism gradually weakened, and a more critical interpretation of the early Sino-Soviet interactions began to be formulated. Jun Du suggested that the Soviets occupied northern Manchuria the same way they occupied Outer Mongolia, another area of key strategic significance to Russia. The Soviet army justified the occupation by claiming to exterminate the White army in Manchuria, and completely ignored the protest of the Chinese government, thereby exposing *Realpolitik* tendencies in Soviet foreign policies.[32] Eventually, even the most pro-Soviet political force, the Sun Yat-sen Guangzhou government, was dissatisfied with the unilateral occupation. Therefore, from these writers' point of view, both in the final Sino-Soviet treaty and in Soviet implementation of its provisions, China was accorded a secondary place in the management of the CER until 1952, when the People's Republic of China finally nationalized the Railway.[33]

Similarly, a "revisionist" view on the Beiyang government gradually took over the mainstream of Chinese academia in the 1990s and 2000s. Some of the Beiyang government's diplomatic actions, such as its participation in the Siberian Intervention in order to protect Chinese immigrants and workers there, and the openness of its general diplomatic policies reflected in its active contacts with most of the major powers in the

[32] See 杜君 [Jun Du], "1917-1924 年苏俄在中东铁路问题上的对华政策再探," [A Re-investigation of the Soviet Policy on the Chinese Eastern Railway from 1917 to 1924] in *史学集刊* [Collected Papers of Historical Science], No. 4 (2004): 39-40, 宋谦、张永涛 [Qian Song and Yongtao Zhang], "中苏在中东铁路问题上的交涉," [Sino-Soviet Negotiations on the Chinese Eastern Railway] in *现代企业教育* [Modern Enterprise Education], No.3 (2007): 199-200, and 周海 [Hai Zhou] "苏俄在中东铁路问题上对华政策的演变," [Transitions of Soviet Russia's China Policy on the Chinese Eastern Railway Issue] in *辽宁商务职业学院学报* [Liaoning Business Vocational College Journal], No.2 (2004): 168-9.

[33] Whiting, *Soviet Policies in China, 1917-1924*, 249.

world, were recognized as part of its achievements.[34] As for the Guangzhou government, the revisionist historians believed that Sun Yat-sen's general attitude toward Soviet Russia was not positive, especially toward Soviet-style communism. The alliance with Moscow did not mean an embrace of the country but rather a move that would benefit both sides. Right before he passed away in March 1925, he insisted that communism was not an available option for China.[35] In addition, in many works, Zhang Zuolin was no longer portrayed as a reactionary Japanese puppet, but as a warlord who was concerned about expanding his power in Manchuria against both Japan and Soviet Russia.[36]

This thesis maintains a more balanced view of ideology and *Realpolitik*, so it would find itself somewhere in between the two camps. The ideological element was indeed reflected in the Soviet diplomatic policies, especially regarding the CER. In terms of the research approach, its most notable new contribution is the horizontal analysis and comparison. Most of the secondary works structure themselves vertically and chronologically, and do not give the Guangzhou-Soviet and Fengtian-Soviet interactions the attention they deserve. Yet this thesis shows that the Soviet railway diplomacy consisted of policies targeting Beijing, Guangzhou and Fengtian in parallel, and

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[34] See 雪珥 [Er Xue], "强势外交：北洋政府出兵西伯利亚护侨," [A Strong Diplomacy: Beiyang Government's Participation in the Siberian Intervention and Protection of Immigrants] in *文史博览* [Literature and History], No. 1 (2012): 5-10, and 王溶 [Rong Wang], "北洋军阀政府外交浅析," [An Analysis of Beiyang Warlord Government's Diplomacy] in *黑龙江史志* [Heilongjiang History and Annals], No. 21 (2010): 33-4.

[35] 林渊 [Yuan Lin], "孙中山坚持称共产主义不适合于中国," [Sun Yat-sen's Insistence that Communism Was Not Suitable for China] in *北京日报* [Beijing Daily], Aril 27, 2013, 郭世佑、邓文初 [Shiyou Guo and Wenchu Deng], "民族主义的裂变：以孙中山与苏俄关系为中心的分析," [The Transition of Nationalism: Analysis Centered on Relationship between Sun Yat-sen and the Soviet Union] in *江苏社会科学* [Jiangsu Social Sciences], No. 2 (2005): 126-137, 刘道刚 [Daogang Liu], "孙中山谋求苏俄军事援助的尝试," [Sun Yet-sen's Attempt to Seek Soviet Russia's Military Aid] in *中国青年政治学院学报* [Journal of China Youth College For Political Sciences], No. 2 (February 2003): 8-14, and 董海鹏 [Haipeng Dong], "苏俄与孙中山国民党的合作、矛盾极其对第一次国共合作的影响," [Cooperation and Conflicts between Soviet Russia and Sun Yat-sen's Kuomintang and the Impact on the First United Front] in *哈尔滨学院学报* [Journal of Harbin College], No. 4 (April 2010): 7-14.

[36] See 胡玉海 [Yuhai Hu] ed., *奉系对外关系* [Fengtian Cliques' External Relations] (Shenyang: Liaohai Press, 2000).

Moscow's efforts at establishing relations with each of them separately. Furthermore, this thesis will elevate the importance of the Soviet-Guangzhou as well as Soviet-Fengtian interactions with respect to the CER by examining their significance in detail.

Sources

This thesis makes use of the available primary source collections published in mainland China, Taiwan, Russia, and the Soviet Union. The Beijing chapter mainly relies on the historical documents, *Zhong'E guanxi shiliao* [Historical Materials on Sino-Russian Relations], compiled by the Institute of Modern History of Academia Sinica in Taiwan from 1959 to 1974, which include telegraphs, conference records, private correspondence, and government records on the CER from 1917 to 1922, and early Sino-Soviet interactions from the October Revolution on. The materials came from both the Chinese and Soviet sides, and the Russian materials were translated into Chinese. Another *Zhong'su guojia guanxishi ziliao huibian, 1917-1924* [Historical Documents on Sino-Soviet National Relations, 1917-1924] was compiled by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing, and was published in 1993; it incorporates new materials that became available after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The main Russian/Soviet source used in the first chapter is *Sovetsko-kitaiskie otnosheniia 1917-1957: sbornik dokumentov* [Sino-Soviet Relations, 1917-1957: Document Collection], which came out in Moscow in 1959.

The Guangzhou chapter relies partly on the source, *VKP (b), Komintern i natsional'no-revoliutsionnoe dvizhenie v Kitae: Dokumenty 1920-1925* [CPSU (b), The Comintern and the Nationalist Revolutionary Movement in China: Documents, 1920-

1925], published by the Russian Academy of Sciences in 1994, and *Liangong (bu) yu Zhongguo geming wenxian ziliao xuanji* [The Comintern, CPSU (b) and the Chinese Revolution: Documents and Materials, 1917-1925], which was originally in Russian and was translated by the Party History Research Centre of the Chinese Communist Party in 1997. Besides, *Sun Zhongshan quanji* [The Collected Works of Sun Yat-sen] are crucial to unveiling the diplomatic activities of the Guangzhou Government. *Malin yu diyici guogong hezuo* [Maring and the First United Front], a document collection published by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in 1989, which includes the process of the establishment of the United Front, also helps to build up this chapter.

Primary documents used in the Fengtian chapter about the Manchurian warlord Zhang Zuolin are drawn from *Tianjin wenshi ziliao: Zhang Zuolin fuzi dangquan shi duisu guanxi he zhongdong tielu neimu* [Tianjin Historical Collections vol. 2: The Sino-Soviet Relations and the CER during Zhang Zuolin's and his Son's Reigns] and *Jilin wenshi ziliao: Zhang Zuolin deng fengxi junfa renwu ziliao zhuanji* [Jilin Historical Collections vol. 4: Documents and Memoirs of Zhang Zuolin and other Fengtian Clique Warlords] published in 1979 and 1983 respectively.

In addition, several memoirs allow the historical characters to speak for themselves on condition that they be assessed in light of other materials. It is useful to investigate relevant people through their memoirs, because policies are created and made important by them. Major sources in this category include *Zhongguo guomin gemingjun de beifa: yige zhuhua junshi guwen de zaji* [The Northern Expedition of the Chinese Nationalist Revolutionary Army: Memoir of a Military Advisor in China] published in 1961, *Zhongguo huiyilu 1921-1927* [Chinese Memoir 1921-1927], written by S. A. Dalin and

published in 1975, *Malin zai Zhongguo de youguan ziliao* [Materials on Maring in China] published in 1984, and *Baoluoding zai Zhongguo de youguan ziliao* [Materials on Borodin in China] published in 1983. Although there is no memoir exclusively about the CER, they all make references to it. Many of the authors acted as mediators between the Soviet regime and China. Their interactions with the KMT, the Comintern and Moscow helped reveal the Soviet struggle for balance between ideology and national security.

These documents and materials mainly include conference records, correspondence, treaties and interview records. Most of them are government records; although not all of them are specifically about the CER, they are useful for illuminating the general trend of development in Beijing and Guangzhou, and Fengtian's foreign policies.

This thesis does not utilize any archival sources retrieved directly from the archives; this could be problematic because the choice of documents in the document collections might be influenced by the editors' political bias or social context. One way to moderate this problem is to base the thesis on collections published by different countries and areas during different time periods. The publishing years of the documents used in this thesis range from 1957 to 1997, and some are available in both Russian and Chinese. Also, this thesis relies more on Chinese sources than Russian/Soviet ones because of the language barrier. Therefore, it will unavoidably interpret the interactions more from the Chinese perspective.

Chapter 1

Origins of the Railway Disputes

This chapter explains the complexity of the conflicts occurring along the Railway and its affiliated regions during the last few years of the 1910s, and sets up the background of the Soviet-Beijing interactions in the early 1920s. It examines the chaos in the Railway-affiliated regions caused by the Whites as well as the international intervention forces, and argues that Beijing had already been active in the area before substantial negotiations with the Bolsheviks were initiated in 1921. Since the completion of the Railway project, its ownership had been in the hands of the tsarist regime. After the February Revolution in March 1917, the Beijing government's active defense of Chinese national sovereignty against Grigorii Semenov's White forces and the Russian General Director of the CER, Dmitrii Horvath, was relatively effective, and to some extent managed to protect people living along the borders. Indeed, during the Russian Civil War, Beijing attempted to act while the other concerned parties were engaged in the fighting, and temporarily took back the Railway ownership for a few years.

Background

Both due to its rich natural resources and its location, Manchuria was an important international prize. The amount of natural resources in the Manchurian region was vast. It was one of the most forested regions in the world, and petroleum, coal, iron ore, copper, tin, gold, diamonds and other important minerals were found there. Apart from the resources, the ports on the Amur River, especially Vladivostok, which was ice-free all

year round, were of great strategic and economic importance.[37] As early as 1849, in the report of the well-known governor of Eastern Siberia Nikolai Murav'ev to the tsar, he asserted, "If at the mouth of the Amur stood a Russian fortress… then with moderate means Russian control would be guaranteed forever over Siberia and over all of its infinite riches and particularly over its gold, as well as over the even richer deposits which are to be found on the left bank of the Amur." [38]

The CER helped linked the Far East and European Russia as a strategic southerly shortcut for the Trans-Siberian Railway. Situated at the intersection of Chinese Manchuria, Russia, Mongolia and Japanese-controlled Korea, the Railway had been at the centre of political and military rivalries since the 1900s. Apart from the cargo traffic and passenger transportation it created and the stimulating trade and industrialization it brought, the CER was designed to carry troops and materials. It became the defining factor of the potential troop concentration, rate of deployment, and transportation of army supplies in the event of war in the Far East.[39]

In 1896, the Qing government signed the *Contract Regulation of the Chinese Eastern Railway Bureau Administration Partnership* with the Russo-Asiatic Bank, which required that the Railway be administered by both China and the Russian Empire. The Bank was established by Russia and France, and had the privileges to build railways, mines and factories in Chinese Manchuria, while the Chinese government invested five million taels of silver into the Railway project and acted as one of its shareholders.

This *Contract* stipulated that all Railway-related profits must go to the Railway

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[37] 马蔚云 [Weiyun Ma], *中俄（苏）关系中的中东铁路问题* [The Chinese Eastern Railway in the Sino-Russian/Soviet Relationship] (Harbin: Heilongjiang University Press, 2010), 53-6.

[38] Original text is from Ivan Platonovich Barsukov, *Graf Nikolai Nikolaevich Murav'ev-Amurskii* [Count Nikolai Nikolaevich Murav'ev-Amurskii]. 2 vol. Moscow: Sinodal'naya Tipografiya, 1891. Cited from Paine, *Imperial Rivals*, 37.

[39] Elleman, "Introduction," in *Manchurian Railways and the Opening of China*, 2-6.

Company for a period of 80 years, and that 36 years after the Railway's completion, the Chinese government had the right to redeem it back with the principal plus the interest and all other expenses. The *Contract* specified Russia's right to use the Railway for military purposes; during wartime the Railway would be an important connection for the transfer of the Russian army and its munitions free of charge. In addition, the width of the railway gauge (five feet) would be consistent with that in Russia, rather than the narrow gauge in use in other parts of the world (four feet eight and a half inches).[40] This way Russia prevented other potential rivals from snatching the Railway and using it against Russia. According to the *Contract*, the general director was to be a Chinese, but in reality, the tsarist government appointed Horvath the director of the Railway Company as soon as the construction was completed in 1903.[41] During the twenty years of Horvath's reign, he established administrative and civil institutions along the Railway and the nearby regions, and almost turned the area into Russia's colony. In 1908, he extended his power to the centre of Manchuria, Harbin, by setting up an autonomous self-government there and managing many of the local affairs.[42] In this way, the Russian Imperial government in fact monopolized control of the Railway.

Since 1900, with the outbreak of the Boxer Rebellion, Russia had started to dispatch its army along the Railway and all the capital cities of the three Manchurian Provinces to protect it. After its defeat in the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, the tsarist government ceded the southern branch of the Railway to Japan, which basically completed the

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[40] Steven Marks, *Road to Power: The Trans-Siberian Railroad and the Colonization of Asian Russia, 1850-1917* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1991), 156.

[41] This was mainly as a result of the Boxer Uprising and its enormous damage caused to the CER in 1901. The Russian Imperial Government shifted to a hardline policy in Manchuria in order to better control the region. See Paine, "The Chinese Eastern Railway from the First Sino-Japanese War until the Russo-Japanese War," in *Manchurian Railways and the Opening of China*, 19-21, 23-6.

[42] Paine, *Imperial Rivals: China, Russia, and Their Disputed Frontier*, 316.

division of Manchuria between Russian and Japanese spheres of influence, with Russia in the north and Japan in the south. The Japanese occupation of the southern branch was crucial at the time, because Japan would become the major force behind the White Army after the October Revolution. Also, Japanese existence in southern Manchuria was welcomed by the Anfu clique, for the government's pro-Japanese orientation; therefore, it was reasonable for Beijing to turn down Soviet rapprochement, which was not desired by the Anfu premier Duan Qirui.[43] From late 1917 to late 1918, the Beijing government would find itself closer to the White forces in the Far East supported by Japan.

However, the period from 1919 to 1922 witnessed a gradual strengthening in Beijing's position vis-à-vis the Whites. In terms of the Railway dispute, this active defense of national interest could be considered a diplomatic advancement compared to its Manchu predecessors.

Beijing and the Whites

In interactions with the Whites, the attitude of Beijing experienced a gradual evolution. Initially, the Beiyang government was much more supportive toward the Russian Provisional Government, and later the White government in Siberia, because Beijing was very suspicious and reluctant to have contacts with the communist Reds.

After the abdication of the tsar in March 1917, the Russian Provisional Government was established under Prince Georgy L'vov. Beijing recognized the Provisional Government less than twenty days after its establishment, along with all the major western powers. The new government in many ways resembled most western government

[43] Allen S. Whiting, "The Soviet Offer to China in 1919," in *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, vol. 10, No. 4 (August 1951), 357.

structures, so it was relatively easy for Beijing to continue having diplomatic contacts with the Provisional Government, especially when it agreed to keep the former imperial Russian ambassador to China, Prince Nikolai A. Kudashev in his position. The Railway administration itself remained the same after the February Revolution, with the old imperial crew still in charge, headed by the General Director Horvath. However, the Provisional Government was only able to maintain itself for eight months until the Bolshevik Revolution occurred in November. During the next few months, the Beijing government was not too attentive to the situation in Russia, although very close contacts with the Chinese Minister to Russia, Liu Jingren (刘镜人), were kept up throughout the time.[44]

After the Bolshevik Revolution, the Provisional Government was dissolved and driven out of Petrograd, followed by a five-year civil war among the Bolsheviks, the Whites, and the "Greens" (armed peasant groups). One of the important bases of the Whites was in the Far East, where the Provisional Siberian Government was formed right after the October Revolution. It was established in Vladivostok in early 1918, headed by Viktor Chernov, and claimed to break away from Moscow, blamed the Bolshevik government for the truce signed with Germany, and appealed to the Chinese government for support.[45] It dissolved itself in the wake of the formation of the Provisional All-Russian Government in September 1918, under the rule of Alexander Kolchak in Omsk. After the headquarters in Omsk were lost, Kolchak withdrew to Irkutsk, and designated Grigorii Semenov as the new leader of the White Army in Siberia in November 1919.

[44] "驻俄公使刘镜人致外交部电，1917 年 11 月 17 日," [Telegram from Minister to Russia, Liu Jingren, to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, November 17, 1917] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 9.
[45] "收黑龙江督军鲍贵卿电，民国七年二月二十一日," [Telegram from the Military Governor of Heilongjiang, Bao Guiqing, February 21, 1918] in *CER 1917-1919*, 116.

