

РОЗДІЛ 3.

Політика пам'яті та соціальні трансформації

DOI <https://doi.org/10.30525/978-9934-26-689-8-17>

MEMORABLE IMPACT OF UKRAINE ON CHINA'S REGIONS (1890S-1960S) AND SUBSEQUENT AFTERMATH

Velychko V. V.

INTRODUCTION

The study of Ukrainian memory and traditions impact on China societies in regions is a recent development, commencing with the historical presence and settlement of Ukrainians there since the late 1890s. This period saw the preservation of traditions by the Ukrainian diaspora and their dissemination to subsequent generations settled across China regions. The aim of this chapter is rooted in the urgent need to further preserve the legacy and memory of Ukrainians living in China cities that time. Since the diaspora has demonstrated a steadfast commitment to their ancestral traditions, language, faith, and national identity (Chornomaz, V. (2013), Khomenko, O. (2021), Kiktenko, V. (2002), Koval, O. (2022), Sagan, G. (2018) and others¹.

Furthermore, educational services and knowledge transfer to China occurred during distinct historical periods, namely from 1950 to the early 1960s.

The article "Scientific and Technical Cooperation of Ukraine and China 1949–1959" along with his PhD dissertation (Volodymyr Urusov, 2003, 2005), significantly underscores the pivotal establishment of scientific, technical, and economic relations between the Ukrainian SSR and China during this transformative era. The analysis highlights essential elements such as Ukraine's technical assistance, the dynamic exchange of specialists, and the invaluable training provided to Chinese students in a range of locations in Ukraine². By illustrating these critical interactions, the work convincingly demonstrates how these collaborations not only advanced technological progress in China regions but also fostered a unique partnership that has lasting implications in today's China.

Therefore, the study encompasses two pivotal domains, with its temporal framework extending over a period exceeding a half of a century.

¹ Koval, O. An encyclopedia about Ukrainians in China. The Encyclopedia Herald of Ukraine. 2022.14, 73–80. [http://doi.org/10.37068/evu.14.8/\[In Ukrainian\]](http://doi.org/10.37068/evu.14.8/[In Ukrainian])

² Urusov V.B. Scientific and technical cooperation between Ukraine and China 1949–1959. *Eastern World*. 2003. No. 2. P. 114–118/[In Ukrainian]

Table 1

Impact of Ukrainian (culture) education on China: Studies Timing Framework

The following analyses have been conducted: the materials on the Ukrainian diaspora in China during the late 19th to the middle of the 20th century;
--

And the materials on the Chinese students in Ukraine from the 1950s to the early 1960s, and their contribution to the construction of the People's Republic of China after their return from Ukraine
--

Despite the wealth of literature published in the 2010s and 2020s that has explored the history of the Ukrainian diaspora around the world, the narrative of Ukrainians in China's regions should remain a central focus in relevant studies and be examined over a longer time period. The chapter's objective is to illuminate the sustainability of the aforementioned process by briefly acknowledging the contributions of Ukrainians in and for China's regions. This is achieved by means of concrete cases. The potential exists for the establishment of a more profound collective comprehension of the past, with the consequence of this being the fostering of support for a community that is both vibrant and resilient in the present.

1. Chinese Ukrainian diaspora spatial structure (late 1890s–1949)

Since the late 1890s, Ukrainian public life, characterised by its cultural and educational aspects, has been established in Manchuria (North East). This is consistent with the historical roots of Ukrainian traditions in the Chinese public life, culture and education sector and even industry and transportation.

Towards the end of the 1890s several thousand Ukrainians migrated and settled in some regions of imperial China. An overwhelming majority were employed in various institutions there, including legations, consulates, postal service, industries and the merchant area. Unfortunately, little is known about the early Ukrainian organizations. Probably, the first Ukrainian cultural society was established in Liaoyang, in southern Manchuria, around 1903. Ukrainians formed various amateur and professional drama troupes within the East-China Railway (中东铁路) employees' and workers' clubs. After the 1905 Revolution a Ukrainian Hromada Society was created in Shanghai (1906) from Ukrainian migrants formerly lived in Manchuria, and a year later a Ukrainian Club (Ukrainskyi Dim) was created in Harbin³.

In 1918, the Ukrainian community in Harbin raised funds through voluntary donations to design and construct a 'Ukrainian Club' building in the city. The large, three-storey building, completed two years later, housed a Ukrainian school, a gymnasium, a library, a theatre and a church. With the support of the Ukrainian Club, the newspapers *Visnyk Ukrainського Klubu*, *Ranok*, and later *Manchurian Visnyk* ("Bulletin of the Ukrainian Club", "Morning", later – "Manchurian Herald") were published⁴.

³ Mariusz Borysewicz (2018). A Brief History of Ukrainian Diaspora in Manchuria, 1898–1945. *Scripta Historica*. 24. P.95

⁴ Borovyk, K. (2023). From the history of the Ukrainian community in China. *Ukrainian Weekly*. Chicago. December 12. <https://ukrainianchi.com /3-історії-української-громади-в-китаї/> [In Ukrainian]

The cultural centres and circles that emerged in proximity to the Railway's 880 km span played a startup role in this transformation. The establishment of cultural institutions by the Ukrainian diaspora in Manchuria during the early 1900s was the result of the formation and activities of these circles. The organisation had educational goals, which included the following: to preserve Ukrainian culture traditions among the Ukrainian diaspora, to awaken interest in Ukraine among the local Chinese population, to promote knowledge of Ukrainian history, literature and music, and to provide material assistance to those in need.

The allure of remunerative employment, coupled with the appeal of residing in proximity to the Zeleny Klyn (Green Wedge) – a region within the Far East that boasted a significant Ukrainian demographic – proved a compelling factor for many. As time passed, a dynamic public life came to the fore in Manchuria, one which was deeply rooted in cultural and educational pursuits. The cultural centres and communities that emerged in proximity to the Railway played a pivotal role in this transformation. The establishment of the Ukrainian Club, schools, performance troupes, and a church in Manchuria in the 1900s was a significant milestone, as these institutions were born from the community circles that existed at the time. The organisation has established a series of pivotal educational objectives⁵.

Table 2

Educational objectives of Ukrainian diaspora in 1900s

Firstly, it seeks to cultivate a profound sense of national pride among Ukrainian locals.
Secondly, it aims to expand their and Chinese locals' understanding of the nation's historical, arts, literary and musical heritage.
Thirdly, it is committed to providing its members and Chinese locals with the requisite enlightenment and educational assistance. This legacy endures and continues to influence contemporary Ukrainian identity in China.

The development of Ukrainian national life in Manchuria was characterised by unevenness. Prior to 1917, the institution had an exclusively cultural and educational orientation, centred in the Ukrainian Club in Harbin and culture lovers' circles that emerged in Ukrainian settlements situated along the Railway. During the period 1917–1921, cultural and educational activities (including the opening of an Ukrainian elementary school, a Ukrainian gymnasium, a Ukrainian Orthodox parish, and the construction of the Ukrainian Club) were integrated with political activities (such as the establishment and operation of the Manchurian District Council and the UPR's Ukrainian P.R.Consulate in Harbin, the fostering of connections with U.P.R. government and educational circles in Kyiv.

In the aftermath of China's rapprochement with the Soviet Union, a series of developments occurred that significantly impacted the Ukrainian community in Manchuria. By 1923, some Ukrainian circles in the region were disbanded, and

⁵ Chornomaz, V. Manchuria (Original work published 2018). In I. M. Dziuba, A. I. Zhukovsky, M. H. Zhelezniak, et al (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Modern Ukraine*. 2025. Vol. 19. Kyiv: Institute of Encyclopedic Research, NASU. <https://esu.com.ua/article-63542> [In Ukrainian]

the Ukrainian populace was compelled to accept Soviet citizenship. The weekly "Ukrainian Life" was the only publication published in the Far East in 1920s, although it was printed in a Japanese printing house.

The life of the Ukrainian communities underwent significant changes following the Japanese occupation of part of China and the establishment of Manzhou-guo 满洲国. In the context of the Japanese occupation, military authorities facilitated the repatriation of the Ukrainian population, thereby enabling them to re-enter their country of origin and engage in the organisation of public life.

