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Review of “Qing Simei/Chen Jian Recent Exchanges in H-Diplo” by Yafeng Xia.

Re: H-Diplo Roundtable Review of Simei Qing, *From Allies to Enemies: Visions of Modernity, Identity, and U.S.-China Diplomacy*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007. Published on 13 October 2010. URL: <http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/PDF/Roundtable-XI-44.pdf>

Re: “Serious Concerns: Discrepancies between Qing’s Citations and Her Sources,” by Chen Jian, Cornell University. Published on 15 August 2011. URL: <http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/PDF/RT-XI-44-ChenJian-SeriousConcerns.pdf> .

Re: “Response by Simei Qing, James Madison College, Michigan State University.” Published on 15 August 2011. URL: <http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/PDF/RT-XI-44-Qing-furtherfurther-response.pdf> .

Stable URL: <http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/PDF/RT-XI-44-YafengXia.pdf>

Review of “Qing Simei/Chen Jian Recent Exchanges in H-Diplo” by Yafeng Xia, Long Island University

As a scholar who was educated in both China and the United States, and fluent in both Chinese and English, I have a scholarly interest in major issues in Chinese-American relations. In view of the recent exchanges between Professors Qing Simei and Chen Jian¹, I’d like to submit my own analysis of the Chinese sources, which both scholars discussed in their pieces.

I was one of the two reviewers of Chen’s “Serious Concerns” and have thoroughly checked all sources he cited. I feel that Chen’s concern is reasonable and his criticism is fair. Qing’s response, however, fails to address important questions Chen raised.

¹ Chen Jian, “Serious Concerns: Discrepancies between Qing’s Citations and Her Sources,” <http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/PDF/RT-XI-44-ChenJian-SeriousConcerns.pdf>; Response by Simei Qing to Chen Jian’s “Serious Concerns ...” <http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/PDF/RT-XI-44-Qing-furtherfurther-response.pdf>

Chen asked Qing to clarify her citation about a meeting between Zhou Enlai and Roshchin on July 2, 1950 from Bai Zhouxuan ed., *Selected Russian Archival Documents on the Korean War, January 1949-August 1953* (Seoul: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Korea) (Chen, p. 5). Qing fails to do so in her response. In fact, the volume that Qing cited does not exist. In 1994, Russian President Yeltsin delivered to Kim Young-sam, then South Korean President over 200 Russian documents on the Korean War. The South Korean foreign ministry excerpted and edited these documents, and a portion of them were published in the South Korean newspaper *Seoul Times* in 1994. Then, some Chinese military researchers translated these documents from Korean into Chinese and put them in a collection for “internal use only.” Is this the volume to which Qing was referring? If so, it is not edited by Bai Zhouxuan (whose English name is Baek Joohyun). I also checked the Russian document about the meeting.² Qing’s direct quotation, “If the American troops do not cross the 38th parallel, the Chinese troops will not cross the Yalu,”³ is not there.

Chen points out that in citing Mao’s speech at a CCP Politburo meeting on August 4, 1950, Qing adds a sentence to her quotation that does not exist in the original text, “Should MacArthur’s troops cross the 38th parallel” (Chen, p. 6). I notice that Qing does not answer Chen’s question. In addition to double-checking the source from which Qing quotes, I also checked two other important sources.⁴ They all prove that Chen’s allegation is accurate.

In Qing’s response, she posts the photocopy of pages 7-8 of the book by Pang Xianzhi and Li Jie regarding the “bottom line” in China’s entry into the Korean War, and she makes a comparison of the Chinese text and the English translation (Qing, pp. 2-4). She claims that “Mao discussed the question of the 38th parallel as the ‘bottom line’ in China’s participation in the war.” She then asks numerous questions, including “aren’t there quotation marks?” and “Don’t they deal with the ‘bottom line’ and ‘the 38th parallel?’” (Qing, p. 4) Yes, there are quotation marks. However, as in English usage, quotation marks in the Chinese text also have different functions. In this case, Pang and Li use quotation marks in two different ways. They quote one statement Mao said in 1956, “If the American imperialists had intervened but did not cross the 38th parallel, we would not have intervened. If they cross

² AVPRF (Archive of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation) ed., *Khronologiya osnovnykh sobytii kanuna i nachal’nogo perioda koreiskoi voyny, ianvar’ 1949-oktiabr’ 1950 gg.* [Chronology of Major Events on the Eve of and in the First Period of the Korean War, January 1949-October 1950], Unpublished, pp. 35-37. I would like to thank Professor Shen Zihua for providing me with a copy of the document and the Chinese translation of it.

³ H-Diplo Roundtable Review of Simei Qing, *From Allies to Enemies: Visions of Modernity, Identity, and U.S.-China Diplomacy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007). See <http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/PDF/Roundtable-XI-44.pdf>, 13 October 2010, p. 59.