This Cossack ataman and his army developed a reputation for being little better than thugs and were very active mainly around the Lake Baikal region; more often than not, they would extend their reach to the Sino-Russian borders and Manzhouli, where the CER started. In Jamie Bisher's words, the Semenov army was "an army where robbery and extortion were widely accepted practices", and tales of systematic brutality and plundering by Semenov's soldiers circulated far and wide.[46] They sacked villages, burned houses, and murdered civilians and were deeply resented by the locals. Moreover, the Kolchak government attempted to conspire with the Japanese by attempting to yield the CER secretly to Japan in exchange for its support, but it was forced to abort the plan when Omsk fell to the Bolsheviks.[47] As a result, Beijing resorted to military confrontation because of the constant White disturbances along the Railway. Although it was not able to guarantee that the Railway was entirely free from the Whites' sacking and attacking, the Chinese Railway police was at least able to disarm the disruptive White soldiers and send them back across the border in most cases.[48]

Beside the Kolchak government in Siberia, there was a "government" established inside Manchuria. In fact, the Manchurians were familiar with Russian existence and administration. Before World War I, there were about 30,000 Russian soldiers stationed in Harbin, and 60,000 lined along the CER, most of whom were sent to the battlefield after the war broke out. After the Revolution, internal upheavals occurred frequently among the remaining troops. In May 1918, Horvath claimed that Russians in Harbin and the CER affiliated regions were independent from the Bolshevik government and were

[46] Jamie Bisher, *White Terror: Cossack Warlords of the Trans-Siberian* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), 128.
[47] "收吉林省长郭宗熙快电，民国八年九月二日," [Express Telegram from the Governor of Jilin, Guo Zongxi, September 2, 1919] in *CER 1917-1919*, 697.
[48] "收中东铁路郭宗熙督办电，民国七年二月二日," [Letter from the Governor of the CER, Guo Zongxi, February 2, 1918] in *CER 1917-1919*, 91.

"under his rule"; in June he set up the Railway Corps while enforcing martial law in the above region. The "All-Russian Provisional Government" was established in Vladivostok and headed by Horvath himself in July 1918. Although the government was not recognized by any political entity, the Horvath Railway Corps, like the Semenov troops, caused problems inside China.[49]

One such problem was the misbehaviour of the White Army. Although political turmoil had taken place in Petrograd, in the far eastern side of Siberia, the old and new Director Horvath proclaimed that no change in the Railway administration was necessary, and that he would cooperate with the Provisional Government in Siberia to defend against possible upheavals. However, this temporary stability did not last long. It was not long before the Beijing government started to complain about the Russians in the Railway region.[50]

Starting from mid-1919, there were reports of Russian soldiers' interference with the Railway administration. In June, Semenov sent seven generals to Manzhouli Station, requesting detailed information of the staff and the trains, and ordered that all relevant administrative matters be first of all approved by his people. He also demanded two of the most high-class trains on the CER from Manzhouli Station.[51] In July, he abducted a group of Chinese merchants carrying a significant amount of rubles to Siberia. The Chinese government protested many times but got no response from the White

[49] "收吉林省长郭宗熙快电，民国八年九月二日," [Express Telegram from the Governor of Jilin, Guo Zongxi, September 2, 1919] in *CER 1917-1919*, 697.
[50] "收黑龙江督军鲍贵卿电，民国七年一月十三日," [Telegram from the Military Governor of Heilongjiang, Bao Guiqing, January 13, 1918] in *CER 1917-1919*, 56.
[51] "收黑龙江督军鲍贵卿电，民国八年六月九日," [Telegram from the Military Governor of Heilongjiang, Bao Guiqing, June 9, 1919] in *CER 1917-1919*, 529.

government in Omsk.[52]

Toward the end of 1919, the White soldiers' activities in Manchuria were becoming more frequent, mainly because of Japanese support. On October 10, a group of Semenov's soldiers marching from Manzhouli arrived in Harbin. On the way, Semenov left 120 of his men stationed in Haila'er and Qiqiha'er, two of the major stations along the Railway, and planned to send the remainder to safeguard Harbin, altogether 160 soldiers. The number expanded to 2,500 over a very short time. When they were stopped by the Chinese Railway protection troops, they responded that they had already gained the approval of Beijing (which in fact they had not). The Beijing government believed that, "this craziness and anxiety of Semenov were a result of Japanese provocation."[53] After having taken over Germany's concessions in Shandong, Japan had been interested in Manchuria and to take a share of this area, a plan which clearly came into conflict with Russian ambitions. In fact, attention had been focused upon Manchuria even before the Russo-Japanese War, and adventurers moved into that region to prevent Russian expansion during the subsequent years of the war. When the Bolshevik Revolution took place in 1917, Japan responded to the situation by seeking to extend its influence to Eastern Siberia and Manchuria, gradually fulfilling its continental policy.[54] Semenov was one of the agents Japan chose, and he was supported by the Imperial Japanese Army, elements of which had been deployed to Siberia in 1918 and 1919.

There were numerous reports of such matters around the late 1910s, and Beijing was

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[52] "收黑龙江督军鲍贵卿电，民国八年七月十日," [Letter from the Military Governor of Heilongjiang, Bao Guiqing, July 10, 1919] in *EZBYYBJS 1919*, 375.
[53] "收交通部函，民国八年十月十一日," [Letter from Ministry of Transportation, October 11, 1919] in *CER 1917-1919*, 764-5.
[54] See Mikiso Hane, *Modern Japan, a Historical Survey* (London and Boulder: Westview Press, 1972), 196-9 and Akira Iriye, *Japan and the Wider World, From the Mid-Nineteenth Century to the Present* (London and New York: Longman, 1997), 38-42.

growing anxious about them. All it could do was protest to Horvath, and send over railway police to expel the Semenov soldiers, but this did not stop them from disturbing the Railway region constantly. What was worse, threatened by the Japanese behind the Whites, the Anfu warlords in Beijing were unable to conduct direct military actions against them. This was exactly Japan's goal, for it could send its own army into Manchuria as soon as regional conflict broke out, using "protection of Japanese immigrants" as an excuse.[55]

Another problem that led to the deterioration of Whites' image in China was the corruption and mismanagement of the Russian railway police and administrators along the CER. For instance, in March 1919, on a train coming from Suifenhe, one Chinese railway inspector discovered opium and suspected someone was smuggling opium through the Railway, but he was immediately detained by Russian soldiers and the opium he captured from the suspected smugglers was taken away. After a brief protest from the Chinese side was publicized, the inspector was released but the Russians refused to give back the opium they had confiscated. The official explanation of the Railway Company was that they were unaware of the incident and those soldiers must have been local bandits dressed in Russian military uniform. However, the fact was that this was not the first such incident. In the letter of Fu Jiang, Circuit Intendant of Binjiangdao in Jilin Province, he reported to the Ministry of Taxation, "The third army Corps of the Russian Oriental Legion stationed along the Railway frequently interfered with the Chinese border inspections and mistreated the passengers. I hope the commander of this legion

[55] ""次长会晤日本林权助公使问答，民国七年八月二十九日," [Conference Record with Japanese Envoy Hayashi Gonsuke, August 29, 1919] in *CBXBLY 1917-1919*, 301.

can be informed and measures can be taken to restrain these soldiers."[56] Chinese merchants who conducted business mainly in Manchuria and Siberia suffered a great loss due to the conflicts in the Far East. They were sacked, beaten, insulted, and even murdered while in Russian territory by either the local bandits or Semenov's soldiers.[57]

Horvath was undoubtedly aware of the situation. During his twenty years as the head of the Railway Company, he had recruited his own army and arbitrarily declared the Railway-affiliated Russians under his control. He seized millions of Railway administrative fees to maintain his private army, which consisted of the White soldiers, landless peasants and local bandits, while the railway workers were unable to get sufficient salary month after month. The money was also used to buy weapons from Japan, totaling 1.6 billion yen.[58] Although the Railway was supposedly managed by both China and Russia, during the imperial period and even after the October Revolution, the Russians had always had real control over the Railway. According to the *Railway Contract* signed in 1896, China had the right to send railway inspectors, but they were never properly put into place. Director Horvath monopolized the almost all the trains on the Railway and kept almost all the profits in his own hands. The Manzhouli branch of the company consisted of thirty members on the Board, and among them twenty-five members were Russian and only five were Chinese. In addition, the sales tax had increased more than fifty times in five years' time, and the Company claimed that the

[56] "收驻崴刘镜人公使电，民国八年三月七日," [Telegram from Minister to Vladivostok, Liu Jingren, March 7, 1919] "收郭宗熙督办函，民国八年三月十二日," [Letter from Governor Guo Zongxi, March 12, 1919] and "收吉林滨江道道尹兼铁路交涉局总办傅疆来呈，民国八年三月十四日," [Telegram from the Circuit Intendant of Binjiangdao, Jilin, Fu Jiang, March 14, 1919] in *CER 1917-1919*, 330-334.
[57] "收陆军部函，民国十年一月十一日," [Letter from Ministry of Army to Military Governor of Heilongjiang, Bao Guiqing, January 11, 1921] and "收驻黑河程总领事程福庆电，民国十年一月二十一日," [Telegram from General Counselor in Heihe, Cheng Fuqing, January 21, 1921] in *YBJS 1921*, 26, 47.
[58] "收交通部函，民国九年三月十七日," [Letter from Ministry of Transportation, March 17, 1920] in *CER 1920*, 94.

amount was "mutually decided" at the board meeting.[59] With the Russian voters outnumbering the Chinese ones, this was less likely to be the case.

Unfortunately, the merchants were not the only ones who suffered in Siberia. Most of the Chinese labourer groups sent to Russia since 1896 had not returned home in the late 1910s. The wave of labour migration started in the 1860s, and most of the workers migrated north from Shandong, Hebei, Manchuria and Xinjiang. They scattered across Russia from Moscow and St. Petersburg, the Ural Mountains and the Caucasus, to Siberia and the Far East. During World War I, China joined the Entente Alliance but did not send any soldiers to Europe; instead, it sent hundreds of thousands of labourer corps to Europe, including Russia, and many found themselves stuck there. They were forced to undertake the heaviest labour, live in the worst conditions, and were treated as sub-humans by their Russian foremen. They were lonely, because few brought families along, and they were not welcomed by the locals.[60] In earlier 1917, on a train full of Chinese workers heading to Russia, to prevent the workers from escaping, the Russian foremen sealed the wagons completely, which resulted in the suffocation of more than 200 Chinese workers in it.[61]

The embargo leveled on Soviet Russia in late 1919 worsened the situation of the Chinese workers. To discourage Bolshevik activities in Siberia, the Entente powers ordered that China stop transporting wheat and grain into Siberia. This not only caused a panic among the Chinese merchants there, it also put the Chinese workers in Siberia in danger of starvation. Soviet Russia had already experienced serious droughts and famine in the late 1910s and early 1920s, and had no extra supplies available to feed the Chinese

[59] "收黑龙江省长徐鼐霖咨，民国八年十一月十一日," [Letter from the Governor of Heilongjiang, Xu Nailin, November 11, 1919] in *CER 1917-1919*, 822.
[60] See Lewis H. Siegelbaum, "Another 'Yellow Peril': Chinese Migrants in the Russian Far East and the Russian Reaction before 1917," in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (1978): 307-330.
[61] "收绅商詹幼谷等呈，民国六年三月二十七日," [Letter from A Merchant, Zhan Yougu, March 27, 1917] in *EZBYYBJS 1917-1918*, 60.

workers.[62]

In addition, numerous Chinese workers were recruited to the Russian armies, both the Red and the White, and this was especially common in western Siberia. The Bolsheviks organized an army of Chinese workers, usually several thousand of them, into a "Red-Yellow Army"[63], and Semenov had his own Chinese army of several hundred workers as well. Most of these recruited workers did not have a clear idea of what they were fighting for, and the Beijing government was unable to protect them all.

To deal with the Whites along the border, the Beiyang government took some initiatives. Although it was not able to engage in direct military actions against the Whites for it was unwilling to trigger larger-scale regional conflict, it did strengthen its own forces in the Railway-affiliated area for safeguarding purposes. In late 1917, to prevent local soldiers' disturbances due to the instability of the provincial government, the commander of the Third Mixed Regiment Tao Xianggui was dispatched to Harbin and established the CER Garrison Command Headquarters; Regiment Commander Li Qinglu led one cavalry battalion and two infantry battalions deploying along the branch from Harbin to Shitouchengzi; one infantry battalion belonging to the Nineteenth Regiment advanced into Harbin; besides, one division and two other regiments were sent to central Manchuria to cover the branch between Harbin and Changchun.[64] Meanwhile, the Military Governors of the three Manchurian provinces jointly recommended that the Governor of Jilin, Guo Zongxi, be named the Inspector of the CER to stabilize the

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[62] "收黑龙江督军孙烈臣电，民国九年一月二十九日," [Telegram from the Military Governor Sun Liechen, January 29, 1920] in *YBJS 1920*, 20.

[63] It possibly meant "Asians in the Red Army", but the precise meaning was not further explained. "发日本芳泽代使、英朱尔典使兼协商领衔公使、美马克谟代使、法柏卜使、比贾尔牒代使、葡符礼德代使、义华蕾代使节略，民国七年九月二十八日," [Telegram to Japanese, English, American, French, Belgian, Portuguese and Italian Envoys in China, September 28, 1917] in *EZBYBJS 1917-8*, 525.

[64] "吉林督军鲍贵卿致国务院等电，1919 年 8 月 11 日," [Telegram from the Military Governor of Jilin, Bao Guiqing, to the State Council, August 11, 1919] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 340-1.

situation and to take back some of the lost sovereignty, and the Beijing government agreed so in December 1917.[65]

Siberian Intervention

In August 1918, the main Entente countries, Britain, France, Japan and the United States decided to militarily intervene in the Russian Civil War, and would remain in the Russian Far East until 1922. Among them, the United States and the Japanese forces were to intervene from Siberia in favour of the White government there. Taking advantage of the Siberian Intervention, Beijing made a big diplomatic move during the period, attempting to detach the CER from Soviet control and taking back the ownership of the Railway.

Relatively early in the intervention period, in January 1919, an international committee had taken over the administration of the CER, the Trans-Siberian Railway and the Ussuri Railway for a short period. The committee, consisting of the United States, Britain, France, Japan, Italy, China, and the Whites, entrusted the administration and operation of the Railway during the occupation to the American engineer John Frank Stevens. Each country was responsible for one part of the Railway, and a group of technicians of each nationality, which was later transformed into a railway professional bureau, was established; once the situation in the Far East was stabilized, the international committee would be dissolved. The Railway also received financial assistance from the committee since it had been malfunctioning for a long time.[66]

The biggest beneficiary of the Intervention was probably Japan. During the period,

[65] 胡 [Hu] ed., *奉系对外关系* [Fengtian Cliques' External Relations], 133-4.
[66] "收海参崴刘镜人高等委员电，民国八年一月十六日," [Telegram from Senior Committee Member to Vladivostok, Liu Jingren, January 16, 1919] in *CER 1917-1919*, 261.

Japan sent a huge army and had not withdrawn two years after the other Entente nations left in October 1922. The Japanese claimed that the Chinese railway army was incompetent and not able to guarantee the safety of Japanese immigrants there; this way, it had a legitimate reason to station its own troops in the region. Also, the Japanese presence in Manchuria would make it possible for Japan to extend the Southern Manchuria Railway it owned, which was functioning as "a covert military installation left in place, in the manner of a Trojan Horse."[67] The 70,000 Japanese soldiers massed along the border later caused a series of problems to the Beiyang government. In fact, Japan ordered the Chinese railway army be under the command of General Otani Kikuzo exclusively in April 1919, and stationed its army in Manzhouli, which was one of the most crucial stations along the Railway. The Japanese Major General Yasutaro Takayanagi claimed in a meeting with the Chinese railway administrators that, "as one branch of the Trans-Siberian Railway, the CER is supposed to be under the leadership of Japan."[68]

Paul Dunscomb maintained that during the Japanese occupation in Siberia, the Japanese army refused to subordinate itself to the railway board, justifying its wider military operations as a broad interpretation of railway protection.[69] At least 4,000 Japanese soldiers remained in Manzhouli and its surrounding areas, to "protect Japanese merchants and immigrants from the Bolsheviks", but in fact there had been only fewer than 200 Japanese living there and they escaped even before the war broke out.[70] The other members of the Committee were not in any position to stop them because of the

[67] Y. Tak. Matsusaka, "Japan's South Manchurian Railway Company in Northeast China, 1906-1934," in *Manchurian Railways and the Opening of China*, 41.
[68] "收交通部函，民国八年四月二十五日," [Letter from Ministry of Transportation, April 25, 1919] "收参战处函，民国八年六月九日," [Letter from Ministry of War, June 9, 1919] in *CER 1917-1919*, 443, 530.
[69] Paul E. Dunscomb, *Japan's Siberian Intervention, 1918-1922: "A Great Disobedience against the People",* 92-3.
[70] "收国务院函，民国八年六月七日," [Letter from the State Council, June 7, 1919] in *CER 1917-1919*, 521.

overwhelming size of the Japanese army in Siberia.

In June 1920, the Americans, British and the remaining Entente powers withdrew from Vladivostok, but the Japanese decided to stay, primarily due to fear of the spread of communism so close to Japan and Japanese-controlled Korea. From 1920 to early 1921, there was still close cooperation between the Japanese forces and Semenov, who now took refuge in Manchuria with his army. Although pushed further south by the Red Army, Semenov still saw himself as the successor to the Russian Empire, and in exchange for Japanese support he claimed that he would transfer the privileges and treaties concerning the Railway to Japan. In exchange for the Russian Army General Commander position the Japanese offered, Semenov declared in May 1920 that the government he had established was the supreme and only legal political entity in Siberia. All the rights regulated in the Russo-Sino-Mongolian Charter and the CER Charter were yielded to Japan.[71] Obviously, these were empty promises because Semenov had no actual administrative control over the Railway.

