

# **Postwar America and the Fall of the “Great Power China”: From the Marshall Mission to the Asian Cold War**

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## **I. Twofold Postwar Order and the Asian Cold War**

### **1. The Asian Cold War Viewed from the Chinese Revolution**

The present international political situation is ceaselessly changing in Asia. Despite the end of the Cold War its remnants have not completely disappeared. The formation of hub-and-spoke alliances centered upon the United States and the distribution of power among China, Taiwan, and South and North Korea happened during the Cold War period. Such a regional order still exists although its *raison d’etre* has greatly changed,

particularly since the 1990s.<sup>1</sup> Any consideration of the history of the Cold War in Asia is no less a study of contemporary historical research which aims at understanding the current situation by returning to its origins.

How was the Cold War shaped in postwar Asia? I shall separate previous Cold War studies on this subject largely into two (for details see Matsumura, 2004a). The first school argues that “the Yalta System”, i.e. the spheres of influence that were mutually recognized by the US, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union, were established in Asia by the end of World War II, and remained until the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950 (the first image). This school claims that the Cold War at first arose in Europe, then expanded to Asia only after the Korean War, and later the antagonism between the US and China was finally formed (Iriye, 1974; Tucker, 1983; Levine, 1987; Gaddis, 1997; Ishii, 2002). The second school believes that the Cold War already appeared in Asia immediately after the end of the war (the second image). By limiting the region and period to be studied, it is assumed that the US-Soviet Cold War and local confrontations such as civil wars in various parts of Asia were interconnected. One of the most typical arguments claims that the Cold War between the US and the Chinese Nationalist Government (Nationalist China) versus the Soviet Union and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) emerged from the end of 1945 until the spring of 1946 in Northeast China (Westad, 1993. Also see Niu, 1992; Kan, [1992]1997; Sheng, 1997; Yang, 1999; Chen, 2001).

With the availability of newly declassified documents of the former Eastern bloc of nations after the end of the Cold War, the study of Asian Cold War history has rapidly developed. Recent studies mostly belong to the second image. These historians are quite enthusiastic about the discovery of new materials, and their studies fairly weigh two important points. First, they describe the origins of the Asian Cold War by focusing more on the process in which the Eastern bloc was established and less on that in which the Western bloc was constructed. Second, the historical material concerning local actors such as the CCP and their role in

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<sup>1</sup> For the features of the East Asian region formed mainly by the US after the end of World War II, see Shiraishi ([2000]2001: ch.6) and Ikenberry (2008).

establishing the Cold War bloc are emphasized more than those of the two superpowers. Recent studies tend to depict the origins of the Asian Cold War by combining these two points. The most typical approach emphasizes the CCP's leading role in the historical process in which the Sino-Soviet alliance of 1950 was established. It is claimed that the alliance was formed more by the initiatives of Mao Zedong than Joseph V. Stalin, who was consistently reluctant to establish the alliance even on the eve of signing the treaty (Chen, 1992; Goncharov, 1993; Westad, 2003; Heinzig, 2004). Such an approach also argues that Stalin changed from a defensive to an offensive stance toward Asia only after the alliance was formed, and that then he gave the green light for the North Korean military to attack the South (Mastny, 1996; Shen, 2000; Shen, 2003).

A series of studies by Odd Arne Westad, who is at the forefront of research on Asian Cold War history, are most typical. I shall here summarize his various arguments. Westad believes that the "Sino-Soviet alliance was the greatest antisystemic [sic] power assembled so far during the capitalist era and probably the greatest power to challenge the political supremacy of the Western capitals since the final expansion of the Ottoman empire in the sixteenth century" (Westad, 1998: 2). He states that agricultural societies, which were objects of foreign domination, and the birth of "ideologies of resistance to foreign domination and domestic chaos," were common throughout much of East Asia outside Japan in the first half of the twentieth century. He also focuses the object of the "East-Asian cockpit" on China, especially Manchuria (Northeast China) (Westad, 2003: ch.1). Consequently, he concentrates his study on the process in which the Sino-Soviet alliance was formed, i.e. the center of anti-Western capitalism and stresses that the CCP played a central role in this process.

These recent studies implicitly equate the origins of the Asian Cold War with the process in which the CCP expanded its influence from Manchuria to mainland China, and moreover within the Sino-Soviet alliance. Indeed this story parallels the historical course of the Chinese revolution. This is

one *terminus ad quem* which current Asian Cold War study has reached.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. The Idea of the “Old” Order and a “New” Era

Apart from recent studies, I shall here consider “how the Cold War was formed in Asia” by going back to a fundamental question of international relations. Since the modern era new orders have been formed after the end of major wars in the field of international politics (Ikenberry, 2001). A twofold postwar order was designed mainly by the victorious powers after the end of World War II: the first was the order between the victorious great powers; the second was the treatment of defeated nations by the victorious states. In Asia the former was the order between the great powers of the US, the UK, the Soviet Union and China, and the latter was the occupation of Japan by the allied nations.<sup>3</sup> At that time, however, China had achieved neither territorial unification nor political integration; for instance, the CCP existed with its own army and regional political rule within its own territory (see Kagami, 1994). As a result, one great power (the US) was bound to commit itself to the national unification of another great power (China). This originated in “the policy of making China a Great Power” that was initiated by the US in wartime (Tang, 1963).<sup>4</sup> After the end of the war, the “Great Power China” disappeared due to the civil war between the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) and the CCP. Consequently, the twofold postwar order also began to decay, and the Eastern and Western camps were finally formed in Asia.

In fact, no framework of previous Asian Cold War studies concerning either the first or the second image, can fully explain such a historical process. At least two problems can be pointed out.

First, both images fail to question how the US developed its “policy of making China a Great Power” in the postwar period. The first image is premised upon the conception of “the Yalta System” that was formed by

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<sup>2</sup> The aforementioned trend in Asian Cold War study is largely based on Matsumura (2007).

<sup>3</sup> The idea of the two fold order was most typically compacted in “The State of the Union (The President’s [Harry S. Truman] Message to the Congress),” Jan 14, 1946 (Bulletin, 1946, vol.XIV, no.344: 136, 139). Also see Tang (1963: 33-35).

<sup>4</sup> The term, “the policy of making China a Great Power” is based upon Tang (1963: 35). But since he does not necessarily indicate how and when this policy ended, my evaluation of the policy is partly different from his one in this context.

the US, the UK, and the Soviet Union in the absence of China prior to the end of the war. The second image concentrates only upon America's policy towards Northeast China, and implicitly regards it as US policy regarding China in general. There is a failure to consider how the US attempted to establish the "Great Power China" in the whole of Chinese territory. Neither image has analyzed how the order between the victorious powers, including China, developed and collapsed in postwar Asia.

The second problem concerns the meaning of the outbreak of the Chinese civil war. Both images alike ignore how the civil war changed America's policies towards Asia and China. They emphasize the continuity of policies before and after the civil war. The first image implies that the defeat of Nationalist China in the civil war did not destroy "the Yalta System" which was originally formed in China's absence (Iriye, 1974: chs.4-5). The second image claims that the US consistently conducted a "containment policy" in Northeast China both before and after the civil war, in order to prevent the expansion of Soviet and the CCP influences and to establish the military and political predominance of Nationalist China. It regards this policy not only as the major factor in the civil war but even as one of the origins of America's "containment policy" towards China from the late 1940s to the early 1970s (see Niu, 1992; Kan, [1992]1997). Both images completely differ in an assessment of whether the civil war was closely connected to the US-Soviet Cold War or not, but they commonly misunderstand how the civil war changed America's policies regarding China.

