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Month of Submission: February 2014

Year of Acceptance: 2014

Back-Channel Diplomacy and the Sino-German relationship, 1939- 1945

Abstract

This dissertation employs a combination of diplomatic and intelligence history to challenge established narratives about the relations between Nationalist China and the Third Reich during WWII. This approach allows for the exploration of how Chiang Kai-shek's wartime diplomacy influenced Chinese foreign policy in regards to the Axis Powers. Archival documents reveal that in the fight for China's survival pragmatism, rather than ideology, was the most important force behind Chiang Kai-shek's foreign policy strategy.

As earlier research has shown, Republican Chinese foreign policy had many pragmatic traits, and in this project it becomes evident that diplomatic communication was maintained by Chiang Kai-shek with as many countries as possible. This foreign policy approach was influenced by the experience of having unreliable allies throughout the 1920s and 1930s. This approach resulted in the maintenance of communication with Germany, even beyond the crucial official break in diplomatic relations between the two countries in July 1941.

This project explores how clandestine back channels emerged as the preferred tool for fostering Sino-German relations, and how these back channels continued from 1942 until 1945 in Switzerland. Special envoys with intelligence links, appointed by Chiang Kai-shek, conversed with representatives of the German party intelligence service, the RSHA, and with the German Resistance movement of 20 July 1944. These back channels reflected Chiang Kai-shek's pragmatic foreign policy, and these connections subsequently contributed to the difficulties that arose between the Western Allies and China at the end of the war.

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Acknowledgements

I started work on this dissertation in November 2010. I am deeply indebted to a great number of organisations and individuals, without whom this dissertation would not have been completed.

At my home university, the University of Sheffield, my supervisors Dr. Jeremy Taylor (now at the University of Nottingham) and Dr. Marjorie Dryburgh (at the School of East Asian Studies, Sheffield) supported and encouraged my research ideas from the start. I am grateful for all the support and encouragement that I received from these two scholars. Above all, they helped me through the highs and lows of a PhD, and provided an objective view of my work.

I would also like to thank Prof. William C. Kirby from Harvard University. At a presentation at Academia Historica in Taiwan during my fieldwork in early 2012, I had the honour of meeting Prof. Kirby, and talking to him about my research. By giving me hints and tips for archival research, Prof. Kirby influenced the direction and focus of this dissertation.

My fieldwork in Taiwan received much support from academics at Academia Sinica and National Cheng-chi University. Foremost amongst these is Prof. Zhang Li of the Institute of Modern History at Academia Sinica and Prof. Chou Whei-ming, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts at National Cheng-chi University. In China, I would like to thank Prof. Jiang Liangqin at the Centre for the History of Republican China at Nanjing University for her assistance and advice, in particular when I ran into problems at the Second Historical Archives.

I would also like to thank the supporting staff at Academia Sinica and Academia Historica, who patiently answered my questions and did all in their power to advise me. My thanks go especially to the staff of Academia Historica's digital reading room, who welcomed and supported me with my archival research.

Pursuing a PhD in today's difficult financial climate is not easy, and I would like to thank the University of Sheffield, which granted me a three-year studentship, which allowed me the opportunity to study for this PhD.

My field trip to the People's Republic of China was partially funded by a research grant from the Universities' China Committee London and was arranged through the World Universities' Network. For my trip to Taiwan I was awarded the Center for Chinese Studies Research Grant.

In the course of my PhD, I participated in the University of Bristol Conference on "Modern China's Internationalisation and its Legacies" on 11 and 12 January 2013. Moreover, I was able to present my work at the 22nd Columbia University Graduate Student Conference on East Asia in New York. As well as presenting aspects of my PhD research to a group of interested individuals, I enjoyed the conversations and criticism that such events provided.

Beyond academia, much support was provided by my family and friends. I would like to thank my parents, siblings and their families, who constantly asked me constructive questions and encouraged me. I would like to thank my friend and fellow PhD student Chen Chiao In for the interesting discussions on my work, Republican China and her help in Nanjing.

The most important person, without whom this research would not exist, however, is my husband Amin Ur Rehman. Thank you for supporting me throughout these three years, which have not always been easy for both of us.

Note on Romanisation and referencing of archival sources

Throughout this dissertation, I have chosen to use the Hanyu Pinyin System of Romanisation for all Chinese words, names and proper nouns. The only exceptions are the names of individuals which are commonly provided in other Romanisation systems, such as Sun Yat-sen (Sun Zhongshan), Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi), and T.V. Soong (Song Ziwen) amongst others.