Interestingly, Beijing saw the Intervention as an opportunity to take back some of its territorial losses to Russia. Therefore, during the Intervention period, Beijing was quite active in seizing administrative power as its army advanced into parts of northern Manchuria. This process was initiated as early as January 1918, when large numbers of Chinese troops started to mobilize and march into Manchuria. In July 1918, the Beiyang government responded to the Intervention by sending a small fleet, led by Commander Officer Lin Jianzhang and his battleship "Hairong", to dock at Vladivostok. One month later, around 2,000 soldiers were sent into Siberia. Beijing announced that it participated

[71] "收国务院函，民国九年五月十五日," [Letter from the State Council, May 15, 1920] in *CER 1920*, 180-1.

in the Intervention to rescue the emigrants and labourers sent to Russian Siberia during World War I.[72] Up until August 1919, 7 cavalry battalions and 2 infantry battalions were deployed around Harbin, two mixed brigades around Suiyuan, and 1 mixed brigade around Changchun. The militarization of the CER prepared Beijing for claiming sovereignty over it.

In January 1920, Horvath on behalf of his "All-Russian Provisional Government" declared that he would adopt supreme rule over Russians living in the CER area and attempted to enforce it with his army. In response, under the instructions of the State Council and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the CER Inspector Bao Guiqing[73] declared that, "The Railway is located exclusively on Chinese territory, and no second power should be involved in its administration… Horvath's self-imposed rule on Chinese territory is intolerable. Moreover, residents dwelling along the Railway are to be protected by the Chinese Railway Army alone, and Horvath and his army have no right to rule the region."[74]

In May 1920, the Beiyang government continued to advocate the return of the CER by declaring the return of judicial sovereignty in the CER area, and the annulment of all the "illegal Russian authorities" there. Chinese laws were to be applied to all incidents, including all kinds of Sino-Russian disputes. In October, a special court for the CER region was established, mainly in charge of the railway-related matters. Up to January

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[72] "刘参事[崇杰]晤日本林权助公使问答，民国七年七月二十三日," [Meeting between Counselor Liu Quanjie and the Japanese Minister Gonsuke Bayashi, July 23, 1918] in *CBXBLY*, 211.

[73] On August 11, 1919, Bao Guiqing was sent to the CER as the Inspector to take the place of Horvath, but Horvath refused to accept the change of position. Due to Horvath's personal army in the area, Beijing's new appointment order could not be implemented. See 马 [Ma], *中俄（苏）关系中的中东铁路问题* [The Chinese Eastern Railway in the Sino-Russian/Soviet Relationship], 75.

[74] "中东铁路督办、吉林督军鲍贵卿致国务院等代电，1920 年 1 月 21 日," [Telegram to the State Council from the General Inspector of Chinese Eastern Railway and Military Governor of Jilin, Bao Guiqing, January 20, 1920] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 342.

1921, a functional railway police system was established and centred in Harbin, and the transfer of court cases from the old Russian authorities to China was initiated.[75] This marked one crucial step for Beijing toward establishing sovereignty over the Railway, and was also one of the important diplomatic milestones during the Republican period.[76]

Conclusion

The Railway and its affiliated regions had experienced years of chaos before the Bolsheviks and Beijing initiated informal negotiations around late 1921. Semenov, Japan, and China had all attempted to take control of the region, which made the late 1910s one of the most confusing period in the history of the Far East for Beijing. The Siberian Intervention further complicated the situation, with the international forces participating in the management of the CER. However, during this period Beijing also initiated active defense of national sovereignty in Manchuria against the Whites. The collapse of the Russian Empire gave Beijing an opportunity to deal with the Far East while Russia was engaged in its own chaos. The Russian Civil War and the Siberian Intervention tied down most of the Red Army forces and left a vacancy in the CER region. Therefore, the biggest progress was also achieved during the Siberian Intervention, when Beijing managed to recover much of the administration of the CER.

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[75] "接收路界内俄法院筹备处呈司法部文，1920 年 11 月 10 日," [Document to Ministry of Justice from the Department of Accepting Russian courts in CER Regions, November 10, 1920] and "东省铁路路警处组织大纲," [Outline of Police Organization in Special Regions of Manchuria, January 1921] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 357-9.

[76] "驻西伯利亚高等委员李家鏊致中东铁路督办、吉林督军鲍贵卿电，1920 年 3 月 24 日," [Telegram from Senior Committee Member to Siberia, Li Jia'ao, to the General Inspector of the Chinese Eastern Railway and Military Governor of Jilin, Bao Guiqing, March 24, 1920] "吉林省长公署致中东铁路督鲍贵卿密咨，1920 年 3 月 24 日," [Confidential Letter from the Office of Governor of Jilin to the General Inspector of the Chinese Eastern Railway, Bao Guiqing, March 24, 1920] "北洋政府拟定中东路界内司法权办法，1920 年 5 月 4 日," [Beiyang Government's Measures of Judicial Right in the Chinese Eastern Railway Area, May 4, 1920] and " 外交部收中东铁路公司督办公所密咨，1920 年 5 月 13 日," [Confidential Letter from the Inspector's Office of the Chinese Eastern Railway to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, May 13, 1920] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 352-356.

Chapter 2

The Beijing Government and the Establishment of Relations with Soviet Russia

This chapter examines Moscow's efforts to regain ownership of the CER through contacts with the Beijing government in order to gain political legitimacy, and Beijing's failed attempt to maintain the Railway ownership after the Siberian Intervention. During this time, the policy-making of the Beijing politicians experienced a transition as the Russian Civil War gradually came to an end. In 1921, Wu Peifu of the Zhili clique continued the relatively firm and consistent position against Moscow, as Duan Qirui of the Anfu clique had done in the late 1910s during the Siberian Intervention. Following the decline of the White government in Siberia, negotiations over the CER between the Soviet envoy Lev Karakhan and Beijing were initiated in 1923 and completed one year later, mostly to the advantage of Moscow, because the Red Army mobilization in Outer Mongolia caused a direct military threat to China proper. Moreover, domestic and international pressure accounted for the rapprochement.

Early Bolshevik-Beijing Interactions

In 1919 and 1920, interactions with the Bolshevik government progressed very slowly. For years after the October Revolution, the Chinese border guards and the Railway protection army were very active in defending Manchurian territory and national sovereignty against any possible Bolshevik infiltration. Not surprisingly, the Beiyang Government revealed an obvious distrust of the Soviets from the beginning, demonstrated

by its refusal to recognize the Soviet regime long after the October Revolution. Instead, Beijing prepared to treat the Omsk, and later Irkutsk, Provisional Government in Eastern Siberia and the White Army as the only official Russian authorities. Starting from December 1917, the Beijing State Council directly ordered the Provincial Governor in Harbin to disarm and repatriate the Red soldiers crossing the Mongolian border. In 1919, almost two years after the October Revolution, Beijing openly announced that no Bolshevik be allowed to cross the border into China.[77]

Indeed, Beijing had every reason for concern because the Reds did have several indirect confrontations with the Chinese army along the Railway, and the Red regulars had gradually grown in strength over time. In early 1918, the Bolsheviks began a regular mobilization and they determined to increase the army to one million in a year.[78] The Bolshevik leader Riutin[79] gathered over 8,000 soldiers in eastern Siberia and was believed to be marching toward Manzhouli, the starting station of the Railway, in order to eliminate the White troops in the region. Reports also circulated that about 1,000 armed Soviet soldiers had infiltrated Harbin and were ready to act.[80] In response to the Russian Revolution, the Chinese railway police was sent to the area for safeguarding purposes. The regular Chinese armed forces in Harbin reached 4,000, plus the reserve guards and police force that would be stationed along the railway to suppress any potential Bolshevik uprising in the Railway region.[81]

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[77] "收国务院交抄黑省督军鲍贵卿来复电，民国七年一月四日," [Telegram from the Military Governor of Heilongjiang, Bao Guiqing, to the State Council, January 4, 1918] in *CER 1917-1919*, 42.
[78] Benson Bobrick, *East of the Sun: The Epic Conquest and Tragic History of Siberia* (New York: Poseidon Press, 1992), 406-7.
[79] No full name of this person is mentioned in any of the available sources.
[80] "收俄库达摄夫使节略，民国七年一月二十四日," [Excerpts in letter from Russian Ambassador Kudashev, January 24, 1918] and "收吉林督军孟恩远电，民国七年一月二十五日," [Telegram from the Military Governor of Jilin, Meng Enyuan, January 25, 1918] in *CER 1917-1919*, 77.
[81] "收滨江施绍常道尹函，民国六年十二月二十日," [Letter from the Circuit Intendant of Binjiangdao, Shi Shaochang, December 20, 1917] in *CER 1917-1919*, 15.

In March 1920, Moscow demanded that Horvath surrender unconditionally, otherwise he would be assassinated and a military campaign would be launched to capture control of the Railway, which should have belonged to the "one legitimate government of Russia".[82] Unable to resist the Red Army, Horvath turned to China for help, but the Chinese railway guards were unwilling to intervene directly in the Bolshevik-Horvath struggle, wanting to avoid military confrontation with either side. What they could do was to disarm Riutin and other Bolshevik generals and deport them back to Russia. In a telegram, the Governor of Jilin, Guo Zongxi, asserted that the avoidance of war should still be the principle in dealing with the Red Army, and that diplomatic relations with the "Russian government" (in this case the White government) would not be affected.[83]

Apart from the potential military threat the Bolsheviks posed to the border areas, the Beijing government also expressed concern about their ideological propaganda. When the Revolution broke out, the reaction of Beijing was rather calm, because the government believed that the Bolsheviks were a small minority and did not represent the Russian people; therefore they would not stay long. Beijing became worried gradually over 1918 and 1919.[84] According to the Beiyang leaders, the nature of the Soviet communist ideology meant a redistribution of wealth to the poor, and the concern that the Soviets might bring it to China.[85] In the report from Governor of Xinjiang, Yang Zengxin (杨增

[82] "收交通部函，民国九年三月十七日," [Telegram from Ministry of Transportation, March 17, 1920] in *CER 1920*, 94.
[83] "收吉林督军孟恩远、省长郭宗熙电，民国六年十二月二十三日," [Telegram from the Military Governor of Jilin, Meng Enyuan, and Govenor Guo Zongxi, December 23, 1917] in *CER 1917-1919*, 18.
[84] "收驻俄刘镜人公使电，民国六年十一月三十日," [Telegram from Minister to Russia, Liu Jingren, November 30, 1917] in EZBYYBJS, 1917-18, 273.
[85] "外交部发驻奉天，吉林黑龙江督军、省长、交涉员、库伦办事大员、阿尔泰办事长官电，1918 年 1 月 22 日," [Telegram from Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Military Governors and Governors of Fengtian, Jilin, Heilongjiang and Representative in Kuren and A'ertai, January 22, 1918] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 11.

新), Bolshevism, or Radicalism as he termed it, was the principle of equality and freedom of all people, with no distinctions of class, nationality or race. Therefore, as he put it, "since there were far more poor people in China than the rich and they were extremely hard to control, if such an ideology was made public knowledge, it would spread very fast among the poor and would eventually threaten the stability of the regime."[86]

One of the outcomes of the early Bolshevik propaganda that alarmed Beijing was the railway workers' strike. For example, one such influential incident was the riot at Suchang coal mine in April 1919, during the Siberian Intervention. The coal mine supplied the Railway with one million puds (approximately 453,000 kilograms) of coal per month, but the production was greatly disrupted by Bolshevik attacks around the area and the output was cut in half. According to the conference report of the International Railway Committee, "Most workers were not Bolsheviks, but Bolshevism polluted the miners and greatly discouraged the miners by making them aware of their horrible working and living conditions in the coal mine… They were ready to escape the mine *en masse* when suppressed."[87] Therefore, the coal mine needed to be reorganized and miners guarded by American and Japanese soldiers when it was reopened.

Another large-scale workers' strike, which was led by the Reds in Harbin among the Chinese and Russian railway workers, occurred in July 1919. The strike was caused by the workers' refusal to be paid in the new Siberian currency issued by the White government. The value of this currency was not considered stable and the workers requested Chinese silver coins. Provoked by the Bolsheviks travelling to all 36 workers

[86] "新疆省长兼署督军杨增新致大总统等电，1920 年 6 月 8 日," [Telegram from Governor of Xinjiang, Yang Zengxin, to the President, March 28, 1920] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 11-3.
[87] "共同监管会会议录第二十号，一九一九年四月八日," [Siberian International Committee Conference Record No. 20, April 8, 1919] in *CER 1917-1919*, 569.

barracks and addressing them, the strike soon spread to the train drivers and the clerks in the Russian Telephone Bureau. It was not long before the Railway was paralyzed and all trains were forced to stop.[88] The strike lasted for more than a week and it occupied the Beijing government's high attention. After the railway police were sent to the area yet proved unable to suppress the strike, Beijing had to transfer 750,000 silver coins to satisfy the workers' demands. This strike forced Beijing to once again borrow from the United States to cover the cost of the strike settlement. As soon as it was over, Beijing immediately sent an army to suppress the remaining workers.[89] In addition, there were several strikes against Horvath's rule on the Railway, in some of which even the Russian railway police refused to intervene, for they were sympathetic to the demonstrators. One big worry of Beijing was that the Russian upheavals might destabilize the social order in major Manchurian cities.[90]

Other more drastic Bolshevik activities occurred along the Railway as well. According to the reports of the Railway Committee, the Red attacks against the Railway, factories and mines in the nearby areas became more frequent toward mid-1919. Although the target of the Bolshevik attacks was not China *per se* but rather the Whites in the area, collateral damage on Chinese civilians was not uncommon. One incident in June 1919 occurred around Shuangchengzi Station, when 400 Red soldiers attacked the station, killing 12, wounding 1, destroying 6 miles of the rail beds and derailing one train. This was only one of many Red attacks along the Railway and Beijing was unable to do

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[88] "收吉林省长郭宗熙电，民国八年七月二十二日," [Telegram from the Governor of Jilin, Guo Zongxi, July 22, 1919] and "收吉林省长郭宗熙电，民国八年七月二十六日," [Telegram from the Governor of Jilin, Guo Zongxi, July 26, 1919] in *CER 1917-1919*, 619, 645.

[89] "收驻海参崴刘镜人公使电，民国八年七月三十日," [Telegram from the Minister to Vladivostok, Liu Jingren, July 30, 1919] in *CER 1917-1919*, 646.

[90] "共同监管会会议录第三十八号，一九一九年六月六日," [Siberian International Committee Conference Record No. 38, June 6, 1919] in *CER 1917-1919*, 632.

anything. Sometimes the Reds would avoid direct sabotage, but rather dress up as civilians or common soldiers and disturb the Railway administration. They would sometimes detach the wagons filled with munitions from trains belonging to the Whites or Chinese and take them as their own.[91] One direct result was that up until January 1921, all transportation on the CER and the Baikal Railway between Manchuria and Soviet Siberia was stopped to prevent the "Radicals" and their "socialist doctrines" from crossing the border.

Establishment of Diplomatic Relations

No matter how firm its resolution to keep Bolshevik influence out of its borders, the Beijing government had to acknowledge the deteriorating situation in Manchuria. The management of the Railway had been unstable since the October Revolution because the on-going conflict in Siberia severely disrupted trade as well as civilian transportation. Maintenance costs needed to be spent on the Railway to fix the destruction caused by both the Reds and the Whites. The embargo imposed on the Far East to prevent the Bolshevik advance worsened the deficit. By the end of the Civil War in 1922, the Railway had basically stopped functioning.[92] Under these bleak circumstances, Beijing finally realized it was time to re-consider its Russia policy and its attitude toward the White government, which was close to its demise, and this was when the Soviets started to play an important role in Chinese diplomatic engagement.

It was in 1923 that formal negotiations with the Reds were initiated, but informal

[91] "共同监管会会议录第五十四号，一九一九年八月十五日," [Siberian International Committee Conference Record No. 54, August 15, 1919] in *CER 1917-1919*, 740.
[92] "外交部俄约研究会第六次会议录，1920 年 8 月 24 日," [Russian Studies Conference Record No.6 of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, August 24, 1920] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 101-2.

and secret meetings started some time earlier. In fact, in order to make an alliance with China, Moscow had made a very friendly diplomatic move as early as July 1918. According to Elleman, the Soviet government's diplomatic isolation and military weakness in the years following the October Revolution forced it to rely heavily on propaganda and diplomatic manoeuvring to achieve its foreign goals.[93] At the Fifth All-Russian Congress of Soviets in 1918, the Commissar for Foreign Affairs Georgii Chicherin declared that, "We will give up everything the tsarist government seized in Manchuria and hand back the sovereignty over the Chinese Eastern Railway to China."[94] This should have included all territories and privileges granted to Russia in the treaties signed with China, including the 1856 Treaty of Aigun and 1860 Treaty of Beijing, a series of treaties concerning the construction rights of the Railway in 1896 and 1901, as well as the Russo-Japanese Treaties signed from 1906 to 1917 that carved up Chinese Manchuria and Shandong.

