Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Arts
of
DMITRY PETROV
BA (People’s Friendship University of Russia, 2011)


Department of History

Thursday, September 6, 2018
3:00 P.M.
Clearihue Building
Room D131

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Zhongping Chen, Department of History, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Serhy Yekelchyk, Department of History, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Feng Xu, Department of Political Science, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Tatiana Gounko, Department of Education Psychology & Leadership Studies, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Abstract

This paper examines the reasons of the failure of the Soviet advisers’ mission in Chinese warlord Feng Yuxiang’s army in 1925-1927. The USSR had a goal of promoting its nationalistic interests in Northern China in addition to its mission to spread communist revolution to the Asian country. It used military and political advisers’ missions to increase its influence in the region. As a result, Soviet leadership chose prominent Chinese political and military leader Feng Yuxiang as one of its main allies and sent advisers to help him strengthen and indoctrinate his army. This Soviet mission, also known as the Kalgan group of advisers, was active in Feng’s Peoples’ National Army from 1925 to 1927. It did not achieve its main goals and was cancelled when Feng terminated all relations with the Soviet Union in 1927. There were three main reasons for the mission’s failure to achieve its goals. First of all, the pragmatic motives for Soviet alliance with Feng did not resolve political contradictions between Feng and the USSR. Feng Yuxiang was a patriot and anti-imperialist general, who was strongly against the increase of any foreign presence in China, even though he desperately needed Soviet support at first. Second, Feng was very progressive among Chinese warlords, but he was not ready to accept communist ideology, while one of the USSR’s main goals was to spread communism in his army. During the whole time of the cooperation between Feng and the USSR, he tried to limit Soviet advisers’ educational and political activities in his army, because he did not want to lose absolute control over his troops. Moreover, Soviet advisers’ problems with understanding Chinese culture and political situation in China and in Feng’s army led to their poor interpersonal relations with Chinese officers, and other internal problems in the advisers’ group also limited the advisers’ ability to achieve success in their mission and eventually contributed to the mission’s failure.