During the period of Japanese occupation in Manchuria, a significant proportion of the Ukrainian population sought refuge in other cities, with Shanghai being a particularly popular destination. Consequently, in September 1932, the organisation of the Ukrainian community was established with the objective of safeguarding the interests of Ukrainians, preserving their national cultural heritage, and providing both moral and material support to Ukrainians residing in the Far East. According to the Community, the population of Ukrainians residing in Shanghai at that time was approximately 5,000. The dissemination of music and news was facilitated through the medium of radio broadcasts.⁶

In the early 1930s, the OUN began to pay special attention to events in the Far East. It succeeded in persuading the Japanese General Staff of the exceptional political, strategic and economic importance of Ukraine in the context of resolving the Eastern problem. In addition, the OUN leader E. Konovalts endeavoured to exert an influence on Germany's policy in Eastern Europe by means of Japan. It is evident that Y. Konovalts' endeavours were instrumental in the in the Chinese and Japanese language publication of literary works concerning Ukraine in 1937. The endeavours of OUN members among Ukrainians in the Far East yielded notable outcomes, particularly given the operation of a quantitatively constrained group in the absence of substantial political and financial support⁷.

That time, the certain Ukrainians developed successful firms in the industry, for instance, the Shevchenko Brothers, who owned a forest concession near the Shitouhezi railway station, which was located along the line running from Manzhouli to Suifenhe. The workforce in the lumber industry, though, was largely of Chinese origin.

Ivan Svit (1897–1989) was a Ukrainian historian, economist and journalist who specialised in the study of Ukrainian life in China. The primary sources consulted for this study include Svit's personal observations, diary notes from 1929 to 1946, correspondence, numerous excerpts from the local press of the time, archival materials (in particular, notes from the archive of the Ukrainian Consulate in Harbin, etc.), memoirs and scientific literature, collected mainly from 1920 to 1945. Svit's work provides a comprehensive analysis of the socio-political, economic and cultural life of organised Ukrainians in the region. This analysis is set against the backdrop of the prevailing political and economic situation, as well as the attitude towards Ukrainians among Japanese official circles. Each fact or event mentioned by the

⁶ Borovyk, K.(2023). From the history of the Ukrainian community in China. *Ukrainian Weekly*. Chicago. December 12. <https://ukrainianchi.com>

⁷ Posivnykh, M. OUN Activities in the Far East (1934–1944) *Nationalist portal*. (2014). <https://ukrnationalism.com/history/594-diialnist-oun-na-dalekomu-skhodi-1934-1944.html>[In Ukrainian]

author is confirmed by reference to relevant documents and sources. A plethora of additional works by I. Svit have been published, which illuminate a multitude of facets concerning the history of the Ukrainian diaspora in the Far East, with a particular emphasis on China⁸.

The lives of other figures of the Ukrainian diaspora in China were not the same. Following the dissolution of illusions regarding a potential return to the Motherland, the vast majority of Ukrainians opted to relocate to countries where substantial Ukrainian communities were already established. This decision was motivated by the desire to preserve their cultural heritage, leading to a migration to nations such as Canada, the USA, and Australia. A significant migration of Ukrainian immigrants from China was triggered by the cessation of World War II.

Smaller Ukrainian enclaves were founded in central and southern Manchuria, including those in Dairen, Kirin and Mukden. After leaving Harbin, Ukrainians also set out to establish their own communities across the coastal region. As a result, a Ukrainian Hromada existed in Shanghai as well as the relocated Ukrainian Club in Tientsin. Under auspices of these organizations, they conducted various Ukrainian activities, including exercises commemorating Ukrainian historical dates. By 1920, there were an estimated 150,000 citizens of the Russian Empire in the Harbin area and a further 50,000 scattered elsewhere in Manchuria. Among this number, as noted, were 22,000 Ukrainian families, an estimated 100,000 persons⁹.

As the number of permanent employees of the China East Railway grew, a network of schools, parks, hospitals, and other social infrastructures and amenities for the settlers were built and established. Women were fortunate to secure jobs as school teachers and in the civil service. Some worked in sectors such as the textile industry, where they added a new dimension in the cloths and blankets they worked by embroidering in them Slavic patterns.

The second wave of Ukrainian immigration into Manchuria comprised an undetermined number of political refugees travelling with a larger contingent of exiles from various parts of the Empire after the Bolshevik Revolution. Together they initially numbered upwards of 25,000 most of them settling in Harbin, but some eventually gravitating towards Shanghai and even further afield in Asia. In early 1930s, the number of Ukrainians in China was increasing.

Gradually, Ukrainian public life, which had a cultural and educational character, was established in coastal China and beyond.

⁸ Senyk Ya. Ivan Svit about Ukrainians of the Far East. Scientific Notes of the National University "Ostroh Academy". Historical Sciences. 2008. Issue 11. Pp. 355-365. URL: http://nbuv.gov.ua/UJRN/Nznuoi_2008_11_32. [in Ukrainian]

⁹ Serge Cipko (2008). Ukrainians in Manchuria, China: A Concise Historical Survey. *Past Imperfect*. 2008. February (electronic file) DOI:10.21971/P72019

Table 3

**Periods of Ukrainian diaspora existence in China and its culture
education structure**

Establishment and Settlement (1903–1916): The first Ukrainian organizations were tied to the construction of the Chinese Eastern Railway. A Ukrainian cultural society was established in Liaoyang in 1903, and a Ukrainian Club was created in Harbin in 1907.
Cultural and Political Life (1917–1930): Following the 1917 Revolution, a distinct national consciousness grew among Manchurian Ukrainians, who were often linked with the "Green Ukraine" (Zeleny Klyn) movement, aiming for an independent Ukrainian state in the Pacific region.
Japanese Period (1931–1945): After the Japanese occupation of Manchuria, the Ukrainian movement experienced a brief revival, supported by Japan's interest in anti-Soviet movements (Promethean Movement), but was later curtailed due to a change in Japanese policy, including the banning of the newspaper "Manchurian Herald".
Final Years (1945–1949): The community experienced a rapid decline and was ultimately terminated after the Soviet invasion in August 1945, which caused many to flee to Tianjin, Shanghai, and eventually Taiwan, the United States, and Canada.
Organizational Structures: The community established a Ukrainian Club ("Ukrainian National House") in Harbin, which served as a center for cultural activities, schools, and theater groups. Prominent organizations included local chapters of the Ukrainian Youth Association and Prosvita.
The Ukrainian Club in Harbin was the epicenter of social and educational life for the community during the first half of the 20th century. Established to preserve a distinct identity within a predominantly Russian-influenced Harbin, it housed several essential institutions: The Ukrainian Club in Harbin served as a vital sanctuary for Ukrainian identity in the Far East, specifically through its educational and theatrical programs.
The Primary School: A cornerstone of the Ukrainian culture community, this school provided education in the Ukrainian language to the children of railway workers and émigrés, ensuring the preservation of their heritage. The primary school was designed to counteract the surrounding linguistic and cultural assimilation. While exact daily schedules are scarce, the curriculum followed the broader "national school" models developed in Ukraine during the 1917–1921 revolutionary period.
Prosvita (Enlightenment Society): Replacing earlier groups like the Sich Society in 1928, Prosvita operated within the National House to promote national consciousness and raise the educational level of the colony through lectures and a library.
Youth Organizations: The house served as a base for the Union of Ukrainian Students and other youth groups that focused on physical education and patriotic training.
Theater Stage: The building featured a dedicated auditorium that hosted regular performances, ranging from classic Ukrainian dramas to community-led talent shows.
Drama Club "Bandura": Founded around 1910, this influential drama troupe was one of the most active cultural arms of the Club, staging plays that often addressed themes of national independence and history.
Community Events: Beyond formal theater, the space was used for choral rehearsals, traditional holiday celebrations, and as a meeting point for political leaders like Ivan Svit.

While exact daily schedules are scarce, the curriculum followed the broader “national school” models developed in Ukrainian People's Republic during the 1917–1921 revolutionary period.

Table 4

Curriculum of Ukrainian School in Harbin

Language and Literature: The core of the curriculum was intensive study of the Ukrainian language and literature, focusing on authors like Taras Shevchenko. This was a radical departure from the Russian-only education offered in other Harbin schools.
National History: Students were taught Ukrainian history through a national lens, emphasizing the Cossack era and the struggle for independence—subjects often censored or omitted in Russian émigré or Soviet institutions.
Physical Education & Ideology: Influenced by the Sich Society (later Prosvita), the school integrated physical training with patriotic education to foster “national consciousness” in the youth.
Religious Instruction: As the community was deeply religious, education often included sacred carols and hymns, sometimes integrated with musical training.

The drama troupe, often associated with the Bandura name, was a main way of preserving Ukrainian oral and artistic tradition in Manchuria.