The first official document about the treatment of the Railway made by the Soviet government was the First Karakhan Manifesto. The Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Lev Karakhan, proposed the Manifesto to China and warned Beijing that the "imperialist powers" were working "to transform it into a second Korea or India, a fate that could only be avoided by joining with Soviet Russia."[95] Published on July 25, 1919 in the Soviet press under the title of "Obrashchenie Sovetskoi Rossii k Kitaiu" (Appeal from Soviet Russia to China), it was officially delivered to both the Beijing

[93] Elleman, *Diplomacy and Deception: The Secret History of Sino-Soviet Diplomatic Relations*, 23.
[94] "契切林在第五次苏维埃代表大会上的报告（节译），1918 年 7 月 4 日," [Chicherin's Speech to the Fifth All-Russian Congress of Soviets (excerpt), July 4, 1918] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 7.
[95] Elleman, "Sino-Soviet Tensions and the Soviet Administrative Control over the Chinese Eastern Railway, 1917-1925", 76,

government and the Guangzhou government simultaneously in March 1920.[96] This Manifesto specified the privileges and treaties that would be relinquished by the Soviet government. The highlights of the Manifesto included the renunciation of the conquests made by the tsarist government, which deprived China of Manchuria and other areas, renunciation of the receipt from China of the 1900 Boxer rebellion indemnity, and the abandonment of all factories owned by Russian merchants on Chinese soil.[97] Although the Manifesto was supposed to be a turning point in Beijing's attitude to Soviet Russia, the disputes over the settlement for the Railway in two different versions of the Manifesto complicated the relations between Beijing and Moscow. Beijing claimed that in the July 25 version, the Soviet government had offered an unconditional return of the Railway to China, but not long after, regretted the decision and changed its mind. According to Beijing, the text it received read as follows,

> "The Soviet Government returns to the Chinese people without compensation of any kind the Chinese Eastern Railway, and all mining concessions, forestry, and gold mines which were seized from them by the government of the Tsars, that of Kerensky, and the outlaws Horvath, Semenov, Kolchak, the Russian generals, merchants, and capitalists."[98]

However, the Soviet side claimed otherwise. Like the Whites, the Bolsheviks claimed that they had inherited the tsarist privilege of the Railway administration, and there had

[96] The delay was caused by the absence of envoys in both countries. Beijing withdrew Chinese envoys in Russia after the Russian Civil War broke out, and cut all diplomatic relations with Soviet Russia. See 马 [Ma], *中俄（苏）关系中的中东铁路问题* [The Chinese Eastern Railway in the Sino-Russian/Soviet Relationship], 94-5.

[97] "俄罗斯苏维埃联邦社会主义共和国政府对中国人民和中国南北政府的宣言，1920 年 3 月 26 日," [Declaration from Russian Soviet Socialist Republic to the Chinese People, Northern and Southern Governments of China, received on March 26, 1920] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 57.

[98] "收俄国劳农政府代理代理外交总长卡那康电，民国九年三月二十六日," [Letter from Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Karakhan, March 26, 1920] in *YBJS 1920*, 464.

never been a promise to return the Railway to the Chinese. In the edition published in *Izvestia* in August 1919, there was no mention of the CER at all. Moreover, this version would be taken as the standard for Moscow to demand the restoration of joint administrative rights to the CER, claiming that it had never promised the Railway back to China unconditionally.[99]

This triggered the discontent of Beijing, for it asserted the legitimacy of the "original document". However, the fact is that the "original Soviet text" the Chinese claimed was nowhere to be found. The only available text which mentioned the settlement for the Railway was the one delivered by Iakov Ianson, representative for Foreign Affairs of the Peoples of Siberia and the Far East, to the Chinese consulate in Irkutsk on March 3, 1920, and then telegrammed to Beijing on March 26, 1920. The document was in French and was translated into Chinese. Naturally, the Soviets denied its authenticity. However, researches of Elleman and Whiting both showed that the version with the promise to return the CER was the original one, based on a pamphlet published by Vladimir Vilenskii, a Soviet Foreign Ministry official in 1919. Moreover, Elleman discovered another piece of evidence, the Bulletin of the Far Eastern Secretariat of the Comintern, which also conformed to the Vilenskii document.[100]

According to Elleman, the two versions allowed the Soviet government to satisfy its propaganda requirements (July version) and its diplomatic requirements (August version). The Manifesto was used to open Sino-Soviet diplomatic negotiations over the status of

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[99] "苏俄国家出版社印行的"宣言"俄罗斯苏维埃联邦社会主义共和国政府对中国人民和中国南北政府的宣言, 1919 年 7 月 25 日," [Declaration from Russian Soviet Socialist Republic to the Chinese People, Northern and Southern Governments of China published by the Soviet Union, August 26, 1919] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 58-60.

[100] See Elleman, "Sino-Soviet Tensions and the Soviet Administrative Control over the Chinese Eastern Railway, 1917-1925", in *Manchurian Railways and the Opening of China*, 61 and Whiting, *Soviet Policies in China, 1917-1919*, 269. See also the original copy of the Vilenskii pamphlet cited by Elleman, Vladimir Vilenskii, *Kitaia i Sovietskaia Rossia* [China and Soviet Russia] (Moscow: Gos. Izd-vo., 1919), 15-6.

the CER, as well as attempt to obtain the Chinese people's sympathy for the diplomatically-isolated new Soviet state.[101] Either way, eventually, Moscow managed to disown the July version of the Karakhan Manifesto and maintain joint control over the CER.

In March 1920, Moscow reminded the Beijing Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the Lenin government had already presented terms that would have benefitted China, including the abolishment of all the secret treaties and the right of extraterritoriality, and most importantly, new plans for administering the Railway. Knowing the decline of the Whites, Beijing finally decided it was not such a bad idea to negotiate with this different group of Russians, as long as they complied with all the laws in China.[102] In August 1920, General Zhang Silin (张斯麟) was dispatched to Moscow as the first attempt, and he was warmly received by Lenin himself. Although Zhang was not officially appointed as the plenipotentiary representative to Moscow, Chicherin and Karakhan both met with him and expressed hope that China would lift the embargo placed on Soviet Russia and fight against all the "imperialists" along with Moscow.[103] Historian Gabriel Gorodetsky asserted that this anti-imperialist concept rested on the assumption that revolution in Russia, the weak link in the chain of capitalism, would not be secured until the threat of imperialist intervention was removed. The Commissar for Foreign Affairs Lev Trotsky saw little significance in establishing diplomatic relations with capitalist regimes whose

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[101] Elleman, "Sino-Soviet Tensions and the Soviet Administrative Control over the Chinese Eastern Railway, 1917-1925", in *Manchurian Railways and the Opening of China*, 61.

[102] "收驻崴李家鏊高等委员电，民国九年三月二十一日," [Telegram from Senior Committee Member to Siberia, Li Jia'ao, March 21, 1920] in *CER 1920*, 103-4.

[103] "张斯麟自莫斯科致外交部电，1920 年 10 月 6 日," [Telegram from Zhang Silin in Moscow to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, October 6, 1920] "张斯麟自莫斯科致外交部电，1920 年 10 月 9 日," [Telegram from Zhang Silin in Moscow to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, October 9, 1920] and "苏俄副外交人民委员致正在莫斯科的中国军事-外交代表团团长张斯麟将军函，1920 年 10 月 16 日第 285 号/2," [Letter from Deputy People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs to General Zhang Silin, October 16, 1920 No. 285/2] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 80-3.

fate "had already been determined". That was what made relations with China valuable.[104] Therefore, although no actual resolution was reached during the visit, this was the first Beiyang mission to Moscow since the October Revolution, and, as Henry Wei suggested, it was also an attempt to find out directly from Moscow the possibilities of a trade agreement, and even a long-term political settlement.[105]

A more convenient channel between Moscow and Beijing was made through the establishment of a puppet state, the Far Eastern Republic, in April 1920. It was nominally an independent state but was largely under the control of Moscow, and was established as a buffer zone between the Soviet state and the Japanese-dominated territories in Siberia during the Civil War. As soon as it was founded, it published some announcements to Beijing concerning territorial security, commercial relations through the Railway and the eradication of the White troops, presumably under directions of Moscow.[106]

By this time, with the gradual withdrawal of Semenov's army from Siberia, Beijing started to see a chance to keep the Whites off the Railway with the help of the Reds through the Far Eastern Republic. In August 1920, Beijing concluded that the Whites were very unlikely to return to power, and future Russian relations would unavoidably involve the Bolsheviks. Therefore, the general policy of the time shifted toward rapprochement with the Reds and gradually abandoning the Whites. However, given how conservative the Beijing government was, it was still extremely suspicious of the representative plenipotentiary sent by the Far Eastern Republic in late 1920, lgnatius Yourin, and only allowed him to take part in commercial negotiations. He was not received as the formal Soviet ambassador in Beijing and all his activities were under

[104] Gabriel Gorodetsky, "The Formulation of Soviet Foreign Policy: Ideology and *Realpolitik*", 30-1.
[105] Wei, *China and Soviet Russia*, 18-9.
[106] Leong, *Sino-Soviet Diplomatic Relations*, 1917-1926, 152-3.

surveillance.[107] Regarding this Elleman asserted that a crucial facet of Yourin's strategy was to make it appear that the Far Eastern Republic was totally independent from the Soviet government in Moscow, but Beijing was clearly aware that Moscow was the real power behind the throne.[108] The Far Eastern Republic started from scratch and it could not have survived without Soviet financial and political support. However, at the same time, Beijing realized that it was very likely that most major European countries had started to contact with the Reds in secret and China would have to move on from the old policies.

A few months after the first Manifesto, Karakhan announced his Second Manifesto to China on September 1920, and the most important change in it was the complete denial of the favourable terms about the Railway in the first Manifesto, and the request for a separate treaty to decide its fate.[109] In fact, this meant that the Soviets had actually reclaimed the Railway, agreeing only in principle to its eventual redemption by China. In exchange, China needed to take on the corresponding responsibilities of not supporting any anti-revolutionary Russian groups or individuals, disarming and handing over the remaining White forces to Moscow, and not using the portion of the Boxer indemnity that Soviet Russia had given up to sponsor any other illegal Russian government.[110]

Gradually, contacts with Moscow were initiated. The Whites' corruption and

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[107] "外交部俄约研究会第六次会议录，1920 年 8 月 24 日," [Russian Studies Conference Record No.6 of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, August 24, 1920] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 101-2.
[108] Elleman, *Diplomacy and Deception: The Secret History of Sino-Soviet Diplomatic Relations, 1917-1927*, 49.
[109] "俄罗斯苏维埃联邦社会主义共和国外交人民委员部致中国外交部照会，1920 年 9 月 27 日," [Diplomatic Note from People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, September 27, 1920] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 87.
[110] "俄罗斯苏维埃联邦社会主义共和国外交人民委员部致中国外交部照会，1920 年 9 月 27 日," [Diplomatic Note from People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, September 27, 1920] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 87.

mismanagement of the Railway had caused a huge loss to the Manchurian provinces. As has been discussed above, in the early 1920s the management of the Railway was extremely difficult because of the severe financial deficit since the Civil War. Therefore, it was reasonable for Beijing to put that issue high on its agenda. Upon negotiations with the Far Eastern Republic, there were four main problems confronting the Chinese railway guards: the Civil War-related disruptions along the Railway, the obstructions of the Russian administrators who elbowed out the Chinese ones as much as possible, Semenov and his army, and the miscommunication between two parties because of the language barrier.[111] Beijing expressed deep hope to the Far Eastern Republic that once the Whites were out of the way, the Railway management could be a lot smoother.

Following the demise of the Japanese-supported Anfu clique in late 1920 after its defeat in the Zhili-Anhui War, Japan lost its popularity in China because of the new leader Wu Peifu's anti-Japanese position. The reputation of the Japanese-supported White government suffered as well. By late 1920, the Beiyang government had terminated the relationship with the imperial Russian ambassador, Prince Kudashev, because, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "He has lost the qualification to represent a country that had ceased to exist."[112] Not long after, Horvath was also dismissed by a resolution of the Railway shareholders' meeting, although he still refused to withdraw his forces from the Railway. Like Semenov, he attempted to revive his fortune by seeking Japanese support. To prevent Japanese expansion in Northern Manchuria, Beijing planned to re-organize the shareholders' meeting and eliminate Horvath's crew from the power centre

[111] "收交通部函，民国十年四月十五日," [Letter from Ministry of Transportation, April 15, 1921] in *CER 1921*, 71-2.
[112] "外交部收中东铁路公司署办公所密咨，1920 年 5 月 13 日," [Confidential Letter from the General Director of the CER Company to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, May 13, 1920] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 355.

for good.[113] A year after that, in September 1921, Semenov and the remaining White troops in Siberia were completely defeated by the Reds, and Semenov himself fled to Japan. In late 1922, subjected to international pressure and domestic difficulty, Japanese forces withdrew from Siberia. The defeat of the Whites paved the path for the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Bolsheviks.

At this time, since all the White forces were out of the picture, the joint ownership of the CER between Soviet Russia and China once again became the vital issue. Concerning this most important disputed asset, Moscow claimed that a separate agreement needed to be reached. In the early 1910s, the Railway was almost completely in the hands of Russia. All the senior administrators were Russian, and China had obviously nothing to gain from the *Railway Partnership Contract* signed during the Imperial era. The Chinese believed that although the Railway was supposed to be jointly administered, the few years following the October Revolution had proved Russia's incompetence in managing the Railway affairs. More importantly, the Railway was built on Chinese territory and it was closely concerned with Chinese sovereignty, which Soviet Russia was not supposed to violate. Besides, throughout the Civil War years, it had been the Chinese staff running the whole Railway region and undertaking peacekeeping responsibilities.[114] Nevertheless, Moscow insisted that the construction of the Railway had been funded by Russia and therefore it should legitimately claim its ownership. It recognized Chinese sovereignty over the Railway, and asserted that the presence of the Soviet army was only to protect

[113] "收国务院函，民国九年二月十一日," [Letter from the State Council, February 11, 1920] in *CER 1920*, 39-40.
[114] "收交通部密函，民国八年一月二十七日," [Confidential Letter from Ministry of Transportation, January 27, 1919] in *CER 1917-1919*, 280.

Soviet interests there and to defend against the remaining White forces.[115] These arguments would remain crucial for the upcoming negotiations between Beijing and the Soviet government, because Soviet interests in Manchuria through the CER were basically similar to those of tsarist Russia.

In the meantime, the Soviet railway guards were gradually changing their attitudes. The Governor of Jilin Sun Liechen (孙烈臣) reported to Beijing in October 1921 that during the Civil War when Russia was unable to administer the Railway itself, it looked to China for help with the financial difficulties, workers' strike and the disruptive White troops; once the war was over, it came to reclaim its asset. Not only were China's expenditures on the Railway during the war not compensated, but the new Soviet Railway guards began to charge the Chinese army for utilities and supplies. Soviet staff often took miscommunication due to the language problem as an excuse to blame their Chinese counterparts' inefficiency.[116]

The formal negotiations about the Railway were officially initiated in March 1923. Appointed by President Li Yuanhong, Wang Zhengting (better known as C. T. Wang, 王正廷) served as the diplomat to negotiate with Soviet Russia about the Railway. He had been a Chinese delegate under Foreign Minister Gu Weijun (better known as Wellington Koo, 顾维钧) during the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 after World War I, and had a relatively good reputation for not giving in to the unreasonable treatment of China at the

[115] "收东路宋小濂督办电，民国九年九月三十日," [Telegram from General Inspector of the Chinese Eastern Railway, Song Xiaolian, September 30, 1920] in *CER 1920*, 332.
[116] "收国务院函，民国十年十月五日," [Letter from the State Council, October 5, 1921] in *CER 1921*, 302-5.

Conference.[117] The Soviet side was supposed to send its plenipotentiary Adolf Ioffe, but Beijing was later told that he was too ill to attend. Pre-negotiations occurred between Wang and the Soviet temporary representatives, and the new plenipotentiary Karakhan did not arrive in Beijing until August 9, 1923.

Unfortunately, the negotiations had a very rough beginning. As expected, the dispute over the return of the CER described in the Karakhan Manifesto was at the centre of contention. Up until November, no consensus was reached on the Railway. The Soviet side insisted that in theory, the Railway had been an asset of imperial Russia and before any agreement was reached Moscow still owned it; however, in reality, Wang pointed out that at the time Soviet Russia had no power over the Railway. During the negotiations, in response to Wang's request for the complete return of the Railway mentioned in the First Karakhan Manifesto, Karakhan insisted that there had never been such a thing, and claimed on several occasions that, "There is not the slightest chance that I would have said such things as 'The CER shall be returned to China without any compensation.' The misunderstanding must have been caused by translators who obviously did not have a clear idea of what we said." The Soviet position was that it would abolish all the privileges related to the Railway obtained during the tsarist period. As for the Railway itself, because it was regarded as a commercial enterprise, its ownership should belong to the Soviet government.[118]

The negotiations still continued in early 1924. In January, the focus shifted to China's participation in the Siberian Intervention. Karakhan blamed Beijing for

[117] The major one was to transfer German concessions in Jiaozhou, China to Japan rather than returning its sovereign authority to China.

[118] "苏联驻华代表致中俄会议督办王正廷函，1923 年 11 月 30 日，第 7618 号," [Letter from the Soviet Representative to China to the Director of Sino-Soviet Conference, C. T. Wang, November 30, 1923 No. 7618] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 209.

withdrawing its ambassadors from Russia along with other western countries when the October Revolution broke out; worse still, after Soviet Russia published the Karakhan Manifestos and showed a friendly gesture to China, China's response was to participate in the intervention against it. The Soviet government had been continuously making efforts toward the normalization of Sino-Soviet relations; however, not only did Beijing ignore such efforts, it constantly supported the enemies of the Reds.[119] Interestingly, according to Elleman, Karakhan obviously exaggerated the Whites' military power, and he clearly knew that they were no match for the Red Army, especially after 1920. About this Elleman stated that, "Karakhan's purpose was clear: to signal that the Beijing government had no way of forcing him to live up to his earlier promises to return the CER to China without compensation."[120]

Karakhan's proposal incurred protests from the Chinese delegation, but Karakhan replied that, in 1919, the Beijing government had turned the Soviet offers down in the most drastic way, through military intervention. Therefore, without any explanation, Beijing had no right to accuse the Soviets of lack of honesty and sincerity. Karakhan claimed the moral high ground by stating that the Soviet government had already repaid Chinese enmity with kindness by publicizing the Manifestos, instead of holding Beijing responsible for having harboured the Whites throughout the Civil War.[121]

As the negotiation between Wang and Karakhan went on, the attitude of the Soviet side became much more uncompromising than it had been a few years earlier. In

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[119] "苏联驻华特命全权代表加拉罕致中国代表团团长王正廷函，1924 年 1 月 17 日," [Letter from Soviet Plenipotentiary to China, Karakhan, to Leader of the Chinese Delegation, C. T. Wang, January 17, 1924] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 225.