How the US conducted its "policy of making China a Great Power" in the postwar period and how this "Great Power China" fell apart due to the civil war has not been sufficiently studied. Indeed both images similarly argue more about the advent of a "new" era of the Cold War than less about the fall of the "old" order that was designed mainly by the victorious powers. The first image understands that the fall of "the Yalta System" did not cause the Asian Cold War, but that the Cold War appeared, first in Europe and then expanded to Asia, and later "the Yalta System" naturally fell apart (Iriye, 1974). For the second image, the "old" order did not exist early in the postwar period. From the beginning, the formation of the Cold

War, particularly of the Eastern bloc was regarded as a given. It is most symbolic for the scholars of the second image that the postwar “East-Asian Cockpit” was placed, not in defeated Japan, but in Northeast China, i.e. the strategic stronghold of the CCP (Westad, 2003).

The decline of the idea of an “old” order leads to a “new” era.<sup>5</sup> This paper aims to examine how the order between the victorious powers developed and decayed, and how the Cold War was formed in postwar Asia. The key focus is on how the US was involved in the establishment of the “Great Power China”, and how this idea came to fall apart. I shall focus specifically on the whole process of George C. Marshall’s mediation between Nationalist China and the CCP, i.e. the Marshall Mission from December 1945 to January 1947.<sup>6</sup> I shall establish three questions (hypotheses) and examine each one in order.

The first hypothesis concerns the historical development of US policies regarding a postwar Asian regional order. “The policy of making China a Great Power” born in wartime collapsed due to the KMT-CCP civil war, and a “containment” policy appeared out of this process of collapse. The Marshall Mission was the process in which “the policy of making China a Great Power” ultimately disintegrated, and afterwards a “containment” policy was initiated in Asia.

Second, how did the US attempt to establish the “Great Power China”? I shall examine the process in which America committed to a “unification of China” mainly by adopting two policies: supporting both territorial and political integration. The incompatibility between these two policies can be considered as a crucial problem; and the practical meaning of the problem was lost with the outbreak of the Chinese civil war.

The aforementioned two questions are the basis for surveying America’s policy towards Asia and China during the 1940s. The third question, which

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<sup>5</sup> In the field of international political history, the process in which the wartime cooperative relations among the allied powers collapsed in the postwar period is usually argued as simultaneous with the process of the formation of the Cold War (see Gaddis, 2005: ch.1; Ishii, 2002: ch.4 etc). This is not, however, necessarily true for the study of international history in postwar Asia.

<sup>6</sup> The studies on the Marshall Mission at the global standard are collected in Bland (1998). Most of them are, however, based on the argument of the second image. For previous studies on the Marshall Mission, see Matsumura (2005b).

is premised on the first two, is a separate consideration of the Marshall Mission. At first, the Marshall Mission endeavored to establish the “Great Power China” by simultaneously pursuing the two policies concerned with the “unification of China”. With the rapidly fluctuating local situation, however, the two policies were not successful and the means for accomplishing their objectives were lost due to the civil war. Ultimately “the policy of making China a Great Power” fell apart. Finally, I shall clarify that America’s policy failed due to the KMT-CCP’s decision to clash militarily because the US greatly respected the policy choices of the Chinese themselves.

This paper aims at providing a wide perspective and hence cannot cover minute historical facts. It will, however, use a requisite minimum number of official American government documents, diaries and memoirs of policy makers, the Marshall Papers, as well as official documents and publications of Nationalist China and published documents of the CCP and the former Soviet Union.

## **II. From the “Great Power China” to “Containment”<sup>7</sup>**

How did the US design a postwar Asian regional order? After entering into the war against Japan in December 1941, they expected China to play two roles: first, China would contribute to military strategy in the war; second, China would make itself a political and military great power, and serve as a stabilizing power in postwar Asia. In other words, there appeared to be a “policy of making China a Great Power” in which China was treated as one of the Big Four. This course was established in wartime conferences held between the allied powers after the US entered the war (see Tang, 1963: ch. 2; Messer, 1989). On the evening of May 29, 1942, at the White House, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) told the Soviet foreign minister, Viacheslav M. Molotov, of one of the most symbolic ideas of postwar order; that the Big Four of the US, the UK, the Soviet Union and China would “act as the policemen of the world” (FR

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<sup>7</sup> This section is a greatly revised and simplified version of Matsumura (2003).

1942, III: 568-569). This idea consisted of the twofold structure: the order between the victorious great powers and their treatment of the defeated nations.

By the end of 1943, however, the roles expected of the “Great Power China” had partly changed. Until September 1943 the US attempted to attack the Japanese mainland from mainland China. After this, it began to consider making direct attacks centered upon the US army in the Pacific. At the end of November at the Cairo Conference, Jiang Jieshi exhibited a passive stance in regards to attacking the Japanese army from mainland China, and Britain also did not present a positive attitude in regards to the Burma operations. As a result FDR changed the center of gravity of the strategy against Japan from mainland China to the US military in the Pacific. Subsequent major military strategies as well as the postwar order were determined without China (Fukuda, 1979: 122-126, 188-208). In February 1945 at the Yalta Conference, the US, the UK, and the Soviet Union confidentially agreed on Soviet entry into the war against Japan and Soviet interests concerned with China. In addition to preserving the “status quo in Outer-Mongolia”, the Soviet “preeminent interests” were safeguarded in the Port of Dairen [Dalian], the lease of Port Arthur as the Soviet naval base was to be restored, and “the Chinese-Eastern Railroad and the South-Manchurian Railroad which provides an outlet to Dairen shall be jointly operated by the establishment of a joint Soviet-Chinese Company” (CWP, vol. 1: 113-114).

Thus, China’s role as a strategic stronghold against Japan greatly receded, but China was still expected to be a stabilizing power in postwar Asia. Prior to the Yalta Conference, the US Department of State stated, “So that China can become the primary stabilizing force in the Far East, we propose that we shall lead and support them in developing a government which will be strong, stable and unified” (FR 1945, Malta and Yalta: 353. Also see Kan, [1992]1997: 64). At the Yalta Conference the US, the UK, and the Soviet Union assumed that “China would function as a provider of stability and order in East Asia” (Zhao, 1997: 85-86).

Despite some alterations in its contents, “the policy of making China a

Great Power” remained until early in the postwar period. There was no influential alternative idea available. The US decided to occupy defeated Japan using the punitive policies of disarmament and demilitarization, and to couple the development of democratic and representative organizations with economic demilitarization (SWNCC150/4, Bulletin 1945, vol. XIII, no. 326: 423-427; Schaller, 1985: chs.1-2).

At the end of November 1945, Patrick J. Hurley suddenly resigned as American ambassador to China. He had always called for full support to Nationalist China and so, at his resignation, he denounced that this objective failed to be attained due to the policies of the State Department and the actions of some diplomats (Zi, 1987: 62; Cohen, 2000: 143-151. For the original text, see Bulletin, 1945, vol. XIII, no. 337: 930-931). The US government hastily decided to dispatch Marshall, who had just retired from being the Chief of Staff of the Army, to China as the President’s special representative. On December 15, President Harry S. Truman made a declaration just prior to Marshall’s visit to China. In it he remarked that “a strong, united, and democratic China” was most important for the United Nations and world peace, and that the unification of a democratic China was needed for the “maintenance of peace in the Pacific” (Bulletin, 1945, vol. XIII, no. 318: 945-946).

The Marshall Mission endeavored to establish the “Great Power China”, but Marshall’s mediation failed owing to the civil war and ended in January 1947. Afterwards, the US was forced to reshape its idea of Asian regional order; it shifted its gravity of strategy from mainland China to the Pacific island regions, particularly Japan, and began to conduct a “containment” strategy in an effort to restrain the spread of communist influence (Gaddis, 1987: 77-78, 80).

It was in 1948 that American policies greatly changed. This change can be separated into three aspects: policies towards China, towards Japan, and regarding Asia in general (Matsumura, 2003: 9-14).