Table 5

Bandura drama troupe in China in 1900s

Classic Drama: The troupe specialized in ethnographic and patriotic plays. Common plays for similar groups included Ivan Kotlyarevsky’s <i>Natalka Poltavka</i> and Mykhailo Starytsky’s <i>Oh, Don’t Go, Hryts</i> , to the Evening Parties.
The Shevchenko Influence: Many performances were “musical-dramatic,” incorporating the poetry of Taras Shevchenko into theatrical scenes. The bandura itself—the instrument—was often used on stage as a symbol of resistance and the voice of the Kobzar (wandering bard).
Musical Repertoire: Their shows often featured:
Historical Dums: Epic poems sung to the bandura, telling stories of Cossack valor.
Sacred Carols: During Christmas and Easter, the troupe performed traditional <i>koliadky</i> (carols) that served as community-bonding events.
Folk Dance: Repertoire often included folk dance tunes integrated into the plays to showcase Ukrainian high-energy traditions.

By 1932, these cultural activities were invigorated when the Japanese occupation of Manchuria initially allowed Ukrainian organizations to revive and publish materials like the *Mandzhurskyi vistnyk* (Manzhurian Herald).

At that time, the key aspects of culture education in China just started historical evolution: The transition began in 1906 with formal, academic ‘crafts and pictures’ studies replacing traditional apprenticeship. In early 1900s pioneers introduced academic, European-style art education, forming the basis of later curricula. However, Ukrainian women in Harbin and other cities maintained the same high level

of craftsmanship found in their homeland, often adapting available materials to traditional designs.

Table 6

Ukrainian handicrafts in China since 1900s
Embroidery (Vyshyvka): This was the most widespread craft. Women embroidered traditional vyshyvankas (shirts), rushnyky (ritual towels), and household items like tablecloths and napkins.
Techniques: Common styles included cross-stitch and the "nyzynka" stitch, often featuring red and black geometric or floral patterns.
Purpose: Beyond clothing, embroidery was used to decorate the interior of the National House and local Ukrainian churches.
Textile Weaving: Despite the industrial nature of Harbin, many families maintained small-scale weaving for linen, shawls, and decorative paths. These items were essential for recreating a "Ukrainian home" atmosphere in a foreign land.
Woodcarving: While traditionally a male-dominated craft (especially in the Hutsul style), women participated in the finishing and painting of carved wooden objects, such as decorative boxes and plates, which were often sold at community bazaars.
Pysanky (Easter Eggs): Each spring, women organized workshops to teach the art of wax-resist egg decoration to the younger generation, ensuring this complex symbolic art survived the migration.

During the 1930s, these crafts became a form of "silent resistance" against cultural suppression in Manchuria. By wearing and displaying these items, the community asserted a distinct identity separate from the larger Slavic émigré population.

During the peak of the Ukrainian diaspora in Manchuria in 1910–1930s, a vital role in preserving national identity through traditional crafts played the Ukrainian women. These activities were centralized at the Ukrainian Club system and directed from Harbin, where crafts were not only produced for domestic use but also used as tools for cultural diplomacy and fundraising. Cultural preservation was formally organized through the local branch of the Ukrainian Women’s Union (Soyuz Ukrainok).

Table 7

The Ukrainian Women’s Union activities in Harbin in 1900s
Charity Bazaars: The Union regularly held exhibitions and "Ukrainian Days" where hand-crafted goods were sold to support the Ukrainian school and help refugees.
Youth Education: Craft circles were a mandatory part of the curriculum for girls at the Ukrainian Primary School at the Ukrainian club), where they learned the regional patterns of their ancestors (e.g., Podillia or Poltava styles).

Ukrainians in China harnessed the power of culture to forge their Ukrainian unique identity outside traditional state structures during a period when no state existed. Their exceptional self-organization enabled them host vibrant cultural events, successfully establishing the Ukrainian Club, forming dynamic theater groups, building a Ukrainian

church through community donations, and launching both a school and gymnasium, alongside several thriving media outlets. This grassroots movement illustrates the resilience and creativity of the Ukrainian diaspora.

2. The period from the 1950s to the early 1960s and beyond

The period from the 1950s to the early 1960s witnessed a significant change in the relationship between China and the Soviet Union, which evolved from that of a strategic partnership. As Sino-Soviet relations soured, Chinese young students bound to study in the USSR had to follow instructions from their homeland and adjust their roles and standpoints accordingly. They were supposed to stand for the friendship between the two countries and as representatives of the driving force dedicated to socialist construction. Many of them were, however, torn between their own studies and the political priorities of the state. This in turn immediately put them under the Soviet education system and policies from Soviet authorities. In prioritising their political work over their academic studies, these students subsequently assumed a role in promoting educational exchanges in their subsequent professional pursuits. The presence of Chinese students in the Ukrainian SSR was part of a broader Soviet program to train communist cadres and international students from socialist and developing nations¹⁰.

Starting from the early 1950s, the Ukrainian SSR became a significant hub for Chinese students sent to study in the Soviet Union as part of a massive academic exchange program between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the USSR. This exchange was fueled by the Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance signed in 1950. In early 1960s, with the support of the Chinese-Soviet and Soviet-Chinese friendship society, regions like the Hubei province and the Ukrainian SSR continued to exchange delegations and foster educational ties.

In the early days of the People's Republic of China, to cultivate urgently needed personnel for national development, a large number of students were sent to the Soviet Union through various channels, forming a massive ‘留苏浪潮’ ‘students-to-the-Soviet wave’. Due to Ukraine's special status within the Soviet Union, its advanced culture and education system, and numerous universities also accommodated many Chinese students. Universities in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Odesa, and Dnipro trained a large number of Chinese experts in various fields of industry, agriculture, health, science, and education¹¹.

¹⁰ Walke, A. Friends and Enemies: Foreign Students in Late Soviet Universities. Washington: University in St. Louis (USA). <https://eusp.org/en/news/druzya-i-vragi-inostrannye-studenty-v-pozdnesovetskikh-universitetakh#:~:text=Beginning>

¹¹ Liu Xianzong. Socio-cultural exchanges between China and Ukraine: history and reality, Institute of Russian, Eastern European and Central Asian Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. *Ukraine-China*, 2018. 13 <https://sinologist.com.ua/zh/11309-2/> [In Chinese]

Table 8

Key Facts About the Chinese students in Ukrainian SSR

During the 1950s, the Ukrainian SSR hosted thousands of Chinese students (among approximately 38,000 Chinese students trained in the Soviet Union) across its technical and classical universities. The largest groups were concentrated in cities that were major industrial and scientific centers of the Republic. Chinese students in the Ukrainian SSR during the 1950s focused heavily on technical and ideological subjects that were essential for the People's Republic of China's (PRC) rapid industrialization.
Focus on Technical Skills: Many Chinese students and trainees came to study Soviet industrial, agricultural, and educational techniques to aid China's economic reconstruction.
Students typically underwent a one-year "preparatory" course to learn Russian before beginning their specialized degrees. Their studies were strictly focused on industrial technology transfer, such as metallurgy, mining, and aviation, to support China's First Five-Year Plan.
Support and Training: These Chinese specialists and students received training in Ukrainian institutions, with China paying for a significant portion of their living expenses, transport, and medical care.
End of the Era: This period of cooperation was relatively short-lived. By the early 1960s, the Sino-Soviet split—sparked by ideological differences between Mao Zedong and Mykyta Khrushchov—led to the withdrawal of many Chinese students and a sharp decline in academic exchanges.
While high-ranking leaders like PRC president and CPC general secretary Jiang Zemin and Li Lanqing (former Vice Premier) frequently interacted with and led the "Ukrainian cohort" of specialists. This group of returnees formed a technocratic elite that facilitated large-scale technology transfers between Ukraine and China for decades, even after the Sino-Soviet split.
Returned scholars employment: Many of these students returned from Ukraine to China to become founders of major scientific schools and high ranking officials of ministry level (machine building, aviation, geology, education) and chief engineers of industry and military (2d artillery, Air force, airspace agency). Founders of Scientific Schools: Many became heads of national programs, university presidents, or directors of research institutes. Some former students became members of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Industrial Leadership: Graduates from Ukrainian polytechnics led major state-owned enterprises, such as the Luoyang Tractor Factory (whose staff trained at the Kharkiv Tractor Plant).

In Ukrainian technical and classical universities the curriculum was designed to support China's First Five-Year Plan (1953–1957). It was a Soviet-style, centrally planned initiative focusing on rapid heavy industrialization. It successfully established foundational industries—producing, for example, the first domestically produced 一拖 trucks of Kharkiv tractor plant design, and cargo 运 aircrafts of Antonov design and technology – through other major projects, alongside with early agricultural mechanization and farming model in Hebei province (小乌克兰 “small Ukraine” farms) (Table 9).