[120] Bruce Elleman, "Sino-Soviet Tensions and the Soviet Administrative Control over the Chinese Eastern Railway, 1917-1925", 68.

[121] "苏联驻华特命全权代表加拉罕致中国代表团团长王正廷函，1924 年 1 月 17 日," [Letter from Soviet Plenipotentiary to China, Karakhan, to Leader of the Chinese Delegation, C. T. Wang, January 17, 1924] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 225.

February 1924, one of the negotiation records read as follows:

> …
>
> "Wang: You have been claiming all along that the Soviet Union stands on the righteous side, but I see that you only approve of matters that benefit your country and refuse to discuss matters that do not. I do not see any righteousness in this. After all the CER was built on Chinese territory.
>
> Karakhan: No matter what, I cannot agree if the general director of the CER is not from our side… If our opinions on this issue conflict any more, I will not carry on this negotiation.
>
> Wang: You claimed you would promote a healthy Sino-Soviet diplomatic relationship, but there is no equality in this negotiation.
>
> Karakhan: Speaking of that, please be aware that the benefits we offered your country are much more than what we have done anywhere else… What I am doing is protect our national interests on the CER and we do not interfere with Chinese sovereignty. As far as I know, the remainder of the White troops is still active along the Railway and we need to guard against the worst. In general, there is no way we will give the Railway back to China without any compensation…"[122]

After months of negotiations, a draft of the normalization of the Sino-Soviet diplomatic relationship was made in March 1924. According to it, the CER was to be

[122] "筹办中俄交涉事宜王正廷与苏联全权代表加拉罕谈判记录，1924 年 2 月 22 日," [Conference Records of Negotiation between Director of Sino-Soviet Conference C. T. Wang and Plenipotentiary to China, Karakhan, to Leader of the Chinese Delegation, C. T. Wang, February 22, 1924] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 229-36.

redeemed with Chinese capital. In the 1896 *Contract* the bonds offered to China were worth five million taels, but the actual payment Beijing made was approximately seventy million taels. Without being compensated for the huge difference, Beijing was required to pay thirty million taels more to redeem the Railway. Along with the draft were the *Temporary Administration Regulations of the CER*, which stipulated that the policy-making institution of the Railway was a board of directors, consisting of an equal number of Soviet and Chinese directors, but the chief of the administration bureau had to be a Soviet.

In addition to the draft, Karakhan added a new clause on March 14. In his work, Elleman analyzed in detail this significant, yet rarely-discussed secret protocol because according to it, all former conventions, treaties, agreements, protocols, and contracts would be annulled at the signing of the official Sino-Soviet treaty, at which time new treaties would be adopted. This protocol might have been made to prevent outsiders from taking advantage of the period before the official treaty was made, during which none of the Sino-Russian treaties would be valid. This proved to be an important document, since the Beijing government had now recognized the legitimacy of all the earlier agreements reached, even though both sides agreed that they were suspended. If the Soviet Union violated any of the old agreements before an official treaty was reached, the Beijing government could not publicly protest, because it would expose the existence of such a protocol with Soviet Russia, which would have undermined the support that Beijing hoped to gain from other powers, such as Japan and the United States.[123] Being unable to make more out of the negotiations, Wang agreed to sign the drafts and the secret protocol

[123] Bruce Elleman, "Sino-Soviet Tensions and the Soviet Administrative Control over the Chinese Eastern Railway, 1917-1925", 70-1.

on March 14.

Unfortunately, the process of signing was not as smooth as expected. The draft was not delivered to the Chinese State Council until the following day (March 15), which was a Saturday, and further discussions in the Chinese Cabinet were unable to be carried out until the next working day. Therefore, Beijing notified Karakhan that it needed some more time to discuss detailed issues in the signed draft, because it found that several points were omitted, including the Soviet withdrawal from Mongolia and the transfer of the churches and immovable property of tsarist Russia in China. Moreover, most major western countries were against the normalization of Sino-Soviet relationship, which might hamper their interests in the Far East. They requested Beijing to delay ratification.[124] Karakhan, on the other hand, responded with an ultimatum, which accused Beijing of dishonesty, and demanded that Beijing recognize the official treaty within three days (by March 17), otherwise it would be held responsible "for the breaking off the negotiations and the breaking up of the agreement, as well as for all the ensuing consequences".[125] In other words, Karakhan took the draft as the finalized treaty and claimed that once it was signed, it could not be further modified.

Interestingly, although the Soviet Union in 1924 was still in a shattered condition, it was still able to exert some power in the Far East, partly because of the overwhelming army it had stationed along the Mongolian border. Obviously, one of the advantages

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[124] 马 [Ma], *中俄（苏）关系中的中东铁路问题* [The Chinese Eastern Railway in the Sino-Russian/Soviet Relationship], 135.

[125] "筹办中俄交涉事宜王正廷与苏联全权代表加拉罕谈判记录，1924 年 3 月 8 日晚九时," [Conference Records of Negotiation between Director of Sino-Soviet Conference C. T. Wang and Soviet Plenipotentiary, Karakhan, 9 pm, March 8, 1924] "筹办中俄交涉 事宜王正廷出席国务会议第二次报告，1924 年 3 月 11 日," [Second Report of C. T. Wang at the State Council Meeting, March 11, 1924] and "苏联全权代表加拉罕致筹办中俄交涉事宜王正廷照会，1924 年 3 月 16 日," [Diplomatic Note from the Soviet Plenipotentiary, Karakhan, to C. T. Wang, March 16, 1924] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 243-255.

Soviet Russia gained from it was effective diplomatic leverage on Beijing.[126] In the nineteenth century, Mongolia had remained part of the Manchu Empire. Although Outer Mongolia had declared its independence in 1911 when the Qing Dynasty collapsed, no country in the world, including the Republic of China, recognized its legitimacy. In 1919 whilst the Bolsheviks were too involved in the Civil War, Chinese general Xu Shuzheng under the instruction of the Anfu leader Duan Qirui led troops into Outer Mongolia. However, with the demise of the Anfu clique in 1920 and the retreat of Xu's troops, Outer Mongolia fell into chaos again.[127] In November 1920, Moscow claimed that some of the remaining forces of Semenov had fled into Mongolia, and had combined forces with an Austrian anti-Bolshevik, Roman von Ungern-Sternberg, who had fought for a Cossack regiment during World War I. After the October Revolution, Semenov and Ungern were active around Lake Baikal and the Mongolian border. In late 1921, with the Civil War over at home, Moscow finally had a free hand to deal with these "antagonists", since they posed a threat to the stability of Siberia. Knowing that Beijing would not agree to a foreign army on Chinese territory, Moscow still intended to send the Red Army to "assist", since Mongolia was of "great public concern".[128] The only goal would be the elimination of Ungern, and it promised that once the area was clear it would withdraw immediately. Towards the end of 1921, the Red Army defeated Ungern and his White forces in Kuren and captured Ungern himself in July. Beijing was unable to respond because most of the available armies were involved in the First Zhili-Fengtian War in late 1921 and early 1922.

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[126] Leong, *Sino-Soviet Diplomatic Relations, 1917-1926*, 182-3.
[127] 才 [Cai], "1917-1924 的苏俄中东铁路政策," [Soviet Russia's Chinese Eastern Railway Policy, 1917-1924], 121.
[128] "远东外交部长优林致中国政府照会，1921 年 7 月 18 日," [Diplomatic Note from Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Far Eastern Republic, Yourin, to China, July 18, 1921] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 439-40.

The Red Army stayed in Mongolia from then on.[129] Moscow claimed that it was obligated to protect Mongolia, which was a crucial buffer zone between China and itself. It had no intention to withdraw its troops even after the Civil War was long since over, and claimed that the Red Army's existence in Mongolia was to protect the CER as well, since part of Semenov's forces had fled into China and used the CER to transfer its ammunition and new recruits.[130] In February 1924, when the negotiations over the CER had reached an impasse, rumours started to go around that there would be a full mobilization of the Red Army in the region, as soon as negotiations with Beijing collapsed.[131] Whether this information was true or not, the Soviet Army in Mongolia did intimidate Beijing greatly, especially after the declaration of the Mongolian People's Republic in 1924 with Soviet support. As Whiting asserts, in Outer Mongolia, Soviet Russia resorted to intimidation, intrigue and invasion to achieve its ends, in order to both tie Beijing's hands and raise its influence far above the level enjoyed by tsarist Russia by providing the sole military and financial support for the new Mongolian regime.[132]

Beside the external threat in Mongolia, the Beiyang government in early 1924 was under domestic pressure to establish relations with the Soviet Union as well. After the May Fourth Movement in 1919, a cultural and later political movement growing out of student demonstrations in Beijing, there had been several large-scale boycotts against

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[129] Not until after World War II in January 1946 did China formally recognize the independence of the Mongolian People's Republic. This was carried out under the then government head, Chiang Kai-shek, and the two countries established diplomatic relations in February of the same year.

[130] "筹办中俄交涉事宜王正廷与苏联全权代表加拉罕谈判记录，1924 年 3 月 8 日晚九时," [Conference Records of Negotiation between Director of Sino-Soviet Conference C. T. Wang and Soviet Plenipotentiary, Karakhan, 9 pm, March 8, 1924] and "筹办中俄交涉 事宜王正廷出席国务会议第二次报告，1924 年 3 月 11 日," [Second Report of C. T. Wang at the State Council Meeting, March 11, 1924] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 243-255.

[131] The authentication of this information cannot be verified. Supposedly, this came from a telegram sent by the Inspector Wang Jingchun, but the original copy of that telegram could not be found. Therefore, it shall be treated as rumours. "浙江民生协进会通电，1924 年 3 月 21 日," [Telegram of Zhejiang People's Livelihood Progressive Group, March 21, 1924] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 297.

[132] Whiting, *Soviet Policies in China, 1917-1924*, 250-1.

Japan, and they soon developed into a nationwide anti-imperialist wave. In February 1924, social groups, youth clubs, and the newly appointed CER General Inspector Wang Jingchun (王景春) all proclaimed that China had already been able to recover a lot of the lost rights from Moscow and that it might not get a second chance.[133] Meanwhile, on top of these was international pressure. By this time, most of the other major powers in the world had recognized the Soviet Union, and it would have placed China in a very difficult diplomatic position had it still refused to establish relations with this important neighbour. Eventually giving in to all the pressures, Beijing reluctantly accepted the Sino-Soviet treaty, which in fact confirmed Soviet domination of the CER.[134]

Finally, after both sides had signed the treaty, formal diplomatic relations were established on May 31, 1924. Karakhan and Li Jia'ao (李家鳌) were appointed as the first Chinese and Soviet ambassadors respectively. This treaty, the *Sino-Soviet Basic Entente For Resolving Unsettled Problems* made on that day stipulated the following,

> "The Soviet government promises that China will be able to redeem the CER and all the affiliated facilities with Chinese capital, and all the securities and bonds will be transferred back to China. The CER is a purely commercial asset, and the Soviet Union will not interfere in judiciary, civil, military, municipal, tax, land or other rights related to Chinese sovereignty. Only China and the Soviet Union shall be responsible for the fate of Railway, and no third party is allowed to

[133] Various telegrams in *ZSGJGXSZLHB*, 293-9.
[134] "国务院、外交部致各省区通电，1924 年 5 月 31 日," [Telegram from the State Council and Ministry of Foreign Affairs to All Provinces, May 31, 1924] "外交部发中东铁路督办王景春电，1924 年 6 月 1 日," [Telegram from Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the General Inspector of the Chinese Eastern Railway, Wang Jingchun, June 1, 1924] and "外交总长顾维钧出席国务会议的报告，1924 年 6 月 5 日," [Wellington Koo's Report at the State Council Meeting, June 5, 1924] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 279-84.

participate."[135]

After a few years of political chaos, the year 1924 witnessed the normalization of the Sino-Soviet diplomatic relationship. The return of the Railway ownership, at least the northern part, was an important step on the part of the anti-Japanese Zhili warlords to keep Japan out of the game. As early as December 1921, the Foreign Minister of the Far Eastern Republic Yanson had already appealed to China that Japan attempted to seize their share in Manchuria and Russian Siberia, and the Manchurian warlord Zhang Zuolin was manipulated by Japan against Beijing; therefore, Beijing and Moscow would benefit mutually by cooperating on the Railway issue.[136] Six months later in May 1922, the Soviet representative Aleksandr Paikes once again stated that since Zhang had declared independence from Beijing with secret support from Japan, and Japan itself had always attempted to connect its Southern Manchurian Railway with the CER, which might allow it to conveniently occupy Manchuria, the Zhili leaders believed it was the right time for Beijing to act in order to form an alliance with Soviet Russia.[137] Gradually, of course, Beijing was convinced, and an anti-Japanese and pro-Soviet treaty concerning the Railway was eventually reached.

Nevertheless, through the treaty, the Soviets had basically reclaimed the CER and required China to redeem it with a huge sum of money. Moreover, Tang argued that as

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[135] "Sino-Soviet Basic Entente For Resolving the Unsettled Problems, May 31, 1924," in *Sovetsko-Kitaiskie otnosheniia, 1917-1957, sbornik dokumentov* [Sino-Soviet Relations: Document Collection, 1917-1957] (Eastern Literature Publishing House, Moscow 1957), 84.

[136] "收驻赤塔沈崇勳总领事呈，民国十年十二月三十一日," [Letter from the General Counselor in Chita, Shen Chongxun, December 31, 1921] in *EZB 1921*, 174-6.

[137] "外交总长颜惠庆会晤俄代表裴克斯，1922 年 5 月 22 日," [Record of Meeting between Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yan Huiqing, and Soviet Delegate Paikes, May 22, 1922] and "苏俄代表致中国外交部节略，1922 年 11 月 3 日," [Diplomatic Note from the Soviet Delegate to Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, November 3, 1922] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 392-5.

the later conflicts and deadlocks over the CER showed, the basic principles for joint management were not observed in practice. The Soviet pledges for joint management turned out to be a bait to secure a diplomatic settlement. As a matter of fact, by this time, the Soviet government had managed to retake majority control over the CER.[138] This relationship proved to be difficult at the very beginning, and would experience several major fluctuations during the late 1920s.[139]

In addition, the reshuffling of government did not have a significant influence on the CER policy, because, like most other political entities in the world at the time, the Japanese-supported Anfu clique and the American-backed Zhili clique shared their suspicion of the Soviet regime. They were both keen on declaring sovereignty in Northern Manchuria as well as securing control over the CER against Soviet Russia. Therefore, the general consistency of Beijing's CER policy, including the militarization of the region, mobilization of the railway protection army, and the subsequent negotiations, remained more or less intact until the establishment of Sino-Soviet foreign relations in May 1924. The change remained in the role Japan played in the process. The Anfu clique's pro-Japanese tendencies allowed Japan to participate more actively in Manchurian affairs, with the Siberian Intervention being the most noticeable example. As soon as the Zhili clique took over in mid-1920, it began to struggle to counterbalance the existing Japanese influence in the area, and eventually worked with the Soviets to this

[138] See Tang, *Russian and Soviet Policy in Manchuria and Outer Mongolia, 1911-1931*, 164-5, and Elleman, "Sino-Soviet Tensions and the Soviet Administrative Control over the Chinese Eastern Railway, 1917-1925", 72.
[139] Only five years later, the Nanjing government and the Soviet Union broke off the diplomatic relationship and it was not re-established until 1932, and the reason was still the CER. When the Chinese attempted to seize the Manchurian Railway in 1929, swift Soviet military intervention quickly put an end to the crisis and forced the Chinese to accept restoration of joint Soviet-Chinese administration of the Railway. See Felix Patrikeeff, "Railway as Political Catalyst: The Chinese Eastern Railway and the 1929 Sino-Soviet Conflict", in *Manchurian Railways and the Opening of China*, 81-3.

end. Moreover, having been defeated by the Red Army, the Japanese-sponsored White government lost its support from Beijing as the Anfu warlords were ousted in late 1920.

Conclusion

The Soviet-Beijing relationship was one major component of Moscow's "parallel diplomacy", mainly because of its desire to legitimize its actions through Beijing. During the negotiations, Soviet diplomats manipulated two different versions of the Karakhan Manifesto and complicated the relations between Beijing and Moscow. Eventually, a formal diplomatic relationship was established in 1924, but it was not exactly on an equal basis.

Still, the Sino-Soviet political treaty marked one major diplomatic move of the Beiyang government, for it managed to recover some of the lost sovereignty over the CER and in Manchuria. The diplomatic and strategic efforts of Beiyang leaders to obtain ownership of the CER can be seen as a step forward from the Qing Dynasty. It was forced to drop its initial activism because of Soviet overwhelming military force in Mongolia and both domestic and international pressure. Although the story did not have a happy ending for Beijing, it still deserved some credit for standing up against the Soviets/Russians.

Chapter 3

The Guangzhou Government and Its Interactions with Soviet Russia

The diplomatic policies of the Sun Yat-sen government in Guangzhou were a different story, because, in Elleman's words, Sun "quickly signed away China's rights to all of the CER in exchange for promises of Soviet military and financial support."[140] The Soviet reclamation of the Chinese Eastern Railway through Sun Yat-sen was a part of the larger Soviet-Sun collaboration. Soviet Russia, at the time still surrounded by the major "imperialist" powers, could use this Soviet-friendly political ally to get more deeply involved in Chinese affairs. Also, Moscow sought to ideologically legitimize its obtaining of the CER through this symbolic leader of Chinese democratic revolution, Sun Yat-sen. Sun started to establish contacts with the new Bolshevik regime in 1921, and the bond was secured in the 1924 First National Congress of the Chinese Nationalist Party (the KMT) held in Guangdong. As this chapter shows, compared to the Beijing government's diplomatic moves against Moscow, Sun's Soviet policy was somewhat passive and compromising, especially with respect to the CER issue. His purpose in eventually cooperating with Moscow was to form a mutually-beneficial alliance in order to acquire Soviet aid; in exchange, he acquiesced to the Soviet claim of the CER and the Red Army's presence in Outer Mongolia.[141]

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[140] Elleman, *Diplomacy and Deception: The Secret History of Sino-Soviet Diplomatic Relations, 1917-1927*, 118.