While the required Harvard System of referencing has been used throughout the dissertation, archival references have been provided in footnotes, in keeping with the practice employed in a number of scholarly journals, such as the *Asian Studies Review*. Information on the specific guidelines of referencing applied in this dissertation is available as part of the Information Skills Resource of the University of Sheffield.

The referencing style of archival sources in this dissertation follows the guidelines provided by the different archives. These guidelines may differ in their approach, hence the different styles. Information on the guidelines is usually provided by the archives themselves on their online platform.

Abbreviations

AA	Auswärtiges Amt (German foreign office)
Abwehr	German State Intelligence Service
AH	Academia Historica
AS	Academia Sinica
BArch	Bundesarchiv (German federal archive)
BCD	Back-Channel Diplomacy
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CH-BAR	Schweizer Bundesarchiv (Swiss federal archive)
DDR	Deutsche Demokratische Republik (German Democratic Republic)
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
Gestapo	Geheime Staatspolizei (Secret State Police)
GMD	Guomindang
HAPRO	Handelsgesellschaft für Industrielle Produkte (Trading Company for Industrial Products)
IfZ	Institut für Zeitgeschichte (Institute of Contemporary History), Munich/ Germany
NRC	National Resource Commission
NSDAP	Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (National Socialist German Workersparty)
OKW	Oberkommando der Wehrmacht (Supreme Command of the Army)
OSS	Office of Strategic Services
PRC	People's Republic of China
ROC	Republic of China
RSHA	Reichssicherheitshauptamt (Reich Main Security Office)

SD	Sicherheitsdienst (Security Service)
SS	Schutzstaffel (Protection Squadron)
TNA	The National Archives (London, United Kingdom)
US	United States of America
WWI	World War One
WWII	Second World War

In the course of this dissertation, references to archival material found by other scholars are made. Since these discoveries, the style of reference of single archives may have changed, such as in the Swiss Bundesarchiv, or the scholars may have used different reference systems. Please see the following notes on old archival references and their current version.

2 HACH	Number Two Historical Archive, Nanjing, People's Republic of China
ADAP	<i>Akten zur deutschen Auswärtigen Politik</i>
BA MA	Bundesarchiv (Military Branch, Freiburg, Germany)
DGFP	<i>Documents on German Foreign Policy</i>
MA	Bundesarchiv (Military Branch, Freiburg, Germany)
NA	US National Archives (Washington D.C., United States)
FRUS	<i>Foreign Relations of the United States</i>

Chapter One: Introduction

Introduction to the Project

Many aspects of the Second World War (hereafter WWII) continue to grip academic and public attention; this is also true for foreign relations. In this dissertation, I will explore specific aspects of Republican China's foreign policy during WWII. In the process, I intend to shed light on hitherto unknown clandestine communication back channels between the Nationalist government of Chiang Kai-shek and Nazi Germany. As a result, this dissertation contributes to the current wave of research re-evaluating Republican Chinese history by highlighting the extreme pragmatism that characterised Chiang Kai-shek's wartime foreign policy.

Indeed, the decade-long narrative of Chiang Kai-shek breaking contact with the Third Reich, following the end of official diplomatic relations in July 1941, cannot be upheld. My challenge to the established research will be substantiated with reference to extensive archival sources and a re-evaluation of existing scholarship. In particular, I have identified a gap in research on Sino-German relations, especially on Chongqing-German relations after July 1941. It is not my intention to question established narratives of Chiang Kai-shek's alliance with the Western Democracies. Chiang's war objectives in this regard are clear; an alliance with the US and the inclusion of China in the Big Four. However, by combining a diplomatic and intelligence history approach, I intend to raise awareness of the fact that in wartime, Nationalist China's diplomatic relations with Germany survived through numerous clandestine channels.

The existence of these clandestine Sino-German channels should not necessarily come as a surprise to scholars of wartime Chinese historiography, especially since such channels are known to have existed between Japan and Chongqing China in 1940 (Boyle, 1972). However, while the use of clandestine channels with Japan (at that time Chongqing China's primary enemy) seems logical,

the channels to Germany have hitherto not been studied and can contribute to a deeper understanding of Republican China's wartime relations. The fact that clandestine Sino-German back channels during WWII have not been studied before is due to the possibility that scholars did not expect Chiang Kai-shek to deal with Nazi Germany, especially after Chongqing China joined the Allies. This becomes clearer in Chapter Two.