First, with regard to the policy towards China; on the one hand, Secretary of State Marshall judged that the situation in China was “entering into a period of extreme flux and confusion”, and insisted that the US should refrain from directly intervening in the civil war (FR 1948,

VII: 416, 512-513). On the other hand, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) and some Republican senators appealed for active economic and military assistance to the Chinese National Government in order to prevent the Soviet Union from expanding “control and influence” in Asia (JCS to SWNCC, June.9, 1947, FR 1947, VII: 838-844; Blum, 1982: chs.3, 5, 13). The American policy towards China was largely based on the advice of the State Department, and “the China Aid Act” in June 1948 was established to avoid large scale intervention in the civil war (Kan, [1992]1997: 126; Cohen, 2000: 157-160, 175).

Second, the US began to change greatly its Japanese occupation policies from the latter half of 1947. The change was initiated by George F. Kennan who studied pacification issues for Japan as a head of the Policy Planning Staff (PPS) in the State Department. He wrote a report on these issues on March 25 shortly after having returned from Japan where he conferred with Douglas MacArthur. In his draft, Kennan urged Japan’s economic recovery as “the prime objective”, proposed “the relaxation of the purge”, and studied the post peace treaty arrangements. The report greatly influenced the change of occupation policies, and Japan was positioned as a “containment” stronghold against the Soviet Union (Schaller, 1985: chs.5-7; Igarashi, 1995: ch. 1. For the original text, see FR 1948, VI: 691-719).

Third, the idea of the development of “economic interdependence” in Asia emerged in the US government. In an effort to prevent the Soviet Union from spreading its influence in Southeast Asia, the region was positioned as an export destination for Japan’s finished goods and as “a supplier of raw materials”. The idea was incorporated into PPS 51 in which the US policies towards Southeast Asia were comprehensively examined. This was later reflected in the National Security Council (NSC) Paper Number 48/2 which examined general American policies towards Asia (Kan, [1992]1997: ch.4; Schaller, 1985: 83, ch.8; PPS51, NSC48/2, FR 1949, VII: 1128-1133, 1215-1220).

By the end of 1949, the US was determined to draw a defensive line in Asia and to exclude the Chinese continent from its direct commitment areas. However, the problem of how to draw the defensive line remained to

be resolved (see Blum, 1982). On the one hand, by February 1949 Dean G. Acheson, the then Secretary of State, wanted to “create serious rifts between Moscow and a Chinese Communist regime” in the political and economic fields. He and the Department of State also requested that the prevention of “Soviet domination” of the mainland of China and of the communist control over Formosa be achieved by diplomatic and economic means rather than military ones (NSC34/2, NSC41, NSC37/1, FR 1949, IX: 492-495, 826-833, 270-275). On the other hand, considering the Soviet Union and the CCP to be a monolithic entity, the JCS insisted that “some form of military support” to Formosa should be taken (FR 1949, IX: 261-262, 291). The former course largely shaped US policies towards Asia at that time: the strategy to Formosa would be confined to diplomatic and economic means; and serious rifts between Moscow and the Chinese Communists were to be created (NSC37/5, NSC37/2, NSC41, FR 1949, IX: 290-292, 281-282, 826-834. See Blum, 1982: ch.2; Chang, 1990: ch.1; Cohen, 2000: 157-160, 175).

Changes in these policies did not immediately appear, even after the CCP triumphed in the civil war on the Chinese continent. At the end of December 1949, it was decided by the NSC, and later approved by President Truman that the focal points of US anti-communist military commitment in Asia would be in Japan, the Ryukyu Islands and the Philippines. Regarding policies towards Formosa and the Pescadores, diplomatic and economic means were to be employed, and any rifts between the Soviet Union and the CCP were to be utilized by political, economic and psychological means (NSC48/2, FR 1949, VII: 1215-1220. See Blum, 1982: ch.10). In January 1950, Acheson gave his famous speech in which he plotted the US “defensive perimeter” along lines from the Aleutians to Japan, and from the Ryukyu and Philippine Islands, but American commitments to Formosa and the Korean peninsula remained vague (Bulletin, 1950, XXII, no. 551: 111-118. See Gaddis, 1987: ch.4).

But the dispute over the defensive line had not been completely resolved by June 1950. Afterwards, the policies promoted by the JCS eventually prevailed over the previous strategies due to the outbreak of the Korean War (Blum, 1982: ch.11).

### III. “Unification of China” for the United States<sup>8</sup>

How was the US involved in the establishment of the “Great Power China”? I shall here consider the essence and origins of this problem. At least by the end of the 1940s, neither territorial integration nor political unification was attained in China (see Kagami, 1994). At that time the US was involved in the unification of China mainly in terms of these two dimensions. But the two aims could not be easily pursued simultaneously which led to disputes over the priority between them. When the former predominated over the latter, the US had to support the exclusive territorial control of Nationalist China without its political reorganization; if the latter prevailed over the former, the US would find it difficult to advance Chinese territorial integration in “power vacuum” areas since they were forced to carry out political negotiations over “who” and “how” to govern the areas. The US faced such kinds of issue regarding the “unification of China”.

These issues originated from the end of 1943. On December 1, following the Cairo Conference, the US, the UK and China proclaimed that “all the territories Japan has stolen from the Chinese, such as Manchuria, Formosa, and the Pescadores, shall be restored to the Republic of China” (Bulletin, 1943, vol. IX, no. 232: 393). In contrast, faced with a rapidly deteriorating military situation in China, the US started to align itself more closely with the CCP in order to prevent the collapse of the Nationalist regime. Here emerged the idea of the reorganization of the Nationalist government, i.e. a Chinese coalition government with which various political forces (mainly the KMT and the CCP) could join (Tang, 1963: 150-156; Yamagiwa, 1997: 72-74). The US government reached a consensus on the recognition of Nationalist China under the leadership of Generalissimo Jiang Jieshi (Yamagiwa, 1997: 67-71). But the crucial issue still remained over which of the two dimensions was the priority (Matsumura, 2004b: 37-39).

With respect to the unification of China, three major opinions existed in

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<sup>8</sup> This section is a greatly revised and simplified version of Matsumura (2004b).

the US government during wartime (see Tang, 1963: ch.6; Yamagiwa, 1997: 20-24, chs.2, 7; Cohen, 2000: 141-148). American diplomats in China such as John P. Davies and John S. Service were representative of the first opinion. Davies regarded the CCP as composed of democratic and moderate nationalists, and a promising political force. Service thought that the CCP's revolution was "moderate and democratic". Although recognizing Jiang's regime, Davies and Service did not support it exclusively in the long term (Report by Davies, CWP, vol.2: 565, 573, 574. Report by Service, FR 1944, VI: 565-566; CWP, vol.2: 566,574). Second, military personnel such as Claire L. Chennault (the commander of the U.S. Army's 14th Air Forces) and Albert C. Wedemeyer (the US-China theater commander) appealed for military support to the Nationalists under the leadership of the Generalissimo on the premise that a confrontation between the US and the Nationalist Government versus the Soviet Union and CCP would emerge (FR 1944, VI: 158-160; Wedemeyer, 1958: ch.XXIII). Patrick J. Hurley, who served as the American Ambassador to China from November 1944, typified the third opinion. While not perceiving that the Soviet Union and the CCP were a monolith, he considered that the best policy for America was to offer its full support to Nationalist China under US-Soviet cooperative relations (FR 1944, VI: 667; FR 1945, VII: 338-340; Tang, 1963: 176-195, 288-300).

Prior to the end of the war, US policies towards China were largely based upon the third course advocated by Hurley (Cohen, 2000: 141-146). The dispute over the unification of China was not activated until the postwar period when China fully initiated nation-building movements including the postwar settlement. The US government attempted to avoid an outbreak of the civil war and advocated a democratic government. At the same time, it endeavored to transfer Nationalist troops to liberated areas in order to advance the conditions of the Chinese postwar settlement such as the acceptance of the surrender of the Japanese army and territorial reoccupation. These policies were reflected in the directive by the JCS to Wedemeyer on August 10 1945. The State, War and Navy Departments also agreed on such policies (FR 1945, VII: 527-528, 559-561). In November, however, Wedemeyer noticed a contradiction in the JCS

directive. He indicated to Washington that the transport of Nationalist troops could lead to military confrontation with CCP forces (FR 1945, XII: 605. See Sugita, 1999: 68-69). In fact, it was difficult for the Americans to exclusively support the Nationalist territorial integration and simultaneously advance the KMT-CCP political negotiations without military conflict.