[141] Although at the time the CER and Manchuria were not Sun's to give after all, he was still involved through his alliance with the Manchurian warlord, Zhang Zuolin, which is explored in the next chapter. Therefore, it is not quite right to say Sun had no leverage on the CER at all.

Initial Difficulties of Soviet-Sun Contacts

After the death of Yuan Shikai in 1916 the country fell into political chaos, with Beijing having no actual control over the southern provinces and the provincial military governors controlling significant numbers of troops. In Beijing, after several rounds of "ministerial leapfrogging", the power fell to Duan Qirui and the Anfu clique in 1918. In July of the previous year, Sun Yat-sen had arrived in Guangzhou and invited the original members of the Beijing parliament of 1912 to come to Guangzhou to re-establish a new government and revive the Provisional Constitution issued in 1912.

After assuming power as president in Guangzhou in May 1921, Sun still did not have strong military forces of his own and had to rely on other warlords; therefore, a "northern expedition" to force the unification of China Sun ordered in 1922 eventually went nowhere. What was worse, he lost his revolutionary headquarters in Guangzhou because the local warlord Chen Jiongming turned against him. He found himself back where he was in 1912 with no support domestically or internationally.

The ideas that Sun advocated over the years – that China must become a modern and democratic republic, and that the country's natural resources and goods should be enjoyed by all – along with his Three People's Principles (Nationalism, Democracy and Livelihood of the People) were his major capital. After the October Revolution, Sun expressed his interest in the Bolshevik regime, and came to believe there was much to be learned from the revolutionary experience.[142] Gradually, his status as the revolutionary leader of China attracted Moscow's attention.

In the early 1920s, Soviet diplomatic policy was still characterized by a distinctive

[142] Martin Clarence Wilbur, *Sun Yat-sen, Frustrated Patriot* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 7 and 113-4.

ideological quality. Class antagonism remained a crucial component of its formulation, and world revolution was regarded as inevitable.[143] In 1920 at the Second Congress of the Comintern, Lenin's formula for "temporary alliances with national bourgeoisie" was accepted. Because they fought local "feudalism" and foreign imperialism, they deserved support. By the end of the year, Lenin had decided that the Asian nationalist movement was not only helpful but necessary for expediting the overthrow of capitalism. Based on its understanding, Moscow placed Sun in this national bourgeoisie category, which made him a suitable leader for the Chinese nationalist revolution.[144]

Therefore, Moscow took the initiative to seek rapprochement with Sun. At the time, it was rather disappointed in the Beijing government, which by the early 1920s was still controlled by the Anfu warlords supported by Japan, followed by the Zhili warlords backed by the United States. Since its establishment, the Soviet government had started to look for allies to defend against the possible military intervention of the "imperialist powers". Therefore, the only option left for the Soviets was Sun Yat-sen's government in the south. As the executive chairman of the Comintern Far Eastern branch, V. Vilenskii-Sibiriakov argued, "If contacts with Sun were established, Russia could participate in Chinese political life as an active party."[145] Moreover, Sun's name was directly related to the Wuchang Uprising, the revolution that overthrew the Qing dynasty; in this sense, he was more of an icon that represented the revolutionary forces of the country. Although his government in Guangzhou was nothing compared to the one in Beijing, he was incredibly influential symbolically nationwide.[146]

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[143] Gorodetsky, "The Formulation of Soviet Foreign Policy: Ideology and *Realpolitik*," 31-2.
[144] Harold Z. Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-sen, Reluctant Revolutionary* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1980), 222-3.
[145] "Pis'mo C. D. Vilenskogo-Sibiriakova V. I. Leninu, 15 marta, 1922," [Letter from V. Vilenskii to Lenin, March 15, 1922] in *VKP (b) 1920-1925*, 72.
[146]尹、冯 [Yin and Feng], *孙中山与中国国民党* [Sun Yat-sen and the Chinese Nationalist Party], 465-470.

The first Soviet envoy sent to establish contacts with Sun was Adolf Ioffe. He was made plenipotentiary to Beijing in 1922 and was entrusted with negotiating the restoration of foreign relations with the Beijing government. After the negotiation came to a deadlock due to the disputed ownership of the CER and the Red Army in Mongolia, he started corresponding with Sun in the hope that Sun might support him. Chicherin spoke highly of Sun, and believed he was a revolutionary with whom Moscow could cooperate.[147] Naturally, as Peter Tang pointed out, it was the politics of pragmatism to deal with any authorities that might offer promise of serving Soviet interests, as Moscow had yet been unable to establish relations with the "legitimate" government in Beijing.[148]

Similarly, Sun's first impression of the revolutions in Russia was more positive than that of Beijing. In July 1917, he briefly expressed that he was amazed by the February Revolution of Russia, because "it transformed the most conservative and corrupt country into a new republic and a good neighbour of China."[149]. The first actual contact between Sun and Moscow was not initiated until later in 1918, when the new Soviet regime was confronted with its first big crisis, the Civil War, but Georgii Chicherin, who wrote the first letter to Sun, did not hear from him until August 1921. In the replying letter, Sun politely rejected the Soviet attempt to form a political relationship by playing the "geography" card. According to him, the geographical location of the Guangzhou government restricted the possible contacts with the Soviets, and the routes of access were blocked by Zhang Zuolin in Manchuria.[150]

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[147] "契切林致孙中山函，1918 年 8 月 1 日," [Letter from Chicherin to Sun Yat-sen, August 1, 1918] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 671.
[148] Tang, *Russian and Soviet Policy in Manchuria and Outer Mongolia, 1911-1931*, 231-2.
[149] "在广州黄埔欢迎会上的演说，1917 年 7 月 17 日," [Speech at the Welcoming Reception of Whampoa, July 17, 1917] in *SZSQJ* vol. 4, 114.
[150] "孙中山致俄罗斯苏维埃社会主义共和国外交部信，1921 年 8 月 28 日," [Letter from Sun Yat-sen to Russian People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, August 28, 1921] in *Comintern 1917-1925*, 51-3.

Sun was reluctant to cooperate with the Soviets for legitimate reasons. First, Moscow's refusal to cut off diplomatic relations with Beijing was an upsetting factor. In late 1921 when Moscow intended to establish the contacts, Sun had already had such concerns. Sun claimed that his government was completely legal as opposed to the one in Beijing, because it was run under the Provisional Constitution and the Parliament temporarily was being assembled in Guangzhou; therefore, Sun believed it was only legitimate if the Soviets intended to form commercial relations and personal contacts with his government. However, Moscow worried that simultaneous communication with both would affect the relationship with Beijing, the "symbol of national unification". Lenin directed that correspondence with both sides should be carried out, but that with Sun should remain under the table.[151] Especially starting in 1923, among other things, the negotiations concerning the CER had begun with Beijing, while Sun seemed to have far less control over the Railway; therefore, the Soviet leaders considered it more likely to get the most out of negotiations with Beijing.

Although in correspondence with Sun, Moscow appeared to be "the most sincere friend" of Sun, on formal occasions it claimed that it could only talk to the one internationally recognized government in Beijing.[152] The Soviet support of Sun was based on the hope that one day he would take over the Beiyang warlord government and establish a pro-Soviet one, but until that goal was achieved, Moscow found it hard to give up negotiating with Beijing about its immediate interests, namely the CER and Outer Mongolia. As was stated in a confidential letter written to introduce Maring from

[151] "Telegramma G. V. Chicherina A. K. Paikesu, 7 dekabria, 1921," [Telegram from Chicherin to Paikes, December 7, 1921] in *VKP (b)* 1920-1925, 66.
[152] "Iz telegrammy A. A. Ioffe G. V. Chicherinu, 7 & 8 noiabria, 1922," [Telegram from Ioffe to Chicherin, November 7 and 8, 1922] in *VKP (b)* 1920-1925, 137-40.

Moscow, "We believe that we will continue supporting the KMT and its revolutionary plans, but the Party has to understand that we cannot support it to the extent that our own interests are sacrificed."[153] Naturally, the Guangzhou government was extremely unhappy about Moscow's contacts with Beijing, since Sun himself had declared the Beijing government "illegitimate and illegal", and some KMT members even claimed the Treaty was "an act of not complete loyalty to Guangzhou".[154]

A second reason for Sun's uneasiness with the Soviet Union was its ambiguous attitude toward Japan, considering the fact that Japan and Russia had not been on very good terms since the late nineteenth century. Struggles for territories in Manchuria had begun in the 1860s, and the Russian Empire's defeat by Japan in 1905 worsened the Russo-Japanese relationship. Following the Japanese victory over Imperial Russia and the signing of the Treaty of Portsmouth in 1905, Russia lost the southern branch (Harbin to Dalian) of the CER to Japan, and its position in Manchuria was greatly weakened. Moreover, in 1918, Japanese troops invaded Siberia in support of Semenov and his White army, and remained there for almost four years. Interestingly, however, despite all the animosities, the Russians and the Japanese could still find themselves on the same negotiation table, mainly to discuss the division of Manchuria and the Far East. As early as 1907, the Russian Empire signed the first Russo-Japanese Agreements in secret, and along with the three subsequent secretive agreements, the two countries had divided Manchuria into their spheres of influence respectively.[155]

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[153] "达夫谦致斯内夫利特的信，1923 年 5 月 5 日," [Letter from Davtian to Sneevliet, May 5, 1923] in *MLYDYCGGHZ*, 172.
[154] "我与孙中山的两次会见" [Meeting Records between Voitinsky and Sun Yat-sen] in *Comintern 1917*-1925, 101-102.
[155] "俄罗斯苏维埃联邦社会主义共和国政府对中国人民和中国南北政府的宣言，1920 年 3 月 26 日," [Declaration from Russian Soviet Socialist Republic to the Chinese People, Northern and Southern Governments of China, received on March 26, 1920] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 57.

The possibility of a recovering Russo-Japanese relationship put Sun on high alert. In 1922 alone, he wrote several letters to Ioffe requesting information about the possibilities of a non-aggression pact. He asserted, "I am wondering, in order to gain Japanese forgiveness, or more specifically, to reach some kind of an agreement, does your government intend to sacrifice the interests of China again? Similar to the Japanese replacement of you in Southern Manchuria, does your government intend to transfer some of the CER to Japan?"[156] Although Moscow denied such a possibility, the offer had actually been made to Japan several years earlier. In 1918, in order to prevent the Japanese occupation of Siberia, Moscow had promised that it would transfer the CER and navigation rights on the Amur River to Japan, along with special privileges on the Kuril Islands.[157] The offers were turned down by Japan, but Moscow did not give up such a plan. In mid-1920, after the other Entente nations had withdrawn from Siberia, Moscow began to establish a mutually beneficial alliance with Japan. The evidence was Lenin and the head of the Far Eastern Republic Nikolai Matveiev's statements in February 1920 that, "On the condition that Soviet Russia fully recognize that Japan has special economic and trading privileges in the Far East, the Soviet-Japanese peaceful coexistence and mutual beneficial agreement is ratified."[158] This reflected the fact that a peaceful coexistence with the Japanese would be based on Moscow's recognition of Japan's existence in parts of Manchuria.

A third and crucial reason for Sun's unwillingness to work with Moscow was that Sun never fully accepted Soviet-style communism, nor did he intend to bring it to

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[156] "Telegramma A. A. Ioffe L. M. Karakhanu, 30 avgusta, 1922," [Telegram from Ioffe to Karakhan, August 30, 1922] in *VKP (b) 1920-1925*, 107.
[157] 崔丕 [Pi Cui], "日苏北京条约中的几个问题," [Problems in the Research of Soviet-Japanese Treaty of Beijing] in *史学集刊* [Collected Work of History] No. 4 (1993): 45.
[158] 崔 [Cui], "日苏北京条约中的几个问题," [Problems in the Research of Soviet-Japanese Treaty of Beijing], 45.

China.[159] The topic had come up as early as 1921, during the preparatory stage of the alliance. Especially when the Comintern suggested the formation of a United Front with the Chinese Communist Party (the CCP) in 1923, Sun appeared to be hostile toward the Party. In 1923, Moscow sent Mikhail Borodin as an advisor to Sun's Guangzhou government to help him with the re-organization of the party. As an important step toward further cooperation with Sun, Moscow suggested that a united front be formed with the newly-founded CCP to end warlordism in China. However, the two parties had disputes over the method of national unification from the very beginning. Sun insisted that only through the overthrow of the Beiyang government could China be unified, and the source of troops and financial support should come from other local warlords and foreign powers; on the contrary, the CCP was inclined toward the Soviet model, that more propaganda work among the urban workers and poor peasants in the countryside should be done to build a popular basis for an uprising when the current government was in deep crisis.[160]

During the negotiations with Ioffe in early 1923, Sun had already made it clear that Bolshevik propaganda in China was prohibited; he claimed, "The communist organization and the Soviet system cannot be applied to China, because China does not have the right conditions for the Soviet system. The most crucial goal now is to achieve national independence and unification …"[161] Because of Sun's political philosophy, the Three People's Principles, it was hard for him to turn to Marxism, which was entirely different from what he had been fighting for all his life. Despite admiration for Soviet

[159] S. A. 达林 [Sergei A. Dalin], *中国回忆录 1921-1927* [Chinese Memoirs 1921-1927], translated by Junchu Hou et al. (Beijing: Chinese Social Sciences Press, 1981), 104.
[160] Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, 308-9.
[161] "孙文越飞联合宣言，1923 年 1 月 26 日," [Sun-Ioffe Joint Declaration, January 26, 1923] in *Comintern 1917-1925*, 409.

aims, he preferred his own methods for China based on his political principles – citizens' rights of suffrage, recall, initiative and referendum, which were fundamentally different with the Communist dictatorship of the proletariat.[162]

Formation of the Soviet-Sun Alliance

Despite all the uneasiness and suspicion, the establishment of the Soviet-Sun alliance was based on mutual benefit. To win him over, Moscow claimed to Sun that it had the same goal, the elimination of "foreign imperialists". The Soviet leaders saw the opportunity to influence him militarily and financially, and eventually pull him into the Soviet camp. Moscow was well aware that the fatal disadvantage of Sun's Guangzhou government was the lack of an independent army and financial support; the existing so-called army consisted of mercenaries, peasants and gangsters, and they shared nothing with the KMT's political ideals and goals.[163] By attempting to provide support to Sun, Moscow hoped to make itself the saviour on whom the future leader of China depended. In regard to the Soviet assistance, Sun had a long wish list. After years of relying on other warlords' forces, Sun had finally realized that he needed an army of his own. Therefore, he required that Soviet Russia dispatch one division to occupy Eastern Turkestan (modern-day Xinjiang Province) where there were only 4,000 ill-equipped Chinese soldiers. Sun claimed that the province was rich in all kinds of mineral resources, and in order to eventually achieve his goal, he planned to set up mining companies and arsenals to arm his future soldiers. Therefore, he needed Soviet military advisors, weaponry,

[162] Audrey Wells, *The Political Thought of Sun Yat-sen: Development and Impact* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001), 226.
[163] 达林 [Dalin], *中国回忆录 1921-1927* [Chinese Memoirs 1921-1927], 110.

vehicles and planes to materialize his plans.[164] However, like his other grand plans, this one would completely depend on Soviet support and needed to be built from scratch.

Obviously, these plans were not free of charge. At this time, one of Moscow's intentions was to reclaim the Railway, which, according to Trotsky, was worth 800 million rubles, because "Russia also suffers poverty and is hardly able to sponsor the neighbouring colonies and semi-colonies any more."[165] The eventual decision of the Politburo was as follows, according to the letter Ioffe wrote to Sun: "Russia would spare no effort in contributing to China's national unification and elimination of world imperialism…For obvious reasons, the 'special benefits' Russia owned on the CER and its affiliated areas will be settled in favour of Russia in the upcoming Sino-Soviet negotiation, and I do not doubt that…"[166] According to Moscow's understanding, Sun was a national figure who had "little chance of achieving power on his own, but had sufficient public appeal to warrant the attention of the power holders."[167] This exposed Moscow's intentions well enough, that the collaboration with Sun was to a large extent an additional means to take back the Railway, which was fundamental to maintaining the balance of power with Japan in Manchuria.

The mark of the alliance's formation was the signing of the Sun-Ioffe Declaration on January 26, 1923 in Shanghai. It was once again stated in the Manifesto that all the treaties signed with China during the imperialist period were abolished, including the ones concerning the CER, which was consistent with the content of the Second Karakhan

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[164] "Zapis' G. Maringa besedy A. I. Gekkera s Sun' Iatsenom, 26 sentiabria," [Maring's Record of the Meeting between Sun Yat-sen and Gekker, September 26, 1922] and "Iz telegrammy A. A. Ioffe G. V. Chicherinu, 7 & 8 noiabria, 1922," [Telegram from Ioffe to Chicherin, November 7 and 8, 1922] in *VKP (b) 1920-1925*, 126-7, 137-139.
[165] "Pis'mo L. D. Trotskogo A. A. Ioffe, 20 Ianvaria, 1923," [Letter from Trotsky to Ioffe, January 20, 1923] in *VKP (b) 1920-1925*, 183-185.
[166] The obvious reasons refer to the Japanese interests in Manchuria. See "Pis'mo A. A. Ioffe Sun' Iatseny, 15 sentiabria, 1922," [Letter from Ioffe to Sun Yat-sen, September 15, 1922] in *VKP (b) 1920-1925*, 118-9.
[167] Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-sen, Reluctant Revolutionary*, 228.