Official relations between the Third Reich and other states have always fascinated scholars and the public alike. Sino-German relations are no exception, even though much of Western academia's focus has been on Sino-US-Japanese relations, Sino-Soviet relations and Sino-British relations. A widely covered field, Republican Chinese official diplomacy has since become an important part of university research, but has failed to uncover all aspects of Chongqing China's diplomacy. As other research on foreign diplomacy shows, research on merely front-channel diplomacy is insufficient and cannot provide us with the whole picture. As a result, scholars of foreign diplomacy have increasingly turned to diplomacy through back channels. Several major back channels have so far been identified and researched in general diplomatic history. The diplomatic-intelligence history combination in this dissertation focuses on Back-Channel Diplomacy (hereafter BCD), which allows this dissertation to look further beyond the official face of diplomacy. Championed by scholars such as Bungert (2001, 1140), a diplomatic-intelligence history combination allows for further insight into events and behind-the-scene developments.

My main focus in this dissertation is with BCD between the Third Reich and Nationalist China. I will not revisit official German foreign policy in detail and will only provide information on this where necessary, as much research has already been carried out in this field and need not be repeated in detail here. In contrast, it is paramount to discuss Chiang Kai-shek's *official* foreign policy, as expressed in wartime

speeches, in order to highlight the discrepancy between the official statement that Chongqing China was at war with Nazi Germany and the archival findings.

Archival research represents the backbone of this project, and has been carried out in Europe and East Asia. Due to the complexity of wartime Sino-German clandestine communications, I have had to adopt a transnational approach to my archival research. By this, I am referring to an approach that does not focus on one single individual, institution or country. Instead, this research explores the role of German and Chinese individuals equally and from as objective a position as possible. In particular, because of the complexity of this topic and the un-official nature of back channels, a transnational approach allows us to explore the intricate clandestine Sino-German communication channels.

As I hope to show, Sino-German relations were complicated during the war years. This dissertation intends to show that Chiang Kai-sek himself got involved in the maintenance of wartime Sino-German relations, and communicated through back channels via special representatives. These special representatives were located in Switzerland after July 1941, where they maintained contact with two German groups.

The first German group is termed "Berlin", and refers to a number of individuals at the heart of the Nazi German government. "Berlin" mainly includes agents of the RSHA (Reichssicherheitshauptamt, Reich Main Security Office) and their superiors Heinrich Himmler and Reinhard Heydrich. The latter headed the RSHA and the Sicherheitsdienst (Security Service, SD), while Himmler, as the head of the German police and the SS, controlled Heydrich (Büchler, 1986, 11). The RSHA was an intelligence service linked to the Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (hereafter NSDAP, National Socialist German Workers Party). This group does not include other leading Nazis, such as Adolf Hitler and Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop, but may have involved Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring at some stage. This may appear odd, but as it became clear during research, not all information passing through the "Berlin" channel actually reached the *Führer*.

The second group I term the “German Resistance”. As is commonly known, several Resistance groups existed in Nazi Germany across the political spectrum (Hoffmann, 1988, 55). These groups were often persecuted by the Gestapo and their members killed. However, the one high-level resistance group with the potential to overthrow the Hitler government was an alliance of individuals within the German army, civil service and industry which included members of the *Kreisauer Kreis* (Kreisau Circle), such as Helmuth Graf von Molthke, members of the German state secret service *Abwehr* (Defence), such as Hans Oster, Admiral Wilhelm Canaris and Hans Bernd Gisevius, and members of the General Staff of the German army (Oberkommando der Wehrmacht, OKW), such as Count Claus von Stauffenberg. Their most well-known assassination attempt on Hitler took place on 20 July 1944. In this dissertation, this movement will be referred to simply as the “German Resistance” or “the Resistance movement”. It is not my intention to discredit or overlook other Resistance groups in Germany; this nomenclature has been chosen purely for reasons of clarity and simplicity.

On several occasions below, terms such as “German-friendly” or “Chinese-friendly” will also be used to describe factions within, for example, the German government that sympathised with China, and would have liked to see a German East Asian foreign policy in support of China. Similarly, German-friendly Chinese refers to Chinese individuals in Chongqing that sympathised with Germany, who had received training in Germany, and who were in favour of better relations with the European nation. However, it is important to clarify at this step that these terms do not imply that German-friendly Chinese were Nazis, or that they favoured fascism over democracy. This is the same case with individuals that received, for example, training in the US, and can, thus, be classified as US-friendly. Moreover, these terms do not imply that any of these Chinese individuals valued the foreign country they sympathised with as more important than China.