Before the two courses could be combined, Hurley abruptly resigned as ambassador. The Marshall Mission started without any definite answers as to which of the two courses was a priority. The mission finally came to an end while the US had attained neither of them.

With the increasing difficulty of establishing the “Great Power China”, the dispute over the “unification of China” was losing its practical importance. On the one hand, the Secretary of State Marshall proposed to restrict military and economic assistance to Nationalist China. He considered it undesirable for the Americans to offer assistance large enough to serve the civil war and exacerbate the US-Soviet relationship (FR 1947, VII: 805-806, 850-851, 213, 635). On the other hand, the Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson judged that the possibility of establishing “a democratic multiparty government” including the CCP was low. The JCS regarded the relationship between the Soviet Union and the CCP as monolithic, and demanded “carefully, planned, selective and well-supervised assistance to the National Government” (FR 1947, VII: 800-802, 842-844). US policies towards China were largely based upon the course advised by the State Department. For instance, the US government, particularly Marshall, did not adopt the final report of the Wedemeyer Mission (September 1947) which requested an expansion of munitions and technical assistance to the Nationalist government (Wedemeyer, 1958: 396-398, 472. See Cohen, 2000: 157-160, 175). In addition, as discussed above, “the China Aid Act” was also passed to avoid intervening in the Chinese civil war. With the fall of the “Great Power China” the dispute over the unification of China lost its practical meaning.

The Department of State published “The China White Paper” in August 1949 when the CCP had almost secured victory in the civil war. In the preamble, Secretary of State Acheson specified the main causes of the

defeat of Nationalist China: the Nationalists themselves were corrupt and weak; the CCP “attempted to sell themselves as guardians and liberators of the people”; and moreover, the US could not afford to fully intervene militarily in Chinese affairs (CWP, vol. 1: v-vi, xiv, x. Also see Yamagiwa, 1997: 29). “The White Paper” faced sharp criticism, mainly from the China lobby. US policies towards China were strongly condemned in the storm of McCarthyism (Tang, 1963: 509-510, 538-546, 564-569). In particular, Senator Joseph McCarthy directed his attacks at Marshall. He criticized the Chinese policies of Marshall, who had served as the Army Chief of Staff, the KMT-CCP mediator, and the Secretary of State, claiming that they were the main cause of the Nationalist defeat in the civil war (McCarthy, [1951]1962). Despite the lack of any substance to these criticisms the political blame for the government’s Chinese policies intensified.<sup>9</sup>

#### **IV. The Marshall Mission**

##### **1. China and the Soviet Union**

The Marshall Mission was the final historical phase in which the US expected China to become a stabilizing power in Asia, and the period in which the US was involved in Chinese national unification. Early in the postwar period, China underwent a vital shift from peaceful negotiation to civil war. The local situation was greatly affected by the attitude of the Soviet armies that moved into Northeast China in order to enter the war against Japan. I shall here summarize the political and military situation in China as well as that of Sino-Soviet relations.

The KMT-CCP political negotiations held in Chongqing from the end of August to October 1945 produced “the Agreement of 10 October”. Both sides agreed on a series of ways to achieve political democratization: the transition from a “political tutelage” to a “constitutional government”; the convocation of the Political Consultative Conference (PCC); and, equality between, and legitimization of, every political party. They also accepted the avoidance of the civil war. It remained, however, to be decided whether

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<sup>9</sup> For the features of this controversy, see Kato (2001).

CCP areas were to be recognized or whether the CCP had the right to accept the surrender of Japanese troops (Inoue, 2001: 41-43; Matsumura, 2005a: 171-172).

By the end of November the KMT and the CCP shifted the main stage from political negotiation to the military contest for Northeast China. The Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance and the exchange of notes meant that the Soviet Union agreed moral and material support and aid to “the National Government as the central government of China” and “reaffirmed its respect for China’s full sovereignty over the Three Eastern Provinces” (CWP, vol.2: 585-587; PKOXX, IV-2: 187-189 [no.710], 197 [no.717]). From the middle of September, however, the Soviet military command not only informally allowed CCP military forces to move into the Northeast but also refused to allow Nationalist armies to land at Dalian. At the beginning of November, the Nationalists attempted to land at Yingkou but could not successfully move their forces to the area due to the presence of CCP troops. The Nationalist government decided to move the Northeast China Command from Changchun to Shanhaiguan in order to implicate the Soviets in responsibility for such a matter. The Soviet military command then suddenly changed its attitude and urged CCP troops to withdraw from the major cities in the Northeast (Ishii, 1990: 27-43; Yang, 1997: 531-553; Matsumura, 2005a: 172-174).

After this period, the major focus of the KMT-CCP relationship again returned to political negotiations until the end of February. In January, the KMT, the CCP, the Democratic League, the Youth Party, and non-party delegates participated in the PCC, adopting five resolutions related to the transition from a tutelage to a constitutional government, military reorganization and other issues (SLCB, vol.7, pt.2: 229-243. For the PCC, also see Yokoyama, 1997: 247-249).

Meanwhile the Sino-Soviet diplomatic negotiations over the postwar settlement in the Northeast reached its final phase. The Soviet Union regarded “Manchuria” as within its own “zone” and demanded its “war booty”: they insisted on establishing joint Sino-Soviet corporations to manage the former Japanese assets remaining in Manchuria, particularly

the enterprises serving the Kwantun army.<sup>10</sup> In response to that, Nationalist China refused to recognize the Soviet “war booty” and insisted that Sino-Soviet economic cooperation could only be discussed after the Soviet troops completely withdrew from the Northeast.<sup>11</sup> The Soviet demand for “war booty” also led to strong American opposition. The Sino-Soviet negotiations eventually broke down by the end of February (Yamamoto, 2005: 252-253). From the beginning of March, the Russians suddenly began to withdraw their troops from the Northeast completing their withdrawal by May 3 (PKOXX, V-1: 107-108 [no.61]).

The political and military situation rapidly deteriorated from the middle of March largely due to two elements. First, the KMT convened the Secondary Plenary Session of the Sixth Term Central Executive Committee (CEC) in which the PCC resolutions were partly revised. The CCP criticized the CEC decisions for reflecting a one-party dictatorship (Yokoyama, 1997: 247-249; SLCB, vol. 7, pt.2: 260-261; ZTP: 146-152; CWP, vol. 1: 144). Second, Soviet officers requested CCP troops move into areas evacuated by the Soviet troops and the CCP decided to occupy “one whole line of the Chinese-Eastern Railroad” while negotiating with “friends [the Soviet officers]” (PZNP: 386, 389-390, 390-391). This intensified the KMT-CCP military struggle in the Northeast. By the end of April the CCP had secured military predominance, at least in north Manchuria, with its occupation of major cities such as Changchun, Harbin and Qiqihar. At the end of May, however, the Nationalists reversed the situation with their occupation of Changchun. Jiang Jieshi judged that “the problems of the communist armies in the Northeast could be easily dealt with since Soviet troops had already completed their withdrawal”. On the

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<sup>10</sup> For example, Запись беседы тов.И.В. Сталина с Цзян Цзинго, личным представителем Чан Кайши [Meeting Between Stalin-Jiang Jing-guo], 30 декабря 1945 г., в 21 час; Запись беседы тов Сталина с Цзян Цзинго, личным представителем Чан Кайши, 3 января 1946 г., в 23 час (Ледовский, 1999: 24-25, 27, 29).