Manifesto in September 1920. In the Declaration, Sun recognized the legitimacy of the Soviet government, more than one year earlier than the Beiyang government. Moreover, Sun agreed that a separate treaty needed to be drafted to solve the Railway issue, and in fact temporarily approved the Soviet presence in the Railway region. In the Declaration, Sun recognized the *status quo* in Mongolia, and the fact that it was necessary for the Red Army to station itself there temporarily to prevent possible upheavals of the Whites or the Japanese. In return, Sun had two conditions. First, there would be no conversion of China to communism; second, Soviet Russia needed to repeat the renunciation of all the privileges imposed during the tsarist era.[168] The main clauses of the Sun-Ioffe Declaration include,

> …The Russian government is prepared and willing to conduct negotiations with China based upon the renunciation of all the Sino-Russian treaties concluded during the tsarist period, including the agreement on the Chinese Eastern Railway.
>
> … Dr. Sun Yat-sen believes that for the time being the *status quo* regarding the management of the Chinese Eastern Railway should be maintained.
>
> …Dr. Sun concedes that from the point of view of Chinese interest as well as that of necessity, Russian troops should not withdraw from Outer Mongolia immediately, since the present government at Beijing would be unable to prevent the intrigues and hostile actions of the Whites against the Soviet Union once these were withdrawn. Such a withdrawal would create a situation much more serious than that

[168] Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, 310-1.

existing today…[169]

This was roughly the same time the Soviet representatives were negotiating with C.T. Wang in Beijing over control of the Railway, and the agreements reached with Sun eased the tension a lot for Moscow.

Compared to the Soviet-Beijing relationship, the Soviet-Sun collaboration was more of an open exchange, with Moscow needing Sun to take power and secure its back door in the Far East and Sun needing Moscow's support to take over control from various warlords and eventually unify China. Moreover, the Declaration was a milestone in Sun's career, because this was the first time a foreign power acknowledged his claim to speak for China and promised support.[170] Compromises were made based on Sun's recognition of the *status quo* on the CER and in Outer Mongolia, as well as his promises to accept the Soviet Union's advice and later to cooperate with the CCP in 1924. Also, the Declaration stated that specific matters should be further confirmed with Zhang Zuolin, which implied that Sun needed to convince Zhang to agree to a Sino-Soviet joint administration of the Railway through his personal influence over Zhang.

Sun's temporary "giving up" on the CER and Mongolia was a reflection of his desperate need for external assistance, and he made these concessions in exchange for Soviet support. In mid-1922, he was betrayed by the Guangdong warlord Chen Jiongming, on whom he had relied since 1917. After the failure of the Constitutional Protection Movement in 1922, the Guangzhou government was on the verge of collapse,

[169] Translation obtained from https://www2.stetson.edu/secure/history/hy308C01/sunIoffe.html. Original document see "孙文越飞联合宣言，1923 年 1 月 26 日," [Sun-Ioffe Joint Declaration, January 26, 1923] in *Comintern 1917-1925*, 409.
[170] Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-sen, Reluctant Revolutionary*, 234.

and Sun was forced to resign. Chen led his troops to attack Sun's residence as well as his office and forced Sun to escape on a battleship to Shanghai.[171] Worse still, Sun's plan of seeking American support fell through. During his visit to Guangzhou, the Comintern representative Sergei Dalin noticed that Sun had been negotiating with the United States for some time for its support.[172] Sun had had high hopes for these negotiations because he had spent a long time in his early years in the United States and had many personal connections there. Unlike Moscow, Sun would not use the term "imperialist" to refer to the Americans. However, he eventually discovered that the United States favoured General Wu Peifu in Beijing over him and had little intention to assist him. This rejection partly persuaded Sun to side with Moscow, according to John Fitzgerald.[173] With all the misfortunes, mid-1922 became one of the darkest moments of Sun's life, and he lost everything he had previously been working on for years. The Soviet offer was just in time to provide help to Sun, and he took this last straw because he was indeed out of options.[174] At this point, in Bergère's words, since Sun's objective was not simply to supply the needs of a diplomatic and military re-conquest of Beijing, but to light a fire whose flames would eventually engulf the whole country, it was only with the Soviet aid that it would be possible.[175]

Conclusion

The Soviet-Sun relationship, as the second part of the Soviet "parallel diplomacy",

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[171] Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-sen, Reluctant Revolutionary*, 228-9.
[172] 达林 [Dalin], *中国回忆录 1921-1927* [Chinese Memoirs 1921-1927], 107-8
[173] John Fitzgerald, *Awakening China: Politics, Culture, and Class in the Nationalist Revolution* (Stanford: University of Stanford Press, 1996), 168.
[174] 中国社会科学院 [Chinese Academy of Social Sciences] comp., *马林在中国的有关资料* [Materials on Maring in China] (Beijing: The People's Press, 1984), 28.
[175] Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, 293-4.

experienced some difficulties, but the collaboration was eventually formed. Moscow regarded Sun as influential symbolically; therefore, establishing contacts with Sun would be perfectly consistent with its internationalist propaganda and would legitimize Soviet restore of the CER ownership. In exchange, Sun was expected to acquiesce to Moscow's reclamation of the CER and the occupation of Outer Mongolia. With the publication of the Sun-Ioffe Declaration in 1923, Soviet Russia basically achieved this goal. Compared to that of Beijing, Sun's CER policy was somewhat passive and compromising, mainly because he was in urgent need of external military support. His purpose in eventually cooperating with Moscow was to form a mutually-beneficial alliance

Chapter 4

Moscow and the Manchurian Warlord Zhang Zuolin

No matter how much progress Moscow made negotiating with Beijing or Guangzhou, the specific management of the CER had to go through Fengtian warlord Zhang Zuolin, because Manchuria was mainly Zhang's sphere. Although Fengtian did not declare independence from the Beijing government until 1922, and certainly did not share the same status as Beijing, Zhang's influence in Manchuria could not be underestimated. The signing of the Sun-Ioffe Declaration provided theoretical legitimacy for reclaiming the CER, but Moscow found it necessary to reconfirm it with Zhang Zuolin, the *de facto* ruler of Manchuria, and gain some practical leverage. Therefore, this Soviet-Fengtian communication was carried on as the third part of Moscow's "parallel diplomacy" on top of its contacts with Beijing and Guangzhou.

Moscow's Contacts with Zhang

Of all the local warlords in China in the late 1910s and early 1920s, Zhang in Fengtian, Manchuria was a very influential one. Manchuria shared a long border with Russia, which had been weakened militarily after the October Revolution, and as has been extensively discussed above, this region was vulnerable to all kinds of military forces. From 1917 to 1923 the new communist government in Moscow was not clear about who was in charge of operating the Railway. This was how Zhang became deeply intertwined in the Soviet interest over the CER, since Manchuria was basically Zhang's semi-independent domain and the Beijing government's authority was unable to fully

extend to the region. Although Zhang did not claim independence and Manchuria officially remained part of the Republic of China, he did have a lot of leverage over the region, and thus the Railway. Being well aware of Zhang's position, Moscow intended to initiate negotiations with Beijing and Zhang simultaneously to maximize its gain, a course that threatened the legitimacy of Beijing.[176] Despite the fact that initially he made little effort to assert his influence over the Railway, and was preoccupied with ambitions toward the central plains of China, Zhang soon realized the importance of the Railway, but the reason for this change of heart was unclear.[177]

Up until 1922, not surprisingly, there was an obvious mutual distrust between Zhang and Moscow. Zhang believed the Red activities along the Manchurian border had to be kept under close surveillance. Although he claimed neutrality in the White-Red conflicts in the Far East, he was not fond of the Whites either. Initially in 1918 he attempted to set up contacts with Semenov, intending to jointly defeat the Reds, but he soon cut off all relations with the White leader when he found out that Semenov was sponsored by the Japanese and planned to take over Manchuria and Mongolia. Zhang suppressed Semenov's unsuccessful attempts to recruit bandits in Heilongjiang and declared that Semenov should be arrested.[178]

For their part, the Soviets suspected Zhang of affiliating with Japan. In late 1922, the Civil War was approaching its end, and the defeated White army retreated into Northern Manchuria. In order "not to see Manchuria turning into another Mongolia", the Soviet Union decided to deploy its army along the CER to clear the remaining White troops from the region. In the end the mobilization did not come to pass, but this decision

[176] 胡 [Hu] ed., *奉系对外关系* [Fengtian Cliques' External Relations], 174-5.
[177] Gavan McCormack, *Chang Tso-lin in Northeast China* (M.E. Sharpe: New York, 1977), 115-6.
[178] 胡 [Hu] ed., *奉系对外关系* [Fengtian Cliques' External Relations], 134-6.

reflected Moscow's deep fear of Zhang and his connections with the Japanese.[179]

Interestingly, despite the fear that Zhang might be a Japanese puppet, the Soviets never stopped attempting to establish separate agreements with him. The first Soviet attempt to establish contact occurred in late 1921, and it was the representative from the Far Eastern Republic Ignatius Yourin who made the first approach. Yourin's first trip was mostly fruitless, as his plan suggesting the dismissal of all the White officials who still participated in the administrative management was rejected by Zhang. However, Yourin's visit initiated the later negotiations between the two.

After Zhang declared autonomy from Beijing in 1922, the Comintern sent Maring in February 1923 to discuss separately with Zhang the settlement for the Railway. On this trip, Maring brought with him new solutions offered by Moscow, which suggested that the Soviet-to-Chinese ratio on the CER administrative commission be seven to three, and the general inspector be a Soviet.[180] This proposal implied obvious Soviet dominance, and incurred objections from Zhang Zuolin. In regard to the Commission, Zhang only agreed on the condition that five of the ten representatives be Chinese, fearing that to accept such a Soviet-dominant proposal would incur nationwide opposition. Maring also presented Zhang with the Soviet conditions, including appointing Soviets to participate in the administrative management of the Railway, and driving the remaining White forces out of the region. According to Maring, Zhang showed a very reluctant attitude toward the Soviet appeal, and although he expressed his willingness to further negotiate with the Soviets, he was not able to send a representative to Moscow directly. Regarding the CER, he asserted that the complexity of the region would be the biggest obstacle and refused to

[179] McCormack, *Chang Tso-lin in Northeast China,* 13.
[180] "孙中山致越飞的信，1922 年 8 月 27 日", [Letter from Sun Yat-sen to Ioffe, August 27, 1922] in *Comintern 1917-1925*, 392.

come up with a solution immediately.[181]

Six months later, Karakhan himself paid a visit to Zhang, attempting to discuss further details concerning the CER, but the negotiations went rather poorly. Zhang, like the Beijing government, was initially attracted by the Soviet government's proposed terms, but was soon disappointed both by the Soviet occupation of Outer Mongolia in order to clear the region of Ungern-Sternberg's White troops and by Moscow's eventual support for the independence of Mongolia.[182] Since Manchuria and Mongolia were bordering regions, Soviet actions in Mongolia severely threatened the border security of Zhang's Manchuria.

Under these circumstances, Moscow had no option but to approach Zhang through Sun and the existing Sun-Zhang alliance. The collaboration between Sun and Zhang provided a portal for Moscow to work out another plan to get the most out of the CER. Although initially a Sun-Zhang alliance made Moscow uneasy because it suspected that Zhang was a puppet handled by the Japanese, as soon as it realized in 1923 that one way to get some real benefits from the CER was through Sun's personal relationship with Zhang, the *de facto* ruler of Manchuria, it acquiesced to the alliance. Moscow was hoping Sun's "positive influence" would get Zhang to change his attitude toward the Soviet Union.[183]

Sun-Zhang Alliance and Fengtian-Soviet Treaty

Sun's alliance with the Manchurian warlord Zhang Zuolin did not arise out of the

[181] "马林致加拉罕和越飞的信，1923 年 2 月 15 日," [Letter from Maring to Karakhan and Ioffe, February 15, 1923] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 402-3.
[182] 胡 [Hu] ed., *奉系对外关系* [Fengtian Cliques' External Relations], 175-182.
[183] Wilbur, *Sun Yat-sen, Frustrated Patriot*, 138-9, 145-6.

blue. Although Sun was a very active revolutionary, before cooperating with the Soviets he had no troops of his own. Therefore, in order to unify China he had to make alliances with some warlords against the others. Under these circumstances, he chose to cooperate with Zhang against the Zhili clique in Beijing, which he considered the biggest enemy. Initially, Moscow was strongly against such an alliance because Zhang was widely believed to be a puppet of Japan. In fact, however, Zhang was by no means simply a puppet in the service of Japanese interests. About this Gavan McCormack stated, "The strength of anti-Japanese and nationalist sentiment within the Fengtian clique was considerable," and Zhang was clearly affected by it.[184] Throughout his time, he was secretly in disputes with Japan in many major areas, including the construction of new railways and ports, as well as military suppression of Chinese peaceful protests. Although threatened by the existence of the Japanese troops in Manchuria, he had to contain his discontent with Japan. Still, he attempted to realize economic independence from Japan by building several railway branches in Manchuria.[185]

Preparation work for such an alliance started as early as 1919, when the Anfu clique intended to form a triple alliance with Sun and Zhang against the Zhili clique. The Anfu leader Duan Qirui sent his envoy, the chief of general staff Xu Shuzheng, to travel both directions to visit the other two leaders. Interestingly, common interest pulled the former enemies together; in addition, Zhang Zuolin's personal admiration of Sun secured the alliance. In 1921, Sun and Zhang sent envoys to each other and discussed further the unification of China. Around this time the Soviet side was still extremely suspicious of

[184] McCormack, *Chang Tso-lin in Northeast China*, 13.
[185] 张祥斌 [Xiangbin Zhang], *张作霖传* [A Biography of Zhang Zuolin] (Changchun: Jilin University Press, 2010), 204-5.

Zhang, and Sun acted as a mediator between the two.[186] In one of Sun's letters to Ioffe, he explained, "Zhang Zuolin is Chinese, and it is hard to imagine that he hopes to see a foreign country enslave his own or work toward such an outcome… I do not see him as a Japanese puppet. He does not rely on anyone but himself… Last year the representative sent to me claimed on his behalf that he would stand up to the Japanese when necessary…"[187]

The Soviet Union was not yet convinced, especially when the former premier Duan Qirui from the Japanese-sponsored Anfu clique was involved. A. Khodorov, an official from the Soviet Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, lashed out at the proposed entente as an "unholy alliance" and charged Sun with "using the masses as cannon fodder", mainly because this way Japan would gain admission into the stronghold of China.[188] In fact, what Moscow really wanted was a Sun-Wu alliance, which was in its best interests because of the Zhili warlord Wu Peifu's anti-Japanese position. When Ioffe was first sent to China, his mission was to contact General Wu in Beijing, in the hope that as "the military leader of China", he and Sun, "the spiritual leader of China" could form a power-sharing coalition government. However, Wu turned the proposal down by claiming he was "not capable of achieving the goal because of some internal and external disturbances."[189] Moreover, Wu showed an uncompromising position on the two things that Moscow cared about the most; he hoped the Soviet Union could return the CER to China, and he was strongly against Mongolian independence, claiming that he would not

[186] David Bonavia, *China's Warlords* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1995), 72-3.
[187] "Pismo Sun' Iat-sena A. A. Ioffe, 27 avgusta, 1922," [Letter from Sun Yat-sen to Ioffe, August, 27, 1922] in *VKP (b) 1920-1925*, 104-6.
[188] Whiting, *Soviet Policies in China, 1917-1924*, 117.
[189] "Pis'mo Vu Peifu k A. A. Ioffe, 12 oktiabria, 1922," [Letter from Wu Peifu to Ioffe, October 12, 1922] in *VKP (b) 1920-1925*, 130.

recognize any treaties signed between the "Mongolian government" and Soviet Russia.[190] Having failed to "Sovietize" Wu, Moscow was forced to turn to its Plan B.

Moscow's eventual acceptance of the Sun-Zhang alliance resulted also from its failure to achieve anything from Zhang directly. Moscow adopted the plan to manipulate Sun's personal charisma as the symbolic leader of the Chinese revolution and Zhang's admiration for him. Moscow first discovered Sun's influence on Zhang through Maring's trip to Fengtian in February 1923. During the trip, he noticed that Zhang would often mention his close relationship with Sun Yat-sen, and reported to Moscow that, "…Through Sun, a lot of things could be achieved from Zhang." Besides, he received Zhang's warm welcome because of the recommendation letter from Sun that he carried.[191]

Moreover, the negotiations with Beijing had also been going on for too long and no agreement had been reached on any fronts, and the Politburo seemed to hope for a fast solution, reflected by Ioffe's letter to Maring, "We have already offered the Chinese people too much and this (the Railway) we CANNOT give… Right now Sun has to assist me with the Railway to avoid possible troubles."[192] Moscow even went further in agreeing to support Zhang when he intended to march to Beijing, but in exchange, it required that Sun make Zhang accept the Soviet arrangements of the Railway, and reach an agreement regarding it immediately.[193]

Apart from the attempts by Maring and Karakhan to form an alliance with Zhang,

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[190] "Pis'mo Vu Peifu k A. A. Ioffe, 20 noiabria, 1920," [Letter from Wu Peifu to Ioffe, November 20, 1922] in *VKP (b) 1920-1925*, 147-8.
[191] "马林致加拉罕和越飞的信，1923 年 2 月 15 日," [Letter from Maring to Karakhan and Ioffe, February 15, 1923] in Comintern 1919-1925, 410-3.
[192] "越飞致斯内夫利特的电报，1923 年 5 月 20 日," [Telegram from Ioffe to Sneevliet, May 20, 1923] in *MLYDYCGGHZ*, 175.
[193] "越飞致斯内夫利特的电报，1923 年 5 月 11 日," [Telegram from Ioffe to Sneevliet, May 11, 1923] in *MLYDYCGGHZ*, 173-4.

the desire to restore control over the CER drew Soviet Russia closer to the Manchurian warlord. Moreover, Moscow had gradually realized that Zhang was not that much of a Japanese puppet, since over the years, he had been passively resisting the Japanese by ignoring their demands and strengthening his own power base.[194] Therefore, in order to secure its gains on the Railway, Moscow managed to convince Zhang, largely through Sun, that Moscow was a better partner than Japan. Also, Moscow promised Zhang privileges and agreed to act as a counter-balance against Japan. Therefore, in August 1923, Zhang's autonomous government declared that it recognized the Soviet communist regime, and agreed to open up negotiation with Moscow.