⁴ Bo Yibo, *Ruogan zhongda juece yu shijian de huiyi* [Reflections on Some Major Policy-making Decisions and Events] (Beijing: Zhongyang Dangxiao Chubanshe, 1997), rev. ed., vol. 2, p.44; Pang Xianzhi and Jin Chongji, chief eds., *Mao Zedong zhuan, 1949-1976* [A Biography of Mao Zedong] (Beijing: Zhongyang Wenxian Chubanshe, 2003), vol. 1, p. 109.

the 38th parallel, we would have to fight them across the 38th parallel.”⁵ But they also used the Chinese term “底” (“bottom line”) with quotation marks to call the readers’ attention to their own points. As Chen points out, Qing “mistakenly turns the views of the two authors into Mao’s own words, and changes the original text’s third person reference to Mao into a first person reference.” (Chen, p. 7)

In her essay for the H-Diplo roundtable discussion about her book, Qing writes: “On June 23, 1950, Mao ordered the transfer of four more corps from Shanghai areas to the Taiwan Strait region ...”⁶ In her response to Chen’s criticism, Qing claims “there is rich documentary evidence, which directly points to the fact that Mao ordered the transfer of four more corps to Su Yu’s command in the preparation for the Taiwan campaign on the eve of the outbreak of the Korean War.” (Qing, p. 11) Qing indicates that on June 23, 1950, Su Yu requested that three-four more corps from other field armies be transferred to his command. This can be found in many Chinese sources, as Qing shows. However, no source indicates that Mao approved Su Yu’s request. Available Chinese sources only suggest that had Su’s request been approved, Chinese forces for the upcoming Taiwan campaign would have reached 16 corps.⁷ It was Su Yu’s proposal, which was not implemented.

In Qing’s response, she cited the volume by Zhang Xiongwen to prove the request was approved, and that by the end of June the forces under Su Yu’s command had increased from 500,000 to 650,00 in one week’s time (Qing, p. 12). I followed the web address provided by Qing in note 25 to check Zhang’s book. I do not find any information in the part cited by Qing that supports Qing’s contention. I then read through the whole book, and find nothing in it remotely alludes that Mao approved Su Yu’s June 23, 1950 request.

Qing cites Sergei Goncharov, John W. Lewis, and Xue Litai to argue that she was not the first one who concluded that Mao approved Su Yu’s proposal. I checked the book by Goncharov *et al.* Their sources are Zhou Xun’s 1991 article (see my note 6) and He Di’s article, “‘The Last Campaign to Unify China,’ ” which was actually published in 1992.⁸ I further checked these two articles. Neither article indicates that Mao approved Su Yu’s proposal. It seems Goncharov *et al.* made an erroneous statement on this issue. I also checked into several

⁵ This is what Mao told visiting Soviet delegation in 1956 (six years after Chinese entry to the Korean War). Qing’s translation is not accurate. In all honesty I’m not sure if mine is better.

⁶ H-Diplo Roundtable Review of Simei Qing, 13 October 2010, p. 58.

⁷ Hu Zefeng, “Su Yu yu gong Tai zouzhan de zhunbei [Su Yu and the Preparation for the Taiwan Campaign],” *Junshi lishi* [Military History], no. 5 (1997), pp. 39-40; Zhou Jun, “Xin Zhongguo chuqi renmin jiefangjun weineng suixing Taiwan zhanyi jihua yuanyin chutan [A Study on the Reasons Why the PLA Aborted its Plan to Attack Taiwan]” *Zhonggong dangshi yanjiu* (Studies on the History of the Chinese Communist Party), no. 1 (1991), p. 69.

⁸ He Di : “‘The Last Campaign to Unify China’: The CCP’s Unmaterialized Plan to Liberate Taiwan, 1949-1950,” (translated by Chen Jian), *Chinese Historians* Vol. 5, No. 1 (Spring 1992), pp. 1-16.

major volumes⁹ on Mao's military and diplomatic activities, and concur with Chen's conclusion that "I have not come across any Chinese source indicating that 'On June 23, 1950, Mao ordered the transfer of four more corps from Shanghai areas to the Taiwan Strait region.'" (Chen, p. 5)

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⁹ Zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi/Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun junshi kexueyuan bian, ed., *Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong junshi wengao* [Mao Zedong's Military Manuscripts since the Founding of the PRC], 3 vols. (Beijing: Junshi Kexue Chubanshe/Zhongyang Wenxian Chubanshe, 2010); Pang Xianzhi and Jin Chongji, chief eds., *Mao Zedong zhuan, 1949-1976* [A Biography of Mao Zedong, 1949-1976], 2 vols. (Beijing: Zhongyang Wenxian Chubanshe, 2003); Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun junshi kexueyuan Mao Zedong sixiang yanjiu suo nianpu zu, ed., *Mao Zedong junshi nianpu, 1927-1958* [Chronology of Mao Zedong's Military Activities] (Nanning: Guangxi renmin chubanshe, 1994); Zhongguo junshi buwuguan, ed., *Mao Zedong junshi huodong jishi, 1893-1976* [Record of Mao Zedong's Military Activities] (Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 1994).