<sup>11</sup> Запись беседы тов.И.В. Сталина с Цзян Цзинго, личным представителем Чан Кайши, 30 декабря 1945 г., в 21 час (Ibid: 25); Telegram from Jiang Zhongzheng (Generalissimo) to Zhang Jia-ao, Janu.21, 1946 (JWW: Geming wenxian - Kanluan [Papers on Revolution - Suppression of Rebellion], 2020.4, Kanluan shiqi [Period of Suppression of Rebellion], 4450.01, 1, Jiang Zhongzheng geminwenxian-Jieshou dongbei yu duisu jiaoshe, Shang [Jiang Jieshi Papers on Revolution-Taking over Northeast and Negotiations with the Soviet Union, vol.1], 162; Wang’s diary, Feb.7, 20, 1946 (WRJ: 205, 208).

other hand, the CCP shifted its strategy from the major cities to the middle and small towns and farm villages (DSCB vol. 6, pt. 1: 150; ZGWJ, vol. 16: 185. Also see Yang, 1997: 569). Later, the KMT-CCP military confrontation expanded from the Northeast to North China and then to the whole country.

## 2. Two Policies

Now I shall consider how the two courses related to the “unification of China” coexisted in the Marshall Mission.

From the end of November 1945 when Hurley had suddenly resigned, the US government had to decide Marshall’s missions in less than half a month.<sup>12</sup> The decision making process can be separated into two phases. First, the State and War Departments respectively made their drafts. On November 28, John C. Vincent (the Director of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs) drafted the original paper of the State Department. He emphasized in the paper that the establishment of a democratic government in which various political elements could join had to be promoted by peaceful negotiation. While his focal point was the idea of a coalition government, he agreed to “assist the Chinese National Government in the transportation of troops to Manchurian ports to enable China to reestablish its administrative control over Manchuria” (FR 1945, VII: 745-747). The War Department partly criticized this draft. On November 30, Marshall proposed that US assistance to the Nationalist government in control of Manchuria prevail over political negotiation. Above all, he feared that “the Russians will definitely build up such a control” (Marshall to Leahy, Nov.30, 1945, FR 1945, VII: 747-748).

The second phase started when both sides convened meetings on December 9 and 11 in order to adjust their opinions. From the outset both sides accepted in principle the idea of establishing a Chinese democratic government, i.e. a coalition government, as well as American support to the Nationalists in transferring their troops to the Northeast. The crucial controversy emerged over the policy towards North China. The War

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<sup>12</sup> The discussion mentioned below on the decision making process of the missions of Marshall in the US government is largely based upon Matsumura (2005b).

Department criticized the State Department's original draft for placing a priority on Chinese political negotiations over US support to the movement of Nationalist troops to North China (FR 1945, VII: 749-751). Faced with such criticism, the State Department made a concession. At the first meeting, James F. Byrnes conceded that although the US would support the movement of Nationalist troops to North China only after finding "the outcome of General Marshall's discussions with Chinese leaders in Chungking [Chongqing]", they would immediately arrange for "transportation of Chinese troops into north China" (Memorandum by Byrnes, Dec.9, MM: box.1). At the second meeting, however, Byrnes insisted that as Marshall's mediation failed due to Jiang Jieshi's attitude, the US would not send additional Nationalist troops to North China but would assist to move their troops to the region only for the purpose of "the evacuation of the Japanese". This proposal was finally reached at the second meeting (Memorandum of Conversation by Marshall, Dec.11, MM: box.1).

Thus, the US government decided two courses: prioritizing support to Chinese territorial integration in the Northeast; and a cessation of hostilities, political negotiations, and the establishment of a coalition government in "China proper," including North China. However, they devised no answer to any conflict between these two policies and did not assume that there could be any possibility of a conflict. The US intended to respect the principle of nonintervention as much as possible, and to depend on China's decisions regarding the "detailed steps necessary to the achievement of political unity in China" (Statement by Truman, Dec. 15, 1945, Bulletin, 1945, vol. XIII, no. 338: 945-946).

At the end of December 1945, Marshall visited China. The first result of his mediation was "The Cease-Fire Agreement" which was reached on January 10 1946.<sup>13</sup> The agreement had two documents. The first was "the cease-fire order" which stipulated that both the KMT and CCP troops cease all hostilities and movements. The order, however, had an exception clause that provided for an area to which "the cease-fire order" was not

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<sup>13</sup> The discussion mentioned below on the process of reaching the cease-fire agreement is based upon Matsumura (2005a).

applied. The second was a document concerning the “Executive Headquarters” (EH). This organization was to be established in Beiping (Beijing) in order to implement and oversee the truce (FR 1946, IX: 125-126, 127-128; SLCB, vol.7, pt.3: 68-69).

This truce mediation had at least two meanings for the Marshall Mission. First, a set of organizations was established to conduct the mediation. The Committee of Three (COT) composed of Marshall and two representatives from the KMT and the CCP had the highest authority, and the EH the second. The EH was to dispatch field teams to military conflict areas. All these organizations consisted of representatives from America, the KMT and the CCP. Second, US policies regarding China were reflected in the contents of the truce: the order was applied to “China proper”, but not to the Northeast in order to secure Nationalist military movements.

In this process, however, no practical settlement was devised for a collision between the two courses concerned with the “unification of China”, i.e. the movement of Nationalist troops and the cease-fire. It still remained to be decided whether Nationalist troops were unconditionally allowed to move in the Northeast or whether some conditions would be provided to prohibit them from advancing on CCP areas. Only Zhou Enlai raised this issue in the truce negotiation. He insisted that the numbers of Nationalist troops and the route of advancement in the Northeast be limited (Meeting of the COT, Jan.8, MM: box.19; ZTP: 43), and that the CCP also had the right to take over liberated areas (Meeting Between Marshall and Zhou, Jan.9, ZTP: 48). Marshall never clearly responded to this issue and postponed his decision (MM: box.19; ZTP: 48). The CCP ultimately agreed to the cease-fire order while tentatively making the issue ambiguous. They started to dispute this issue once the truce was reached (Matsumura, 2005a: 181-182).

It can be seen from these episodes that as long as its postponed decisions as to “who” and “how” to govern the “power vacuum” areas pertained to the “unification of China”, the US managed to pursue two courses simultaneously.

### 3. “Limited Commitment” and the Nationalist Territorial Reoccupation

How did the Americans implement the two policies? I shall examine the period from January to March 1946 when both policies were executed in accordance with the original mission.

To begin with, how did the US pursue the idea of a Chinese coalition government? <sup>14</sup> In an effort to realize the idea, Marshall employed three “limited commitments”.<sup>15</sup> The first limitation concerned the fields in which he decided to intervene. Instead of intervening in political negotiations for governmental reorganization, Marshall committed himself only to the truce mediation that was regarded as a starting point for the negotiations.<sup>16</sup> He intervened in political negotiations only when the Chinese requested him to. For example, in the middle of January 1946, he drafted the “Charter for the Interim Government of the Republic of China” only after receiving a request from Jiang Jieshi (FR 1946, IX: 139-141). Nevertheless, since Jiang was dissatisfied with Marshall’s draft (DSCB, vol.6, pt.1: 24), the draft was not reflected in the PCC resolutions. Marshall’s proposal turned out to be merely informal. In February, Marshall mediated between the KMT and the CCP in the military reorganization negotiation. This mediation was merely to embody the principles of the reorganization of the armies as stipulated in the PCC resolutions, and not to deeply participate in negotiations about the governmental reorganization (Matsumura, 2006: 4).

The second limitation was regarding the geographical sphere of the truce mediation. Although the Marshall Mission largely concentrated its efforts upon truce mediation, the cease-fire order was applied only to “China proper”. From the middle of January, the EH dispatched field teams to the main armed conflict areas e.g. those in Suiyuan, Jehol, Shandong, Shanxi, Hebei, Guangdong provinces and Hankou city, but not to the Northeast

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<sup>14</sup> The argument about US policies regarding the idea of a Chinese coalition government prior to the civil war is based upon Matsumura (2006).

<sup>15</sup> These “limited commitments” were different from the “limited assistance” argued by Tang. Tang examined some limitations or conditions for American policies regarding China in order to claim that Marshall did not unconditionally support Nationalist China in the civil war (Tang, 1963: 347, ch.9). But he never discusses how Marshall actually committed to the idea of a coalition government.