Eventually, the two sides signed the Fengtian-Soviet Treaty in September 1924. The treaty mainly regulated the navigation rights on the Amur River and the CER; in particular, it shortened the return date of the CER to sixty years, and it returned navigation rights on the downstream portion of the Amur River to China.[195] In addition, a secret protocol stated, "In carrying out the principle of equal representation the normal course of life and activities of the Railway shall in no case be interrupted or injured, that is to say, the employment of people of both nationalities shall be based on experience, personal qualifications and fitness of the applicants."[196] With the signing of this Treaty, the Soviet government was in a strong position to put pressure on Beijing, since it represented the transfer of control of the CER to Zhang Zuolin.[197] Although the Treaty was almost identical to the one signed with Beijing, the inclusion of the secret protocol

[194] For instance, most of the privileges in Manchuria that Japan gained through the Twenty-one Demands in 1915 never came true because of Zhang's resistance, and he turned down Japan's request to build railways in Southern Manchuria several times in the early 1920s. See *JLWSZL*, 184-5.
[195] "中华民国东三省自治省政府与苏维亚社会联邦政府之协定，1924 年 9 月 20 日," [Treaty between the Autonomous Government of the Three Eastern Provinces of the Republic of China and the Government of Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, September 20, 1924] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 317-22.
[196] Elleman, *Diplomacy and Deception: The Secret History of Sino-Soviet Diplomatic Relations, 1917-1927*, 130.
[197] Elleman, "Sino-Soviet Tensions and the Soviet Administrative Control over the Chinese Eastern Railway, 1917-1925", in *Manchurian Railways and the Opening of China*, 71-2.

actually meant that the Soviet Union's agreement with Zhang superseded the treaty with Beijing and so gave Zhang Zuolin the power to choose which Chinese officials would represent China in the joint commission that ran the railway.[198] Interestingly, Moscow's initial fear that Sun's alliance with Zhang might increase Japanese ambition in Manchuria as well as the Russia-controlled Railway vanished, and not long after, Moscow began to utilize Sun's personal relationship with Zhang and gladly collaborated with the Manchurian warlord to secure its position in the Far East.

Not surprisingly, the Beijing government was outraged when it was informed of this treaty, for it in practice meant that the Soviet government had set the Chinese central government aside and reached an agreement concerning national sovereignty with a local warlord. Beijing believed this revealed the Soviet ambition to regain control over the CER through manipulating Zhang, and Beijing claimed that the Soviet-Fengtian Treaty was invalid without the recognition of Beijing, but the Soviet Union ignored Beijing's objections.[199]

In fall 1924, fighting broke out again in Central China and Zhang saw an opportunity to capture North China and Beijing and become head of the Central Government. While most other warlord armies fought along the Yangtze River, Zhang attacked North China. In a surprise move a Zhili commander, Feng Yuxiang, toppled President Cao Kun and took control of Beijing and shared power with Zhang. In 1925 with Zhang in control of Beijing, the Soviet-Fengtian Treaty was recognized as an

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[198] Elleman, "Sino-Soviet Tensions and the Soviet Administrative Control over the Chinese Eastern Railway, 1917-1925," 72.

[199] "外交部发全权公使衔驻俄外交代表李家鳌电，1924 年 9 月 24 日," [Telegram from Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Diplomatic Representative to Russia, Li Jia'ao, September 24, 1924] and "外交部发全权公使衔驻俄外交代表李家鳌电，1924 年 9 月 25 日," [Telegram from Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Diplomatic Representative to Russia, Li Jia'ao, September 25, 1924] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 322-3.

attachment to the Sino-Soviet Treaty.[200]

However, the Fengtian-Soviet relationship broke down soon after that. After the Treaty was reached, actual control remained in Soviet hands. For example, although according to the treaty the Railway staff was supposed to be half Chinese and half Soviet, the actual statistics in 1925 showed that in reality, Soviet staff made up 67 percent and Chinese only 33 percent, and most of the Chinese were either translators or secretaries, leaving the vital and confidential positions to the Soviets.[201] As a result, from early 1925 on, Zhang started to take a more positive interest in the CER, as the feud with Wu Peifu had been resolved. He became increasingly anti-Soviet when he discovered that his new rival, General Feng Yuxiang, was the new recipient of Soviet military aid.[202] He closed down the Soviet administrative office in Fengtian and drove out all the Soviet envoys including Karakhan, and refused any further contact until his death in 1928.

The Sun-Zhang alliance also did not last long, since it was only based on their mutual goal, the elimination of the Zhili clique, which had already met its demise in 1924. Sun's health condition continued to worsen in early 1925 until he passed away in March; the alliance gradually collapsed after that.

Conclusion

Apart from political legitimacy, Moscow was aware that it needed to supervise the railway administration through establishing contacts with the *de facto* ruler of Manchuria,

[200] "外交部照会苏联驻华大使加拉罕," [Diplomatic Note from Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Soviet Ambassador to China, Karakhan, March 18, 1925] in *ZSGJGXSZLHB 1917-1924*, 327.
[201] 胡 [Hu] ed., *奉系对外关系* [Fengtian Cliques' External Relations], 178-81.
[202] McCormack, *Chang Tso-lin in Northeast China*, 217.

Zhang Zuolin. As the third, and most practical component of Moscow's "parallel diplomacy", the Soviet-Fengtian cooperation was based on the mutual fear of future Japanese expansion in northern Manchuria and was confirmed by the reaching of the Fengtian-Soviet Treaty in 1924. However, crises arose due to Zhang's increasing anti-Soviet tendency and Moscow's lack of commitment to cooperation on an equal basis.

Conclusion

1917 to 1925 was one of the most tangled periods in the history of the Republic of China and that of Soviet Russia. The October Revolution and the Russian Civil War that ensued seriously disrupted the normal order in Russia; moreover, the "ministerial leapfrogging" in Beijing and the co-existing Guangzhou and Fengtian authorities further complicated the situation. However, these complexities also make the analysis of the diplomatic mentalities and adjustments in foreign policies of the Soviet and Chinese authorities all the more fascinating. This thesis has been an attempt to analyze Soviet Russia's foreign policy in regard to the disputed property, the Chinese Eastern Railway, and China's corresponding reactions during this time. In response to the research questions in the introduction about what Moscow's intentions were in communicating with these authorities and how the approaches of Beijing, Guangzhou and Fengtian to establishing relations with Moscow differed, the thesis has shown that through its "parallel diplomacy", Moscow intended to acquire political legitimacy, justification of ideology, and practical leverage from Beijing, Guangdong and Fengtian respectively. In terms of the standings of the three Chinese authorities with respect to the Chinese Eastern Railway, the Beijing government took a step forward compared to its Manchu predecessors, and was capable of leveraging against Soviet Russia. The results were a temporary return of the CER ownership during the Russian Civil War and the establishment of formal diplomatic relations with it in 1924. Comparatively, Sun Yat-sen's Soviet policy was relatively receptive and passive, demonstrated by his recognition of the Soviet military presence in Outer Mongolia and Soviet dominance of the CER.

Zhang Zuolin as a local warlord had great influence over the Railway, which was located in his sphere of influence, and he sought to consolidate his control in Manchuria through his interactions with Moscow. This horizontal comparison is the major contribution of this thesis, which is different from the conventional chronological analysis of Soviet Russia's CER policies. It more clearly demonstrates the balance of the roles of propaganda and national interests in Soviet diplomatic policy-making, and Chinese politicians' rationale in response.

Specifically, what Moscow wanted from each of the three authorities was clear. The geographical locations of the three determined that the Beijing and Fengtian regimes would be more concerned about the CER, since they were in direct contact with the Russians in Manchuria. The region was so strategically important that Manchuria had attracted the Russian Empire's attention ever since its defeat in the Crimean War in the 1860s. The construction of the Railway only developed the region's potential of becoming a strategic base. It was axiomatic that Soviet Russia intended to restore its property once it gained an upper hand in the Siberian battlefield of the Civil War. Thus, in order to resolve the CER dispute, Moscow would most definitely come into contact with Beijing, the only internationally-recognized government of the Republic of China, to seek political legitimacy. Almost simultaneously, Beijing's desire to reclaim sovereignty in Manchuria, including the ownership of the CER, became stronger, along with the yearning for international recognition as a strong power. Therefore, Beijing started to plan seriously to fight this diplomatic campaign as one of its initial steps. Taking advantage of the Siberian Intervention, Beijing was actually in control of the Railway for a few years while Soviet Russia was engaged in struggling with the Entente powers. Even

during the negotiations with the Soviet plenipotentiary Karakhan, Beijing attempted to hold its position, before realizing that the Soviet Union had stationed its army along the Mongolian borders and that it was unable to challenge.

However, Moscow was well aware that the fulfillment of the restoration of the Railway ownership also relied on Zhang Zuolin. Zhang, who established autonomy in Manchuria in 1922, had been planning to march on Beijing for several years. Having been at odds with the existing Japanese forces in the region, he hoped Soviet participation would balance the Japanese influence. The major difference with Beijing was that Zhang had to deal with Japan simultaneously, so his attitude was much more ambiguous and sophisticated.

By contrast, the Sun Yat-sen government, which was located thousands of kilometres from Manchuria, was not directly involved in the struggle over the ownership of the CER. Therefore, the Soviet-Guangzhou alliance was not really about the actual handling of the CER matters but to serve Moscow's propaganda purposes. Although in the early 1920s, Sun's sphere of influence barely extended beyond Guangdong Province, he was the symbolic leader of the Chinese revolution and the Chinese internationalist campaign. This alliance was mutually beneficial, because Moscow's support to Sun fulfilled its internationalist mission it had claimed; at the same time, Sun was happy to receive Soviet aid in order to launch his Northern Expedition. In general, there was no direct geo-strategic conflict involved in Sun's contact with the Soviet Union, which partly explained his moderate attitude throughout the negotiation compared to Beijing.

On the Chinese part, the political leaders' responses to Moscow could also be explained. Sun Yat-sen's passivity in dealing with Moscow was mainly because Soviet

Russia was the only reliable power willing to offer military support to Sun at the time. After he was betrayed by the Guangdong warlord Chen Jiongming, he had to discard his long-held policy of "relying on one warlord against another" and start to build a military force of his own. He made it out of Guangzhou alive, leaving behind almost everything he had built over the years, and it was hardly possible for him to recruit an army from scratch again. Although it was not a coincidence that Soviet Russia showed up at this point and promised to offer timely help, Sun eventually decided to take the chance in order to accomplish his lifetime goals, the re-conquest of Northern China and national unification under the KMT banner. He was well aware that these Soviet weapons, advisors and money were not offered for free, but it seemed to be his only option since he did not hold the initiative in this negotiation. Therefore, it made some sense for him to be receptive for the conditions raised by Moscow, mainly concerning the CER and Outer Mongolia. However, he passed away before any of the plans came to pass and left a complicated legacy to his successors.

Beijing was able to hold a firm attitude against Moscow partly because it barely require anything from Moscow. Although it had not yet earned respect like the other powers, it was the only internationally-recognized government in China, and was eligible to participate in global affairs. Despite the frequent changes in government heads, it managed to pull itself together and have a running administrative political system to rule the country. Unlike Sun Yat-sen, it had an independent standing army to guard its own sphere of influence. Moreover, the anti-Russian attitudes of several Beiyang presidents made it even less likely for Beijing to make territorial concessions to Moscow in exchange for benefits. Similarly, Zhang's military power and urban construction did not

rely on Moscow, and it was obvious that he did not trust the Soviets. However, with the animosity toward Japan arising mainly from the Japanese demand for the full implementation of various treaties and agreements, Zhang was happy to see the participation of the Soviets in the Far East.[203]

Despite all the efforts, the results of the three's interactions with Soviet Russia failed to achieve their original intentions; in other words, the Soviet Railway diplomacy was largely effective. Beijing redeployed its guards along the Railway and advanced into Siberia only to see Moscow reclaim the CER through the *Sino-Soviet Basic Entente For Resolving the Unsettled Problems*. The CER remained mainly under Soviet control until Moscow sold it to Japan in 1935, but again came under the joint control of the USSR and China in 1945. Outer Mongolia remained separated from China and eventually declared its independence. Although a formal diplomatic relationship was established with the Soviet Union, the Beijing government was eventually not able to own the CER or to reclaim the territorial losses during the previous decades. Similarly, Sun Yat-sen's collaboration with Moscow did not help achieve his goals of national unification, at least not in his lifetime. The country was still divided and he did not live to see its eventual unification in 1928, under his protégé Chiang Kai-shek. The alliance with Moscow was violently torn apart by Chiang only two years after Sun's death. Zhang Zuolin's collaboration with Moscow was no better. Not only did he fail to obtain the ownership of the CER, he was also unable to rid Manchuria of Japanese influence; subsequently he himself was murdered by the Japanese in 1928. In fact, clashes between the Chinese authorities and the Soviet Union over the CER continued even after the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949.

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[203] McCormack, *Chang Tso-lin in Northeast China*, 125.

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Appendix 1

List of Main Historical Characters

Name	Position	Years Active
YUAN, Shikai (袁世凯)	President of the Republic of China	1912 - June 1916
DUAN, Qirui (段祺瑞)	Premier and President of the Republic of China, leading figure of the Anfu Clique	Various times from 1916 to December 1926
WU, Peifu (吴佩孚)	Leading figure of the Zhili Clique, in control of Beijing	1920 to September 1924
ZHANG, Zuolin (张作霖)	Warlord of Manchuria	1922 to June 1928
BAO, Guiqing (鲍贵卿)	Military Governor and Governor of Heilongjiang, Inspector of the CER (1919-20)	1917 to March 1921
MENG, Enyuan (孟恩远)	Military Governor of Jilin	1916 - July 1919
GUO, Zongxi (郭宗熙)	Governor of Jilin, Inspector of the CER (1917-19)	1916 - 1919
YAN, Huiqing (颜惠庆)	Premier of the Republic of China, first Ambassador to the Soviet Union	Various times from 1921 to December 1926
GU, Weijin (顾维钧)	Minister to the United States and the United Kingdom	October 1915 -1922
LIU, Jingren (刘镜人)	Minister to Russia	1912-1918
LI, Jia'ao (李家鳌)	Siberian senior committee member, diplomatic representative to the Soviet Union	September 1919 - August 1925
ZHANG, Silin (张斯麟)	Diplomatic representative of the Republic of China, received by Lenin	1919
WANG, Zhengting (王正廷)	Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, responsible for negotiations with Soviet Russia	Various times from 1919 to 1928
SONG, Xiaolian (宋小濂)	General Inspector of the CER (1920-22)	1919 - 1923
WANG, Jinchun (王景春)	Chinese representative of the CER Administrative Bureau, Administrator of the CER Company	1920 - 1925
CHEN, Duxiu (陈独秀)	Chinese Communist Party head	1921-1928
Georgii Chicherin (Георгий Чичерин)	People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs in the Soviet government	1918 - 1930
Lev Karakhan (Лев Карахан)	Soviet Ambassador to China	1923 - 1926
Adolph Ioffe (Адольф Иоффе)	Soviet Ambassador to China	1923 - 1924

lgnatius Yourin (Игнатий Юрни)	Plenipotentiary to China of the Far Eastern Republic	1920 - 1922
Yakov Yanson (Яков Янсон)	Representative of Foreign Affairs of the Far Eastern Republic	? - 1922
N. A. Kudashev (Николай Кудашев)	Imperial Russian ambassador to China	? - 1920
Dmitrii Horvath (Дмитрий Хорват)	General Director of the CER, Head of the self-declared "All-Russian Provisional Government"	1903 - 1921
Aleksandr Kolchak (Александр Колчак)	Head of the Provisional All-Russian Government	1918 - 1920
Grigorii Semenov (Григорий Семёнов)	Leader of the White movement in Trans-Baikal	December 1917 – November 1920
Grigorii Voitinskii (Григорий Войтинский)	Comintern advisor to China	1920 - 1921
Henk Sneevliet (Maring)	Comintern representative in China	1921 - 1924

Appendix 2 Timeline

August 1897 Construction of the CER

July 1903 Completion of the CER

February 1904 – September 1905 Russo-Japanese War

October 1911 Wuchang Uprising

June 1916 Death of the Beiyang Warlord Yuan Shikai

June 1916 – May 1920 Anfu warlord Duan Qirui as Premier

November 1917 October Revolution

November 1917 – October 1922 Russian Civil War

July 1918 – October 1922 Siberian Intervention

May 1919 May Fourth Movement

July 1919 Publication of the First Karakhan Manifesto

April 1920 Establishment of the Far Eastern Republic

May 1920 – September 1924 Zhili warlord Wu Peifu in control of Beijing

August 1920 Yourin mission to Beijing
General Zhang Silin's visit to Moscow

September 1920 Publication of the Second Karakhan Manifesto

May 1921 Establishment of Sun Yat-sen's Guangzhou Military Government

April 1922 Establishment of Zhang Zuolin's Autonomous Government of the Three Eastern Provinces of the Republic of China

August 1922 Ioffe mission to Beijing

January 1923 Ioffe's visit to Guangzhou
Publication of the Sun-Ioffe Declaration

February 1923 Maring's visit to Zhang Zuolin in Fengtian

July 1923 Karakhan's visit to Zhang Zuolin in Fengtian

August 1923 Karakhan mission to Beijing

May 1924 Signing of the *Sino-Soviet Basic Entente For Resolving Unsettled Problems*

September 1924 – May 1928 Fengtian warlord Zhang Zuolin in office

September 1924 Signing of the Fengtian-Soviet Treaty

March 1925 Death of Sun Yat-sen