Table 9

Ukrainian universities' curriculum breakdown structure

Engineering and Heavy Industry (Approx. 64% – 68%):
Mechanical and Electrical Engineering: Studied extensively at Kyiv and Kharkiv Polytechnic Institutes.
Metallurgy and Mining: Critical for developing China's steel and resource extraction sectors (Kharkiv, Dnipro).
Aeronautical and Marine Engineering: Often hosted in specialized institutes in Kyiv and Odesa

In the 1950s, Ukrainian universities within the Soviet Union partly became primary hubs for Chinese students. While hosted the second largest overall contingent in the former Soviet Union, major Ukrainian cities including Kyiv, Odesa, Kharkiv and Dnipro were significant hosts due to their specialized technical institutes (Table 10).

Table 10

Ukrainian higher educational hubs for Chinese students in 1950–1960s

Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute (KPI): This was a primary destination for Chinese students pursuing engineering and heavy industry degrees. KPI has trained thousands of specialists for China throughout its history, including future production managers and government ministers. He Guangyuan, former Minister of the Ministry of Machine Building, studied at the Kyiv Polytechnic Institute from 1951 to 1956, Liu Jianfeng, former Vice Minister of the Ministry of Electronics Industry and minister of China Civil Aviation Administration, studied at the Kyiv Polytechnic Institute from 1956 to 1961.
Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (KNU): As one of the top universities in the USSR, it hosted large delegations of Chinese students and scholars, particularly those focusing on science, mathematics, and philosophy. Sciences and Research was focus on physics, chemistry, and mathematics at classical universities like Taras Shevchenko National University to build the PRC's foundational scientific capacity. Ideology and Social Sciences: About 17% of students focused on Marxist-Leninist philosophy, Soviet-style economics, and public administration. A major center for academic exchange. In 1958, professors at this university published the first textbook on ancient Chinese philosophy in the region to mark the 10th anniversary of the PRC.
Kharkiv (The Industrial & Engineering Center): National Technical University "Kharkiv Polytechnic Institute" (NTU KhPI): Historically one of the most popular technical schools for Chinese students, NTU KhPI specialized in machine building, chemical technology, and electronics. V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University: This classical university attracted many Chinese students for foundational sciences and research training.
A large number of interns were also sent to some factories in Ukraine. For example, 21 were sent to the Zaporizhia Aluminum Plant, 25 to the Dzerzhynskiy Steel Plant, 15 to the Nieber Electrode Plant, 19 to the Nitrogen Fertilizer Plant, 37 to the Donbas Mining Area, 19 to the Rubizhne Dye Plant, and 2 to the Donbas Well-Building Bureau

Table 10 (continuance)

Odesa Polytechnic University: Given Odesa's role as a major port city, its maritime and technological institutes also hosted significant foreign cohorts, including Chinese engineering students. Identified as one of the top five Soviet cities hosting international student contingents by the early 1960s. Zhu Lilan, former Minister of Science and Technology, studied at Odesa University from 1956 to 1961
Dnipro: Host to Dnipro University, which was reestablished in the 1930s and saw a revival of research and international engagement in the 1950s following the rehabilitation of scholars. Zhu Xun, former Minister of Geology and Mineral Resources, studied at the Dnipro Mining Institute from 1952 to 1957
Strategic Programs: Returnees played critical roles in establishing China's military technology, including missile and satellite development.
Translation: Humanities students established the first systematic translation centers in China, facilitating translation of Ukrainian universities' textbooks, innovational patents, architectural and industrial technology design graphics.
Academics: Of the Chinese Academy of Sciences members who studied in the Soviet Union, three had studied in Ukraine. Of the Chinese Academy of Engineering members who studied in the Soviet Union, four had studied in Ukraine.

The Chinese alumni who studied in the Ukrainian SSR during the 1950s had their most profound impact on socialist urbanism and industrial standardization until 2000s. They acted as the primary providers of technical norms into the Chinese context, establishing the foundation for China's modern industrial and residential landscapes.

An analysis of the background, content, characteristics, and implementation of urban planning in the early stages of socialist construction under Soviet technical assistance was presented in the work on the planning history of eight key industrial cities during the First Five-Year Plan period (Xi'an, Taiyuan, Lanzhou, Baotou, Luoyang, Chengdu, Wuhan, and Datong). This seminal work is widely regarded as a major research achievement in the field of urban planning during the early years of the People's Republic of China, providing a foundational framework for subsequent historical research in this area (Table 11)¹².

By blending Soviet "Stalinist Empire" styles with Chinese cultural motifs, they created a unique "socialist-nationalist" industrial aesthetic. Alumni from institutions like the Kyiv National University of Construction and Architecture (KNUCA) helped redefine Chinese residential life through Soviet planning theories (Table 12).

¹² Fu, S. *The Planning of Eight Key New Industrial Cities: Urban Planning History of the People's Republic of China in the 1950s (Second Version)* by Hao Li. Beijing: China Architecture Book Publishing. 2019. p.536. *Planning Perspectives*, 37(4). pp. 862-864. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02665433.2022.2085371> [In Chinese]

Table 11

**Adaptation of Ukrainian socialist urbanism standards observed
in eight Chinese cities**

Xi'an (Cultural and Industrial City)
The city of Taiyuan is renowned for its pre-eminence in the field of heavy industry.
The city of Lanzhou is a significant industrial and logistics hub.
Baotou (Steel Industry Base)
Luoyang (Machinery Industry Base)
The city of Chengdu is home to the Comprehensive Industrial City.
The city of Wuhan is of significant industrial importance in the Middle Reaches of the Yangtze River.
The city of Datong is notable for its status as an Energy Industrial City.

Table 12

**Impact of Soviet residential area design on worker residential planning
during the First Five-Year Plan**

The "Superblock" was the core residential unit: a 4–6 story block arranged around a central courtyard, featuring integrated amenities, green spaces, and standardized prefab construction, particularly from the 1950s onward.
The "Mikrorayon" (Micro-district): They promoted the neighborhood unit theory, leading to the creation of self-contained workers' residential areas that included housing, schools, and health clinics within walking distance.
Symmetry and Axes: Their designs often featured the Stalinist monumental style, with broad boulevards and symmetrical building arrangements along central axes, a style that became the hallmark of 1950s Beijing and Xi'an.
"Green City" concepts: while often focused on heavy industry, some alumni applied the Soviet "Green City" concepts, integrating large public parks and "green belts" into new industrial zones to balance the harsh industrial landscape.
Technology of steel-concrete composite structures: the technology advanced the civil engineering landscape by developing more durable and efficient building methods for high-rise and large-span buildings.

In early years of the PRC, the construction of worker housing witnessed a surge of activity in the Northeast, where existing industries underwent further development. In 1951, 703 million square metres of residential areas were developed in the Northeast, and the following year, 730 million square metres of residential areas were initiated in Shenyang alone, with Anshan contributing 200 million square metres. Moreover, the development of residential areas in the Northeast was arguably the most advanced in China. This is primarily due to the fact that housing standards and design were at their most advanced in this region. Indeed, the peripheral-style design was first implemented there in 1952¹³.

¹³ Shao, S. and Takamura, M., Impact of Soviet worker residential area design on Beijing No. 2 textile factory: Research of worker residential planning during the First Five-Year Plan. *Jpn Archit Rev*, 2023. 6. e12375. <https://doi.org/10.1002/2475-8876.12375>

Returning graduates established a range of modern industrial design and architectural programs in China, instilling a "cultural gene" of socialist planning that influenced generations of future designers. For instance, returning alumni were instrumental in implementing the 156 key industrial projects assisted by the USSR. They introduced the Soviet model of heavy and defence industrial complexes, characterized by large-scale, reinforced concrete structures and standardized production layouts. Their influence is visible in these specific buildings and factory districts.