<sup>16</sup> Marshall informed President Truman that he would refrain from acting “as a mediator in the political struggle regarding the formation of a coalition government”. Marshall to Truman, Janu.24, 1946 (FR 1946, IX: 143).

(Document Prepared in the EH, Briefing of the COT and the Commissioners, Feb.28, FR 1946, IX: 389, 453-462; JTQK: 54-171). The COT members inspected each team from the end of February to the beginning of March, and confirmed that while some local level conflicts lingered, the truce had been mostly established in “China proper” (Matsumura, 2006: 5).

The third limitation was of the mediation periods. Instead of continuing his mediation until a coalition government was finally formed, Marshall intended to terminate his effort at the phase in which the prerequisite conditions for a coalition government were fulfilled. By the end of February, the cease-fire order, the PCC resolutions, and the “Basis for Military Reorganization and for the Integration of the Communist Forces into the National Army” were respectively reached. Then Marshall judged that a coalition government was ready to be established, and hence began to study for the end of his task. He planned to terminate his mission between August and September (Meeting between Marshall and Chou [Zhou], Feb.18, MM, Micro: reel.16; Marshall to Robertson, Feb. 21, MP: box. 123, folder. 35), and to nominate Wedemeyer as the new American ambassador to China (Shepley to Marshall, Feb.28, MP: box.124, folder.32).

For the idea of a coalition government, the Marshall Mission employed these “limited commitments” which were greatly based upon the truce mediation.

In the next section, I will focus on how the Americans developed their policies regarding the Northeast. By March 1946, the US was fully supporting the Nationalist territorial reoccupation in line with the initial policy. Two points can be verified. The first concerns the attitude of the US government to the Soviet claim for “war booty” in the Northeast. From the beginning of February, Washington could not overlook the claim, and formally protested against the Kremlin to respect Chinese sovereignty, and to adhere to “the Open Door” principle (FR 1946, X: 1104-1105, 1112-1113. Russian text, PKOXX, V-1: 58-60 [no.21], 77-80 [no.34]). The second point concerns American support for the Nationalist military movements to the Northeast. In the middle of January, the US government

decided to secure military assistance under the Lend-Lease Act to Nationalist China by June 30 1946 (Royall and Forrestal to Truman, Junu.14, Acheson to Truman, Janu.19, FR 1946, X: 724-725, 725-728). In February, Wedemeyer planned to move seven Chinese armies to the Northeast by September 1 (Patterson to Byrnes, Feb.18, FR 1946, X: 729).

At that time the US clarified only its principle of supporting the Nationalist territorial reoccupation, but was ambiguous as to how Nationalist troops should move and take over areas after landing at the Northeast ports. Therefore the two policies managed to coexist only by delaying any decisions regarding the “unification of China”.

#### 4. To the End of the KMT-CCP Mediation

After March 1946, with a rapidly changing political and military situation in China, the US faced this pending issue. At first, the Americans were forced to change their policy towards the Northeast. The changes underwent two major phases.

During the first phase from March to the end of April, the original policy was partly modified. The withdrawal of Soviet troops from the Northeast gradually escalated the KMT-CCP military contest for the region. The US was anxious about a situation in which the Nationalists fell behind in taking over the Northeast, whilst the CCP secured such military predominance in the region that the communists could “flout” the truce (Meeting of Gillem with the Generalissimo, Mar.21, MM, Micro: reel.16; Gillem to War Department, Mar. 30, *ibid*: reel.7; Smith to Byrnes, Apr. 22, FR 1946, IX: 790). The Americans had no decisive evidence clarifying relations between the CCP and the Soviet Union, but feared the reality that CCP troops were rapidly moving at least into north Manchuria (Kennan to Byrnes, Junu.10, FR 1946, IX: 118-119; Smyth to Byrnes, Mar.11, Apr.10, US-China: reel.3). From the middle of March, in response to the situation, the US initiated the truce mediation in the Northeast. As a result the COT finally decided to dispatch field teams to the region on March 27. But the mission of the teams was limited to military matters. Political issues such as the status of the CCP areas remained to be settled (original text, FR 1946, IX: 603). In essence, this agreement was to secure the principle of

Nationalist territorial reoccupation.

Therefore, in addition to the original principle of supporting the Nationalist reoccupation, US policy also included the task of implementing the truce regarding the Northeast. However, no measures against any contradiction between these two courses were devised. The second phase started from the end of April when the Americans were actually faced with such a contradiction. Marshall was perplexed by the circumstances in which the CCP dominated militarily in north Manchuria whilst the Nationalist armies found it difficult to “proceed to re-occupy Manchuria”. He also feared the precarious situation in which hostilities could “spread south into China proper” (Marshall to Truman, May 6, FR 1946, IX: 815-818). Even after the end of May when the Nationalists went on the offensive in the Northeast, American diplomats in China did not greatly change their previous judgment about the military situation. They still considered that CCP troops would persistently resist and that the Nationalists could not easily win a military victory (Smyth to Byrnes, June 4, US-China: reel.3).

In fact, the Americans found it extremely difficult to combine the maintenance of the truce and the further movement of Nationalist forces. Marshall here devised for the first time a settlement for the pending issue. He proposed that the Nationalist troops should concentrate their strength in “the southern portion of Manchuria” while the CCP should dispose of their army “in the area to the west of Harbin and toward Manchouli [Manzhouli]” (Memorandum by Marshall to Chiang Kai-shek [Jiang Jie-shi], May.10, 1946, FR 1946, IX: 824-828). Subsequently with the spread of the civil war, the US government no longer actively supported the movement of Nationalist troops in the Northeast. Thus Marshall’s proposal mentioned above can be retrospectively considered as one of the origins of the historical development in which the US practically relinquished the policy of supporting the Nationalist territorial reoccupation.

Only the idea of a coalition government remained in the Marshall Mission. How did the US conduct its mediation in response to the quickly collapsing ceasefire and the expanding civil war after the end of June?

At first, I shall consider how Marshall and John L. Stuart, the new American ambassador to China, perceived the progress of the civil war. Stuart believed that “probably at the latest about 6 months after the outbreak of full-scale civil war,” the Nationalist “offensive would bog down”; then there would appear “a stalemate” in which the Nationalists would “hold the coast, the principal centers of population, and most of the lines of communication” and the CCP would “be driven into the hinterland” (Stuart to Byrnes, Sep.27, FR 1946, X: 235-236). Marshall feared that the widespread civil war in North China and Manchuria would offer “an ideal opportunity for subversive activities” of the CCP and lead to Soviet intervention in Chinese affairs (Meeting Between Marshall and Chiang Kai-shek, Aug.16, FR 1946, X: 52; Marshall to Truman, Aug.17, *ibid*: 54).

Given these perceptions, the Americans did not consider alternative policies but continued to attempt the previous objectives of securing a truce between the KMT and the CCP and establishing a coalition government.<sup>17</sup> Despite the maintenance of the objectives, the measures for attaining them were lost one after another. At first, the existing mediation organizations based upon the truce activities weakened from the end of June: it was difficult for the COT to be convened, and the EH activities largely broke down (Robertson to Marshall, July 13, FR 1946, IX: 1354-1355). Then Marshall initiated two efforts to restore the ceasefire. The first was to establish a framework in order to secure American mediation even under civil war conditions. With the intensifying military strife, pending political issues such as the status of the CCP areas became vital. Thus, Marshall devised “a small group of civil representatives of high position or reputation” from the US, the KMT and the CCP in order to negotiate such political matters (Marshall to Truman, June 30, FR 1946, IX: 1271). Second, Marshall desired American expertise on Chinese affairs, particularly regarding its political problems. Marshall hence changed his mind and nominated not Wedemeyer but Stuart, the president of Yenching

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<sup>17</sup> For example, formal US policies towards China were proclaimed in a meeting between Vincent and Wellington Koo, the Chinese Ambassador to the US, Aug.13, 1946 (FR 1946, X: 24).

University, as the candidate to be the new American ambassador to China (Marshall to Acheson, July 5, FR 1946, IX: 1298-1299).

From August 1946 Marshall began to combine these two efforts, and persuade both the KMT and the CCP to newly establish a “five man committee (informal committee)” (FR 1946, IX: 1439, 1143-1147, 1453).<sup>18</sup> This was an organization to be used by Stuart to negotiate with the KMT and the CCP representatives on political issues. The CCP, however, resolutely opposed the convocation of the committee. Zhou Enlai considered that it appeared “exceedingly hard to accomplish anything” through political negotiation under civil war conditions, and urged Marshall to secure the truce as a condition of the convocation of the informal committee (Meeting between Marshall, Chou Robertson, and Yeh, Aug.15, FR 1946, X: 29-30; Meeting between Marshall, Stuart, and Chou, Sep.5, *ibid*: 132-140). It was ironic that America’s attempts to restore the ceasefire were refused due to the lack of truce conditions.

While the Americans found it hard to form the informal committee, at the beginning of October Nationalist troops defeated the communists at the CCP strategic point of Kalgan. During this event, which was symbolic of an intensified military confrontation, Marshall not only failed to restrain the movement of the Nationalist armies but could not even secure any means of mediation (Meeting Between Marshall and Chou, Oct.9, Meeting Between Marshall and Yu, Oct.10, FR 1946, X: 340-341, 349). Faced with these events, Marshall started to transfer the mediation task from the Americans to Chinese elements, excepting the KMT and the CCP (Meeting Between Marshall and Liang, Oct.17, FR 1946, X: 385; Meeting Between Marshall and Chou, Oct.26, *ibid*: 433; Marshall to Truman, Oct. 26, *ibid*: 435, 437). In essence, the US mediation ended here.

In the early stage, a third party such as the Democratic League or the Youth Party served as mediator. Nevertheless, once the Nationalists almost unilaterally convened the National Assembly, i.e. the constitutional conference, on November 15, the third parties suffered internal rifts over

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<sup>18</sup> This committee had no formal name and was variously named in the formal US documents: “Dr.Stuart’s small group”, “small committee”, “informal committee”, “5 man committee”, and so on. In this paper, I shall expediently name it the “informal committee”.

the pros and cons of participating in the Assembly. This development “seriously weakened its [the Third Party Group’s] influence for good in acting as a balance between the two dominant parties” (Marshall to Truman, Nov.16, FR 1946, X: 548. Also see Jeans, 1998). Marshall still abstained from mediating, and simply expected that a new political force – “liberals” whose definition and objective were ambiguous – would emerge from the Chinese political parties and non-party elements, and would encourage the establishment of a coalition government (FR 1946, X: 551-552, 662-663, 669-670). But he adopted no practical measures for encouraging the new elements. Moreover, he judged that “his role in China could be interpreted by many, particularly the reactionary group in the KMT, as an undesirable necessity since by keeping him continually in the picture the Government reactionaries could continue their undemocratic practices and military campaigns under the guise of willingness to negotiate” (Meeting between Marshall and Butterworth, Dec. 1, MM, Micro: reel.4).

From December, Marshall seriously studied how to end his mission. On December 18 President Truman summarized Marshall’s efforts over one year (Bulletin, 1946, vol. XV, no. 391: 1179-1183). And on December 28 Marshall informed Truman that now that the National Assembly had adopted the constitution, the “Chinese, themselves” had to “do the things I endeavored to lead them into” (FR 1946, X: 664-665). On January 8 1947 Marshall ended his mission and left China. At the end of January, President Truman decided to withdraw the Americans from the COT and the EH. The mediation organizations disappeared both in name and in reality (Carter to Underwood, Janu.27, 1947, FR 1946, X: 709-710).

Thus, the spread of the civil war caused a decisive split between the objective and the measures for attaining it in the US policies towards China.<sup>19</sup> Without measures for its achievement, the policy objective was to be reconsidered sooner or later and ultimately abandoned. After 1947 the

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<sup>19</sup> Tang regards the “ends” of the Marshall Mission as the reorganization of the Nationalist regime, and its “means” as the use of force. He concludes that the US failed to attain the “ends” due to the lack of the “means” (Tang, 1963: ch.9). But he does not analyze the discussion argued in this paper: how the US secured or lost the measures based on the true mediation in order to attain the objective of establishing a coalition government.

idea of the KMT-CCP coalition government receded, and another idea of Asian regional order that was not premised on the “Great Power China” emerged.

## **V. The United States and the Fall of the “Great Power China”**

After the end of the war, US policy towards China reached a turning point in less than one and a half years. American policy ideas and the situation in China drifted apart as the days went by which impelled the US to alter its policy. I shall revisit the overall argument in this paper from four respects.

### **1. The “Great Power China” and the Civil War**

First, how did the fluctuating situation in postwar China relate to the process in which the US “policy of making China a Great Power” fell apart? According to my analysis, with no detailed and practical answer to the issue concerned with the “unification of China”, from the beginning the Americans largely depended on Chinese decisions on local domestic issues. The US only focused on the unification issue after the KMT-CCP military strife escalated. In fact, they postponed any decision during the Marshall Mission in December 1945, in the truce negotiations in January 1946, and even in the ceasefire mediation in the Northeast in March 1946.

The more respectful of the decisions of local actors, the more vulnerable the US mediation became to local changes. This was especially so when both the KMT and the CCP destroyed the “status quo” of the ceasefire. After the intensification of the military battle, the US policy was at the mercy of local confrontation. Marshall regarded the “unification of China” only after military crashes raged at the beginning of May 1946. Indeed the US failed to maintain its previous policy and was forced to find other solutions due to the rapidly fluctuating situation in the Northeast. In addition, America could later obtain no mediation measures owing to the military and political strategies of both the KMT and the CCP.

“The policy of making China a Great Power” embraced the seeds of collapse within itself. Since the US greatly depended on local decisions via its “limited commitments”, the foundation of its policy was ironically destroyed by the local determination to resort to the use of force.

America's Chinese policy based upon KMT-CCP cooperation failed under the civil war conditions.

## 2. Policy Changes After the Civil War

Second, what significance did the Chinese civil war have for America's postwar China policy? In order to consider America's policy changes after the civil war, this paper has examined the process in which the split between the objective and measures in its Chinese policy emerged. It can be concluded that the means for attaining the objective of establishing "a strong, united, and democratic China" were lost by January 1947. Early in the postwar period, the fundamental objective of the US policies regarding China decayed due to the KMT-CCP civil war.

This development influenced US debate regarding China including that amongst the government, congress and journalists. Such debate was not active during the Marshall Mission when the US retained only a few policy options regarding China, but it increasingly escalated from 1948. By then America had lost almost all its policy options. Later the Americans spent their energy more in accusations of political responsibility for the government's Chinese policy and less in actively debating practical policy options. This greatly restrained the US policies regarding China during the Cold War period (Tang, 1963; Yamagiwa, 1997).

The US traditional principle regarding its Chinese policy has receded since the 1950s. The historical development from the Chinese civil war to the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC) approximates the process in which America's traditional Chinese policy quietly retreated. Since the end of the nineteenth century the US had set the "Open Door Policy" in an effort to prevent foreign powers from strengthening their military, political, and economic interests in China (Tang, 1963; Williams, [1959]1972). Later in the 1940s, however, except for a few areas major foreign powers were eliminated from mainland China and local elements managed to govern the mainland after the establishment of the PRC. Then the "Open Door Policy," which was premised on the presence of foreign powers in China, receded from the forefront of America's Chinese policies.