The locations for the 156 key industrial projects were selected on the basis of geological conditions and access to natural resources. Beyond considerations of geological conditions, Chinese leaders demonstrated a marked preference for the protection of these plants within the confines of mountainous regions and inner areas. It is evident that the 156 Projects were concentrated in the northeastern regions (Heilongjiang, Jilin, Liaoning) and the inner regions, including Henan (Luoyang), Inner Mongolia (Baotou), Shaanxi (Xian, Xianyang), and Hubei (Wuhan). A mere 10 projects were constructed on sites where firms had been in existence prior to 1949. The aforementioned firms were almost completely destroyed during the 1940s and were no longer in existence. The Soviet Union did not provide any aid in the form of grants; it lent China only \$2.9 billion (\$300 million in 1955 dollars) in response to a Chinese request for 10 times that amount. The loan is to be used for the repayment of the Soviet Union's delivery of machinery and equipment. From 31 December 1954 to 31 December 1963, China shall trade raw materials, tea and agricultural products at foreign exchange rates in order to repay the principal and interest. The pricing of machinery, equipment, raw materials, and other commodities was determined by reference to global market prices. In this respect, Soviet assistance was instrumental in shaping the geographical distribution of Chinese industrialisation, as evidenced by the fact that prior to 1952, the few existing plants and factories were predominantly located in coastal areas¹⁴.

Luoyang Tractor Factory (YTO Group), Henan, Central China

The "Kharkiv of the East": The Luoyang No. 1 Tractor Plant was an almost direct copy of the Kharkiv Tractor Plant. Ukrainian-trained engineers implemented the same standardized production lines used in Kharkiv to manufacture the Chinese tractors, which were localized versions of the Ukrainian design models. For the YTO and its workers, what came to be known as the "Soviet model" was a particular local model of the Kharkiv tractor plant (Table 13)¹⁵.

In the contemporary era, the Kharkiv designed plant has confronted considerable modern challenges; conversely, the Luoyang facility has evolved into a globally dominant entity, with the capacity to produce a new tractor at a rate of several minutes and to export to more than one hundred countries.

¹⁴ Giorcelli, M., Bo Li. Technology Transfer and Early Industrial Development: Evidence from the Sino-Soviet Alliance. CESifo Working Paper no. 9552.2022. January https://www.ifo.de/DocDL/cesifo1_wp9552.pdf#:~:text=

¹⁵ Karina Khasnulina. City of Red Tractors: Soviet Models and the Transfer of Agricultural Technology in Luoyang. *Comparativ*. 33 (2023) Heft 3, S. 317–338. DOI: 10.26014/j.comp.2023.03.03

Table 13

**Key Historical Connections of Luoyang Tractor Factory
(YTO Group), Henan**

The Luoyang plant was designed based on documentation and principles from Ukraine, which was originally a model of Stalinist industrialization designed with help from American architect Albert Kahn.
The Product: Luoyang's first major success, the Dongfanghong ("The East is Red") tractor, was an exact copy of the Soviet DT-54, a machine that was being mass-produced in Kharkiv at the time.
Knowledge Transfer: To ensure the "copy" worked, over 130 Chinese trainees were sent to Kharkiv to learn the ropes of industrial tractor manufacturing.
Urban Design: The factory district features the characteristic red-brick socialist industrial style seen in Kharkiv. The resemblance went beyond the factory walls. The surrounding Jianxi district in Luoyang was planned using Soviet industrial urban design principles, mirroring the layout of Soviet "worker cities" like those in Kharkiv.

Wuhan Iron and Steel Works, Hubei, Central China

The Wuhan Iron and Steel Works (WISCO), located in the Qingshan District of Wuhan, Hubei Province, was established in 1955 as one of the key industrial projects during China's first Five-Year Plan. The construction and development of this complex were heavily supported by Soviet experts as part of 156 projects aided by the Soviet Union, with substantial technical input from individuals specializing in Soviet metallurgy, which historically includes expertise from the Donbas region¹⁶.

From 1953 onward, Soviet (including Ukrainian) specialists were involved in all aspects of the Wuhan Iron and Steel Corporation (WISCO) project, encompassing surveying, design, construction, and commissioning. At that time, as many as 514 Soviet experts were present in Wuhan. The organisation provided assistance to WISCO in selecting the optimal location for the plant, establishing systems for acceptance, handover, and quality assessment for the surveying team, and training a group of professional surveying and hydrogeological teams for WISCO. It is noteworthy that even the employee dormitories constructed by WISCO were designed under the oversight of Soviet specialists and were designated as the "Red Houses" due to their construction using red bricks (Table 14)¹⁷.

¹⁶ Chinese Manage 'Steel Town' Despite Soviet Aid Withdrawal <https://www.nytimes.com/1972/07/03/archives/chinese-manage-steel-town-despite-soviet-aid-withdrawal.html#:~:text=WUHAN>

¹⁷ The love-hate relationship between Wuhan Iron and Steel and the Soviet Union – A birthday newspaper from Professor Qian Gang's class [https://medium.com/birthday-paper/武钢与苏联的爱恨情仇-钱钢老师课上的生日报@-7c05d413b8c4#:~:text=\[In Chinese\]](https://medium.com/birthday-paper/武钢与苏联的爱恨情仇-钱钢老师课上的生日报@-7c05d413b8c4#:~:text=[In Chinese])

Table 14

Historical Features of Wuhan Iron and Steel Works

Specialized Training: A large number of technical experts from Ukraine participated in the planning and design, and equipment procurement and technical standards. This complex was developed with heavy input from specialists trained in the Donbas region of Ukraine, which was the USSR's metallurgical heart.
Technical Assistance: The initial design, site selection, and equipment import of WISCO relied heavily on Soviet technical expertise. Many experts who had worked in large steel production bases in Ukraine (such as Zhdanov (Mariupol) and Zaporizhzhia) came to Wuhan to provide on-site guidance.
Equipment and Planning: The Soviet Union provided WISCO with large-scale complete sets of equipment, including coke ovens and blast furnaces, and its production standards adopted the Soviet standard system.
Architectural Features: Origin of Honggangcheng (): The commissioning of WISCO spurred the development of Honggangcheng (Red Steel City, Qingshan District), which urban planning and industrial layout bear a strong Soviet influence. Many place names and buildings record this history of assistance. The district includes "Socialist Realist" administrative buildings and worker housing units modeled after the superblocks of Kyiv and Kharkiv , prioritizing centralized services and green belts.
Historical interactions between China and the Soviet Union (including with the Ukrainian SSR) were not only reflected in industrial aid, but also in broader agricultural and technological cooperation.
Plant's building renovations: In 2021, the company expended in excess of 70 million yuan on a programme of building renovations encompassing 133 high-rise structures within its industrial plant area. This initiative encompassed a range of structures, including chimneys, gas tanks, cooling towers, water towers, pipe galleries and pipelines.

The Wuhan Iron and Steel Works holds the distinction of being the first extra-large iron and steel complex to be constructed in the aftermath of the establishment of the People's Republic of China. It continues to serve as a pivotal enterprise in the contemporary context of China's steel industry. It is evident that over the years, WISCO has developed a comprehensive suite of advanced iron and steel production processes and equipment. These include mining, coking, steel-making, iron-making, rolling and supporting auxiliary facilities. Consequently, it has become a significant production base for high-quality sheets and plates in China. This has had a substantial impact on the national economy and the modernisation of China.

Shanghai Exhibition Centre (Sino-Soviet Friendship Building), East China

The building was designed during the era of the Soviet Union (USSR), specifically under the influence of Soviet socialist realistic architecture (often with some Chinese elements). While designed by a collaborative team, the prominent designers mentioned in the project do not directly highlight a specific, prominent role for Ukrainian-born architects or national identity in the historical records provided. It was a project of the entire Soviet Union's cultural influence. The construction was designed by several award-winning architects from the Soviet Union in cooperation

the first-generation Chinese modern architects. The project was built with Chinese materials by Chinese workers.

The construction of this landmark was initiated in 1954 on the site of a dilapidated ‘Aili garden’ belonging to the Jewish tycoon Silas Aaron Hardoon, who owned the properties in the early 20th century of Shanghai. It was given the sobriquet ‘The Grand-View Garden of Shanghai’¹⁸.

In 1949 the government decided to hold an exhibition in Shanghai in 1955 on the Soviet Union’s economic and cultural achievements in the 37 years since the October Revolution and constructed a new hall to house this exhibition. Its former name was ‘Sino-Soviet Friendship Building’. The construction was completed on 5 March 1955. The Soviet exhibition was held from 15 March 1955 to 15 May 1955.

Until 2011 the building hosted the annual plenary meetings of Shanghai Municipality’s People’s Congress (parliament), and People’s Political Consultative Conference, making the building Shanghai’s de facto municipal parliament building.

Over the years, the building has been renamed several times, reflecting changing political climates (Table 15)¹⁹.