Lacking a nearly half-century-old traditional principle, the US was faced with a new difficulty in its policy towards China.<sup>20</sup>

The difficulty was concerned with the question of “what was the Chinese government?” In the Marshall mission the US had recognized the existing Chinese regime and encouraged various political forces to join the government. But they faced the problem related to the “unification of China” of how to deal with anti-governmental elements in China when they emerged and strengthened their influence. At that time Marshall clearly denied that the CCP would govern some areas independently of the Nationalists (Meeting Between Marshall and Chou, June.17, 1946, FR 1946, IX: 1066). Nevertheless, after the PRC was established, and the Nationalists fled to Taiwan, the difficulty of “what was the Chinese government?” weighed heavily on America’s policy regarding China. Thereafter, for nearly a quarter of a century, this question disturbed the US. The problem related to the “unification of China” was one of the origins of the US’s difficulties in its Chinese policy during the Cold War period.

### 3. US types of commitment

Third, I shall consider the types of US commitment to postwar Asia in order to put the Marshall Mission into a broader context. After the end of the war, particularly during the Cold War period, America frequently intervened in Asia in which many areas were undergoing nation-building movements (see, Fujiwara, 2002; Westad, 2005). Hideki Kan separates these interventions into two types. The first one is one of “the direct and formal control”: the US strongly and frequently militarily intervened in areas where they had failed to encourage their local “collaborators” (for instance, South Korea). The second type is that of “indirect and informal control”: weighing non-military means (e.g. “economic power, ideology and cultural power”) America worked on consensus building in areas where they could foster their “collaborators” as in Japan (Kan, 2006:

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<sup>20</sup> Tang indicates that this traditional principle “has terminated in the reality of two Chinas”, but does not sufficiently discuss the process of the ending of this principle (Tang, 1963: 590-591). Another scholar indicates that the US traditional “Open Door Policy” ended in “Manchuria” after the CCP won the civil war, but does not necessarily clarify the ending process (Wang, 2002).

198-199, 207, 220). Although differing in the form of commitment, both types were based on the hub-and-spoke relationship centered upon the US which the Americans sought for their local collaborators.

Now I shall consider America's balance of power policy between the great powers as a third type of commitment which differs from the policy based upon the hub-and-spoke relationship. As argued above, by 1947, America expected "a strong, united, and democratic China" to play a central role in postwar Asia as the "Great Power China". The US had never wanted to encourage anti-communist collaborators in China. In an effort to establish the "Great Power China", the Marshall Mission employed "limited commitments" in which the Americans left local actors to take detailed decisions on Chinese domestic affairs.

From later in the 1940s, the situation changed greatly: the PRC appeared in mainland China, the Sino-Soviet treaty was concluded, and ultimately the Korean War started. Throughout these events, the US regarded Communist China as a threat to its security, and developed a "containment" strategy against it. While maintaining alliances within its bloc and by militarily and diplomatically threatening the communists, the US endeavored to avoid escalating confrontation with them, sometimes through ambassadorial talks (Ross, 2001: 8-10. Also see Zhang and Jia, 2001: 173-199). Thus, "Overall, from the mid-1950s to the end of the 1960s, the course of U.S.-China conflict was not very different from that of other traditional great power conflicts" (Ross, 2001: 8). The US formed and maintained bilateral alliances based on the hub-and-spoke relationship partly because the Americans attempted to establish the balance of power with mainland China.<sup>21</sup>

From the end of the 1960s to the 1970s, the US began, not only to refrain from militarily intervening in the Vietnam War, but also to reconcile with the PRC by reconsidering its previous "containment" strategy against China. During this process, while exploiting the Sino-Soviet confrontation, the US intended to realize the balance of power in the Far East between

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<sup>21</sup> For example, during the Cold War period, while securing the "credibility" in anti-extended deterrence, the US employed the "self-restraint" policy in Taiwan in order to stabilize the balance of power with mainland China (Sahashi, 2006).

itself, the PRC, the Soviet Union, and Japan (Chang, 1990: 9-15; Schaller, 2001: 361-389; Fujiwara, 2002: 169-171).

The aforementioned policies, i.e. “the policy of making China a Great Power”, a “containment” policy against China, and the rapprochement with the PRC, greatly differ in their intentions as well as in the contexts and periods in which they took place. It is, however, possible to commonly understand each policy as the result of US effort to balance power with the political force governing mainland China.<sup>22</sup> I shall define the third type of commitment only in these terms.<sup>23</sup>

#### 4. Criticism of Asian Cold War Study

Fourth, I shall consider how to understand Cold War history in Asia. International political history in postwar Asia includes too many historical materials and events to be easily assimilated. In this field one can variously focus on his/her research subject in his/her favor. Each nation-building and independent movement that developed in various parts of Asia after the end of the war had its own unique character. Nevertheless, when examining how international politics developed in postwar Asia, one can indicate at least two central questions. First, how was the twofold postwar order composed of victorious and defeated nations designed and later destroyed? The idea for preventing the recurrence of another world war and establishing a stable order was a crucial issue in the field of international politics. Second, how did the Cold War appear in Asia?

Although these two questions are originally two sides of the same coin recent study has concentrated its concern largely on the latter subject. In contrast, this paper insistently aims at combining both subjects in order to examine how the Eastern and the Western blocs emerged from the fall of the idea of postwar order in Asia. I have illustrated this question with an examination of postwar America’s policy toward China.

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<sup>22</sup> Chang studies America’s Chinese policy from the end of the 1940s to the 1970s in terms of Sino-Soviet frictions and of American strategies regarding the Sino-Soviet division. He implicitly or explicitly assumes that the US consistently pursued the balance of power with mainland China (Chang, 1990).

<sup>23</sup> The aforementioned discussion on the type of commitment cannot be fully demonstrated only by my argument in this paper. Therefore, this is merely a hypothesis which has to be further studied and proved.

In order to give an outline, I shall summarize my conclusions in the next section. First, while “the policy of making China a Great Power” (the order which was mainly designed by the victorious powers) was decaying, the US began to shift to a strategy based upon the defensive line in Asia. Second, while the CCP extended its influence from the Northeast to the whole of mainland China during the civil war, and the PRC and later the Sino-Soviet alliance were established, the US “policy of making China a Great Power” receded. As these two processes occurred simultaneously, it is possible to roughly trace how the historical development of the Eastern-Western blocs arose from the decay of “the policy of making China a great power”. Although the history of other parts of Asia excepting China remains to be further examined, it is reasonable to assert that the outset of international political history in postwar Asia is not only located in the Northeast. Rather, an historical narrative starting from Northeast China is an incorrect reconstruction of Cold War history in Asia, not only because the story is greatly, if implicitly, reflected in the then perceptions and strategies of the CCP, but because it is overly deterministic to regard the appearance of the Cold War, particularly of the Eastern bloc as a given from the beginning.

One cannot reduce the US policy towards China to just that concerning the Northeast in the postwar period. It has not been proved that in the spring of 1946 the Americans conducted a “containment” policy in order to suppress the CCP as well as to aid Nationalist military supremacy in the Northeast; much less that this policy directly led to the Chinese civil war. Rather, it can be concluded from my analysis that historical events progressed in the opposite direction: however seriously the US endeavored to prevent a military clash and to restrain the Nationalists from taking over territory local actors’ determination to use force finally destroyed America’s policies. Only after that, did the US initiate a “containment” policy in Asia.

Faced with the civil war, the US policies greatly changed. Hence it is also unreasonable to consistently understand America’s policies towards Asia (or China) before and after the Chinese civil war only in the terms of “the Yalta System”.

The US postwar order designed to prevent the reoccurrence of war and to construct a stable order in Asia was greatly changed from its original form to a so-called “containment” policy; in other words, an archetype of a-quarter-century-old Asian and Chinese policies. With the advent of a new era (the Cold War), the former defeated nation (Japan) ironically formed an alliance with the victorious nation (the United States), and rejoined international society.

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The explanations within [ ] in quotations in this text are mine.

The abbreviation of the title of the materials used in the text is noted before each title.

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# 二战后的美国与“中国大国化”的崩溃——从马歇尔调处到亚洲冷战

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## Postwar America and the Fall of the “Great Power China” : From the Marshall Mission to the Asian Cold War

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