Table 15

Historical names of Shanghai Exhibition Centre

‘Sino-Soviet Friendship Building’ from 1955 to 1968 The building was a focal point and notable landmark along Shanghai main avenue – Nanjing Road West.
The building was renamed the ‘Shanghai Exhibition Hall’ in 1968, and carried it until 1984. The center was recognized as one of the ‘10 best buildings in Shanghai from 1949 to 1989’ and has continued to serve as a central venue for political, economic, technological and cultural exchanges.
In 1984, the Shanghai Exhibition Hall was transformed into the Shanghai Exhibition Center, marking a significant evolution in its purpose and impact. A major renovation the Center in 2001 preserved its architectural integrity while upgrading its facilities to meet contemporary needs. The revamp reinforced the structure to last another 100 years. More than 5,000 grams of gold were used to restore the central tower.
Since December 2021, the center has removed its fences to let the public admire the historical building up close. The internal courtyards have been transformed into several landscaped gardens for leisure walks and photography.

While not a factory, this landmark was built in 1955 as a tribute to the Soviet-Chinese alliance. Its design, featuring a gilded spire and red star, was heavily influenced by the monumental Soviet style prevalent in the post-war Exhibitions of Achievements of the National Economy across some big cities of former USSR including the formerly Exhibition of Achievements of the National Economy

¹⁸ Memory of Aili Garden lives on through its historical tales <https://www.meet-in-shanghai.net/en/news/memory-of-aili-garden-lives-on-through-its-historical-tales-896818/>

¹⁹ Yang Jian. Initially a tribute to Sino-Soviet ties, exhibition center retains prominence. *Citynewsservice* 2024 July 6 <https://www.citynewsservice.cn/articles/cns/lifestyle/initially-a-tribute-to-sino-soviet-ties-exhibition-center-retains-prominence-dk4wd7zm>

(VDNG) of the Ukrainian SSR (now National Complex "Expocenter of Ukraine") and some of its pavilions – the reconstruction of Khreschatyk Street in Kyiv.

Beijing "798" zone and Dashanzi Industrial Area

The rampant demolition of industrial heritage for economic development, or for sheer gentrification of city districts, is increasingly considered misguided. China has increasingly elected to preserve industrial heritage to promote arts, culture, tourism and global visibility. Beijing's 798 Art Zone is one well-known example. The spectacular architecture and unique spatial experience of twentieth-century industrial structures are the key drivers of China's industrial preservation campaign²⁰.

The Beijing 798 Art Zone, located within the Dashanzi Industrial Area in the Chaoyang District, is a renowned hub of modern art and culture. It is known for its iconic decommissioned factory buildings, which were constructed in the 1950s. These factories were part of a collaborative effort involving technical assistance from the German Democratic Republic (GDR/East Germany) and, in a broader context of Soviet-era industrial planning, the USSR, which included the Ukrainian SSR (Table 16).

Table 16

Main features of Dashanzi Industrial Area

GDR Influence: The architecture of the 798 factory complex is heavily influenced by the GDR (East Germany), which provided architectural and technical support for the project.
Dashanzi History: The area, often referred to as the "798 Art Zone" after the Joint Factory 798, was a major electronics manufacturing hub of warfare electronic equipment in the mid-20th century.
Transformation: Since the early 2000s, this area has been converted into a massive art district, featuring galleries, studios, and cafes, while retaining the communist-era architectural style.
Architecture: It features the sawtooth roofs and high-ceilinged workshops typical of Soviet-Ukrainian electronics and radio component factories of the 1950s .
Urban Planning: During the 1950s, the Kyiv Civil Engineering Institute (KISI) – now known as the Kyiv National University of Construction and Architecture (KNUCA) – played a significant role in training specialists for China, aligning with the broader Soviet-Chinese cooperation in higher education and industrial development during that era. Specialists who studied there applied the neighborhood unit theory to this district.
The area is now China's most famous contemporary art district. The red-brick workshop layouts now house over 250 galleries, boutiques, and high-end restaurants. It has become a premier cultural tourism destination, seeing nearly 190,000 visitors during major festivals.

²⁰ Ponomaryova, A. Ryan, B. Will Kyiv's Soviet Industrial Districts Survive? A Study of Transformation, Preservation, and Demolition of Industrial Heritage in Ukraine's Capital. *Journal of Planning History*.2020. 20. P. 6. DOI 10.1177/1538513220939092.

Anshan Iron and Steel Complex (Ansteel), Liaoning, North East China

Ansteel's post-war reconstruction was overseen by experts who studied at the Dnipropetrovsk (now Dnipro) metallurgical schools. They introduced Ukrainian innovations in blast furnace design and open-hearth steel production.

However the reconstruction represents a transformative moment in the rebirth of the Anshan Iron and Steel Company (Angang) in North East, achieved against the backdrop of the Second Sino-Japanese War and the Chinese Civil War. Spanning approximately from 1948 to 1953, this critical period established the foundation for Anshan modern steel industry. Key milestones of this transformative era include several periods (Table 17).

Table 17

Anshan post-war reconstruction time flow

Rebirth from Ruins (1948): After Japan's defeat in 1945, the Soviet Red Army systematically dismantled much of the infrastructure at the Showa Steel Works. When the People's Liberation Army took control of Anshan in February 1948, the plant lay largely inactive, with only one open-hearth furnace repaired by the Nationalists during their occupation. –
Official Founding (1948): On December 26, 1948, the Anshan Iron and Steel Company was officially established, tasked with revitalizing and managing the beleaguered facilities, heralding a new era of industrial development. –
Immediate Production Resumption (1949): In a remarkable display of resilience, workers expedited repairs on the first blast furnace and open-hearth furnaces, restarting production in early 1949. This revival saw the company achieving an impressive output of over 100,000 tons of iron and steel that year, a true testament to the drive for national industrialization. –
Soviet Assistance (1950s): The 1950 "Agreement on Technical Assistance" with the Soviet Union was a game-changer, providing essential machinery and technical expertise that facilitated the restoration and strategic expansion of Ansteel's capabilities. The "Three Major Projects" (1953): A defining achievement of this reconstruction phase was the timely completion of the Seamless Pipe Mill, Heavy Section Mill, and Blast Furnace No. 7, which collectively transformed Ansteel into a formidable large-scale integrated iron and steel complex.
By the 1960s and 70s, this revitalized foundation had blossomed into a comprehensive mining and manufacturing network, serving as a vital pillar for both national defense initiatives and railway development, ultimately contributing significantly to China's industrial strength.

Harbin Industrial Base, North East China

The Harbin Boiler Factory (built 1955) reflects the simplified Stalinist style and functionalist workshop planning taught at Ukrainian polytechnics. Some specific buildings or factory districts in China that were designed by these Ukrainian-trained specialists. Several heavy machinery plants in Harbin, often linked to the "156 projects" (major industrial Soviet-assisted projects), were planned with the assistance of technical staff from Ukrainian design bureaus. Socialist construction, an essential element of national construction in early PRC, followed the 'Kharkiv model' in its various manifestations, be it the city plan, technology, or industrial

relations. For the people involved in the project in China, the ‘Soviet’ had concrete manifestations that were rooted in this specific Ukrainian city²¹.

The industrial hubs built with Ukrainian assistance in the 1950s have undergone diverse transformations in 1990s-2020s. While some remain active high-tech manufacturing centers, many of their original Soviet-style structures have been repurposed into cultural landmarks, art zones, and heritage parks (Table 18).

Table 18

Samples of Reborn as Art and Heritage Zones
Luoyang Heart of Tian Cultural Industry Park: Part of the original Luoyang industrial base, this 120,000-square-meter site was renovated in 2018. It preserved its Soviet-era architecture while adding graffiti walls and theaters while hosting industrial tourism, now attracting over 800,000 visitors annually.
Wugang Yungu-606 Industrial Park, Wuhan: A derelict section of the Wuhan Iron and Steel complex was recently renewed into a modern park. One of its historic 1958 blast furnaces was shut down in 2019 and reopened as a heritage park in 2022.
Continued Industrial Evolution: YTO Group has pivoted to high-tech manufacturing. It now produces 5G driverless tractors and intelligent agricultural equipment.
Ansteel, Anshan: This massive steel producer has integrated ecological restoration, turning abandoned open-pit mines into a 10-square-kilometer tourist attraction. Its "CPC Steel Tour" is now a national industrial tourism demonstration base.
Shenyang Industrial Base: Urban renewal and ecological scars: The city has relocated over 320 enterprises since 2002, repurposing the old factories into creative parks with bookstores and food streets.
Environmental Preservation: Modern efforts now focus on applying clear lacquers to preserve original textures of rusted machinery in Xian-North, Baoutou, Wuhan, Qingdao, Shijiazhuang, treating industrial decay as a valuable aesthetic and historical asset.

The Baotou Tank Plant (Inner Mongolia First Machinery Group), West China

The plant is a major Chinese tank-building facility. Founded in 1954, Inner Mongolia the plant often referred to as Factory and institute # 617 is one of 156 key projects established during the First Five-Year Plan (1953-1957) with the assistance of the fromer USSR, including Ukraine. Historically, the Soviet-era tank hub in Ukraine was the Kharkiv Machine Building Design Bureau (KMDB) and the associated Malyshev Plant were central to Soviet tank production, producing models like the T-34, T-54, T-55, and T-64. The designation "Factory 617" is often associated with the Inner Mongolia Baotou Tank Plant, though it may have had historical technical exchanges with Soviet factories, including Kharkiv. The plant historically linked with the Kharkiv tank production complex in the former Ukrainian SSR – the Malyshev Factory (Zavod named after V.O. Malyshev) (Table 19)²².

²¹ Khasnulina, K. Localising the Soviet in China: Industrial Development Beyond Centralised Models *Peripheral Histories* (U.K). 2024. June 3

²² 617-institute. <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/china/.htm#:~:text=>

Table 19

Baotou Tank Plant Facility location and features

Location: Situated in the Qingshan District of Baotou City.
Scale: It is a large facility, with reports indicating that it covers an area of around 110 square kilometres.
Infrastructure: The facility is a comprehensive manufacturing system with capabilities including steel smelting, casting, forging, welding, machining and final assembly.
Other industrial sites: The area is also home to the Baogang Group (Baotou Iron and Steel), a major steel producer for the Baotou tank assembly factory.
Industrial Heritage: On September 13, 2023, the factory was included in the Third Batch of Chinese Industrial Heritage Protection List.

Antonov aircraft plant and design bureau in China's West, North

Antonov's influence on Chinese aviation technology has spanned several decades. The early aviation industry in China was heavily influenced by Antonov designs, with several of these designs still in operation or having been upgraded to become indigenous platforms. The Antonov aircraft plant and design bureau in China has evolved from direct licence production of Soviet-era designs to providing high-level technical consultancy for modern heavy transport and passenger aircraft.

Shijiazhuang city (Hebei province, North China).

The Shijiazhuang Y-5 (Ukrainian Antonov An-2 design and technology) is a type of legendary biplane aircraft, which licensed production commenced in 1958 with the later variants designated as the Y5-B. It continues to be a staple for agriculture and regional transport, with over 1,100 constructed in Shijiazhuang. The aircraft is frequently referred to by the sobriquets "Annushka" and "kukuruznik" (corn cobbler). It remains in operation on a global scale for the purposes of agricultural spraying, cargo transport, and passenger transport (Table 20).

Table 20

Key details in relation to Antonov and Y-5

Origin & Production: The aircraft in question was designed by Oleg Antonov in 1946–1947, with mass production commencing in Kyiv in 1953, subsequently transferring to Poland (WSK PZL-Mielec) and, finally, China, as stated in the Antonov Company history.
Specifications: The aircraft under discussion is a robust single-engine biplane that has been designed for agricultural and utility roles. It is capable of taking off from short, unprepared runways. The aircraft is powered by a radial engine, most commonly the Shvetsov ASH-62IR, or licensed Chinese versions.
Modernization and Use: Although Antonov ceased production in the early 2000s, the Y-5 remains in production and has been modernised with new features, such as winglets and upgraded avionics (an2flyers.org). Later on a research institute has also conducted experimental trials on modernised versions, incorporating carbon-fibre variants.
Significance: It is widely acknowledged that this aircraft has undergone one of the most protracted production cycles in the annals of aviation.

Table 20 (continuance)

Autonomous and Unmanned Adaptation Legacy Antonov airframes are now being repurposed by Chinese firms for the development of next-generation unmanned technology. Feihong 98 (FH-98): The plant has successfully adapted the Y-5B (a derivative of the Antonov An-2) into a large Unmanned Transport Aircraft (UTA). The aircraft's operational capabilities include remote control for the transportation of cargo, disaster response, and medical evacuation in remote regions.
--

Shaanxi Y-8 (Antonov An-12), China's West

Shaanxi Y-8 (Antonov An-12): The Y-8 was developed based on the An-12, and consequently became China's primary medium-lift transport, with the airframe also being utilised in numerous special-mission aircraft, including those for electronic warfare and AWACS (Table 21)²³.

Table 21

Shaanxi (Xian) Y-8 (Antonov An-12) past and future

Initial Acquisition: During the 1950s-early 1960s, China procured multiple An-12 aircraft, along with a licence for their domestic assembly.
Reverse Engineering: In the aftermath of the Sino-Soviet split, the Soviet Union ceased its provision of technical support. Consequently, the Xi'an Aircraft Company and the Xi'an Aircraft Design Institute undertook the reverse-engineering of the An-12, thereby enabling independent development.
Production Shift: Trial production commenced at the Xi'an plant in 1972, but operations were subsequently transferred to the Shaanxi Aircraft Factory (now Shaanxi Aircraft Corporation). The inaugural Chinese-assembled prototype was flown in December 1974, and serial production officially commenced in 1981.
Significant Design Discrepancies Despite bearing a strong visual resemblance to the An-12, the Y-8 incorporates numerous indigenous modifications. Cockpit: The Y-8 model adopted a nose with a distinctive glazed appearance, derived from the H-6 bomber (Tu-16), for its navigator, replacing the original shorter An-12 nose. Engines: The An-12 was equipped with Ivchenko AI-20K engines, whereas the Y-8 is powered by Zhuzhou WJ-6 turboprops manufactured in China. Cargo Handling: In the initial iterations of the Y-8 model, the design of the doors incorporated a side-hinged configuration. However, subsequent variants underwent an alteration in their door configuration, transitioning from the side-hinged design to a rearward-facing ramp. This modification was implemented with the objective of enhancing the efficiency of loading and unloading operations.
Modern Collaboration with Antonov. Despite the initial rift, China re-engaged with Antonov for significant upgrades in the 21st century: The aircraft's wings and fuselage have been redesigned. The consulting arrangements undertaken in 2001 and 2002 resulted in the modernisation of the Y-8's wing and fuselage, thereby augmenting its fuel capacity by 50%.

²³ Shaanxi Y-8 Military Transport Aircraft. *Airforce technology*. 2010, August 18 <https://www.airforce-technology.com/projects/shaanxiy8militarytra/?cf-view>

Table 21 (continuance)

Successor Project (Y-9): The development of the Shaanxi Y-9 (originally designated the Y-8X programme) was also a collaborative endeavour with Antonov engineers, with the objective being the creation of a tactical airlifter comparable to the US built C-130j Hercules.

In recent years, Antonov has undergone a transition in its operations, shifting from the provision of hardware to the role of a strategic technical consultant for China's most ambitious aerospace initiatives.

The Xian MA60 is a Chinese-manufactured aircraft that was developed from the Antonov An-24. This contemporary regional turboprop is a derivative of the An-24/An-26 family.

Heavy Transport (Y-20): Antonov was responsible for the design and technical consultancy for the Xian Y-20, which is China's first indigenous heavy-lift military transport aircraft.

It is important to note that the progression of this agreement has been hindered by technical complexities, financial constraints, and the geopolitical ramifications,.

Chongqing. Developing transmission systems, China's West

In contrast to the aircraft manufacturer, the UK-based Antonov Automotive Technologies established a presence in China with the objective of developing transmission systems by Chongqing Joint Venture. The company has entered into a partnership with Chongqing Loncin and Lifan Motors for the purpose of manufacturing 6-speed automatic transmissions (6AT).

CONCLUSIONS

1. The study of the early Ukrainian cultural memory in China focuses on the historical presence of Ukrainians across Chinese region from the late 1890s to 1949, examining how they preserved traditions and promoted the Ukrainian traditional culture through education, handicrafts and exchanges.

2. Initial Ukrainian arrivals to China in late 1890s included engineers, employees and laborers, leading to a peak community size of 70,000–100,000 by the 1930s. The organization set forth essential educational goals: to ignite a passion for their homeland among Ukrainian nationals, to enhance knowledge of their history, literature, and music, and to provide necessary enlightenment and educational support to its members and Chinese.

3. Despite assimilation pressures, the community maintained its identity through cultural institutions like the Ukrainian Club, and schools, and a theater. The vibrant networks fostered national-patriotic education and cultural heritage preservation of Ukrainians and transfer of the Ukrainian culture across the rest of coastal and inland China.

4. After 1937, Japanese authorities transitioned from supporting Ukrainian movements to enforcing strict censorship and banning their publications. Following the war in Manchuria in 1945, the Ukrainian community collapsed, leading many to flee to Tianjin and Shanghai, with subsequent emigrations to the United States, Canada, Australia, and Taiwan.

5. The history of the Ukrainian diaspora in China, including its memorabilia and other relevant materials, provides a compelling illustration of the intricate relationship between migration, culture and the formation of the Ukrainian diasporal identity. This phenomenon is somehow intertwined with the history of movements for Ukrainian independence, offering a valuable historical memory case study for understanding the complex interplay between social movements abroad and cultural identity.

6. Between 1950 and the early 1960s, 38 thousands Chinese students and specialists received education and training in the Soviet Union, particularly in Ukraine. This era, characterized by the Sino-Soviet honeymoon, facilitated substantial technology transfer and educational exchanges, positioning Ukraine as a key industrial and academic hub for Chinese talent a substantial number of highly skilled specialists were expertly trained through rigorous scientific and educational exchanges in Ukraine. This initiative of sending students not only advanced scientific and technical collaboration between our two nations, but it also deepened the traditional bond of mutual trust born centuries ago.

7. Key aspects of the training programs in the Ukrainian universities in 1950 – early 1960s include significant support for China's industrial modernization, particularly in heavy and military industry, mining, and transportation. Chinese technicians and students were trained in major Ukrainian universities and industrial centers. This included not only practical technical training but also enrollment in leading technical universities, fostering China's scientific elite. Programs varied in duration, from several months to multi-year degree courses, with selections being competitive based on academic performance and political alignment.

8. Upon their return to home in 1960s the Chinese graduates from Ukrainian universities emerged as pivotal figures in driving scientific, technical, and economic progress across various home country regions. The rich historical experience of academic exchange that China has gained 1950s serves as a valuable benchmark for shaping contemporary Chinese industry, culture and education, emphasizing the importance of interstate collaboration in advancing knowledge and innovation.

9. In the 1960s and beyond, Chinese specialists who had returned from the Ukraine in 1960s played a crucial role in transforming China's industrial and urban landscapes by adopting specific Ukrainian models. This historical collaboration has lasting significance today, demonstrating the enduring impact of those strategic practices.

SUMMARY

The study examines the early Ukrainian cultural memory in China from the late 1890s to 1949, highlighting the preservation of Ukrainian traditions through education and cultural exchanges, despite assimilation pressures. Ukrainian arrivals included engineers and laborers, with community membership peaking at 70,000–100,000 by the 1930s. They established institutions like the Ukrainian Club and schools, fostering national identity and cultural heritage. However, post-1937, the Ukrainian community collapsed after WWII and mass emigration.

Between 1950 and the early 1960s, a significant number of Chinese students were educated in Ukraine, notably contributing to technological and educational advancements through rigorous exchange programs. This initiative solidified Ukraine's role as a key academic hub for China, influencing critical sectors upon their return. The historical legacy of Ukrainian-Chinese cooperation in many areas has had a lasting impact on China's industrial and urban development.

References

1. Koval, O. An encyclopedia about Ukrainians in China. *The Encyclopedia Herald of Ukraine*. 2022.14. P.73. <http://doi.org/10.37068/evu.14.8> [In Ukrainian]
2. Urusov V.B. Scientific and technical cooperation between Ukraine and China 1949-1959. *Eastern World*. 2003. No. 2. P. 114–118] [In Ukrainian]
3. Mariusz Borysewicz. A Brief History of Ukrainian Diaspora in Manchuria, 1898-1945. *Scripta Historica*. 2018. 24. P. 95.
4. Borovyk, K.(2023). From the history of the Ukrainian community in China. *Ukrainian Weekly. Chicago*. December 12. <https://ukrainianchi.com /з-історії-української-громади-в-китаї/>[In Ukrainian]
5. Chornomaz, V. A. Manchuriia (Original work published 2018). In: I. M. Dziuba, A. I. Zhukovsky, M. H. Zhelezniak, et al (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Modern Ukraine*. 2025. Vol. 19. Kyiv: Institute of Encyclopedic Research, NASU. <https://esu.com.ua/article-63542>[In Ukrainian]
6. Posivnykh, M. OUN Activities in the Far East (1934–1944) *Nationalist portal*. 2014. <https://ukrnationalism.com/history/594-dialnist-oun-na-dalekomu-skhodi-1934-1944.html>[In Ukrainian]
7. Serge Cipko (2008).Ukrainians in Manchuria, China: A Concise Historical Survey.*Past Imperfect*.2008.February (electronic file) DOI:10.21971/P72019
8. Senyk Ya. Ivan Svit about Ukrainians of the Far East. Scientific Notes of the National University "Ostroh Academy". Historical Sciences. 2008. Issue 11. P. 355. URL: http://nbuv.gov.ua/UJRN/Nznuoi_2008_11_32.
9. Walke, A. Washington, University in St. Louis (USA).Friends and Enemies: Foreign Students in Late Soviet Universities <https://eusp.org/en/news/druzya-i-vragi-inostrannye-studenty-v-pozdnesovetskikh-universitetakh#:~:text=Beginning>
10. Fu, S.The Planning of Eight Key New Industrial Cities: Urban Planning History of the People's Republic of China in the 1950s (Second Version)]: by Hao Li, Beijing: China Architecture Book Publishing. 2019. 536 pp.In: *Planning Perspectives*, 2022.37(4). P. 862–864. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02665433.2022.2085371> [In Chinese]
11. Shao, S. and Takamura, M. (2023), Impact of Soviet worker residential area design on Beijing No. 2 textile factory: Research of worker residential planning during the First Five-Year Plan. *Jpn Archit Rev*. 2023. 6. e12375. <https://doi.org/10.1002/2475-8876.12375>
12. Giorcelli, M., Bo Li.Technology Transfer and Early Industrial Development: Evidence from the Sino-Soviet Alliance.*CESifo Working Paper*. no. 9552.2022. January https://www.ifo.de/DocDL/cesifo1_wp9552.pdf#:~:text=

13. Khasnulina, K. City of Red Tractors: Soviet Models and the Transfer of Agricultural Technology in Luoyang. *Comparativ*. 2023. 33.Heft 3, S. 317–338. DOI: 10.26014/j.comp.2023.03.03

14. Khasnulina, K. Localising the Soviet in China: Industrial Development Beyond Centralised Models. *Peripheral Histories* (U.K). 2024. June 3 <https://www.peripheralhistories.co.uk/post/localising-the-soviet-in-china-industrial-development-beyond-centralised-models>

15. Chinese Manage ‘Steel Town’ Despite Soviet Aid Withdrawal <https://www.nytimes.com/1972/07/03/archives/chinese-manage-steel-town-despite-soviet-aid-withdrawal.html#:~:text=WUHAN>

16. The love-hate relationship between Wuhan Iron and Steel and the Soviet Union– A birthday newspaper from Professor Qian Gang’s class] [https://medium.com/birthday-paper/武钢与苏联的爱恨情仇-钱钢老师课上的生日报@2-7c05d413b8c4#:~:text \[In Chinese\]](https://medium.com/birthday-paper/武钢与苏联的爱恨情仇-钱钢老师课上的生日报@2-7c05d413b8c4#:~:text=[In%20Chinese])

17. Liu Xianzong. Socio-cultural exchanges between China and Ukraine: history and reality, Institute of Russian, Eastern European and Central Asian Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. *Ukraine-China*.2018. 13. P.26

18. Ponomaryova, A. Ryan, B. Will Kyiv’s Soviet Industrial Districts Survive? A Study of Transformation, Preservation, and Demolition of Industrial Heritage in Ukraine’s Capital. *Journal of Planning History*.2020. 20. P. 6. DOI 10.1177/1538513220939092.

19. Yang Jian. Initially a tribute to Sino-Soviet ties, exhibition center retains prominence.*Citynewsservice*. 2024 July 6 <https://www.citynewsservice.cn/articles/cns/lifestyle/initially-a-tribute-to-sino-soviet-ties-exhibition-center-retains-prominence-dk4wd7zm20.617-institute>. <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/china/.htm#:~:text>

20. Shaanxi Y-8 Military Transport Aircraft.*Airforce technology*.2010, August 18 <https://www.airforce-technology.com/projects/shaanxiy8militarytra/?cf-view>

Information about the author:

Velychko Valentyn Victorovych,

Candidate of Economic Sciences, Associate Professor,

Corresponding member

HO ‘China-Ukraine Educational Alliance ‘One belt, one road’

Room 434, 50, Peremohy Avenue, Kyiv, 03051, Ukraine