Before going into more detail, I will outline the structure of this dissertation, and present the theoretical framework which underpins it.

Structure of the dissertation

This dissertation comprises eight chapters. The initial chapter is split into three sections. The first section includes an introduction to the dissertation and clarifies the content and research focus, as well as the definition of certain important terms. In the second section, I present the structure of this dissertation, and briefly explain the content of each chapter. The third section deals with the theoretical framework which underpins the project. It introduces the reader initially to two theories of un-official diplomacy: Secret and Back-Channel Diplomacy (BCD). After careful consideration and evaluation, I will explain why I have adopted the BCD theory to explore aspects of clandestine Sino-German relations. Besides BCD theory more generally, information on aspects of mediation theory has been added to help understand whether the mediation attempts carried out through these clandestine Sino-German channels had any chance for success.

Chapter Two is a literature review. It also establishes the gap in research which I am hoping to fill through this project. It starts with a "note on research", in which I highlight the challenges I encountered during my fieldwork, in particular in China. Moreover, the literature review underlines the shortcomings in previous research, amongst others the limitation of the research time frame to the summer of 1941 and not beyond. Chapter Two ends with a justification of the project, and some thoughts on the contributions it makes to the field of the history of Republican Chinese foreign relations.

As the last part of preparation for the main body of this dissertation and theoretical discussion, the historical overview (Chapter Three) covers the 1930s, leading up to the events of WWII in China and Germany. My aim in this section will be

to provide an understanding of how events in both China and Germany in the 1930s and before would come to play a role in shaping Sino-German relations into the 1940s. This goes in particular for changes in German East Asian foreign policy and for Chinese foreign policy respectively. Developments in both official Chinese and German foreign policy coincided with changes in the international community. It is of particular interest to this project to ascertain how a certain type of rhetoric was used in Chongqing, and to compare this with the actual events undertaken by the Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek after China's declaration of war on Germany. Hence, Chapter Four provides a selection of wartime Chongqing Chinese propaganda and speeches held by Chiang Kai-shek that highlight the official Nationalist Chinese foreign policy. Moreover, the second section in Chapter Four provides historical evidence for Chiang Kai-shek's use of back channels to conduct a foreign policy that operated separately from the Chinese Foreign Office.

As I will lay out below in the sections on theory, BCD relies on individuals' actions, rather than on that of an organisation (such as a foreign office). But the importance of individuals to BCD means that I will also need to introduce the main players in the Sino-German relationship to the reader, and this calls for a separate chapter in which they are introduced. Chapter Five will therefore lay the foundation of the Sino-German communication network, and ensure that the many different names will not cause any confusion as the dissertation proceeds. The two different back channels to Chiang Kai-shek will be introduced, and the chapter starts with a brief section on Chiang Kai-shek, who, as the only common element of both channels, will be discussed separately. In the next step, the chapter will introduce the Chinese and German agents of the "Berlin-Chiang Channel": Gui Yongqing and Kurt Jahnke. After that follows the description of the "German Resistance-Chiang Channel" agents: Qi Jun and several members of the German Resistance, with whom Qi was in contact in Berlin and Switzerland.

All these individuals play a role in the story that will be explored in Chapter Six, in which the findings from my archival research will be presented. The story starts in 1938/39 and shows how early signs of BCD began to take place between China, Germany and Japan at this early stage of the Sino-Japanese conflict. Over the course of time, the importance of official diplomatic channels decreased (due to changes in the domestic German political landscape), and efforts to foster Sino-German relations shifted to back channels in Berlin that were established and maintained by Gui and Qi until summer 1941. This ultimately paid off when Sino-German relations came to an end and communications continued through clandestine channels in Switzerland, again through Qi and Gui. The discussions running through these channels included topics on mediation, foreign relations and Sino-German relations.

The presentation of findings in Chapter Six clearly raises several questions which need to be discussed in Chapter Seven. Questions about the nature of Sino-German relations, and the pragmatic nature of Chinese foreign policy. How much influence did German-friendly lobbyists inside the Chongqing government have, and at which point in time were such voices at their strongest? How did the existence of German-friendly individuals influence Chiang Kai-shek's position among the Allies? More broadly, I will also consider what all these questions and their answers tell us about BCD, and explore whether or not we need to amend our understanding of this theory. This discussion will then be summarised and brought to a conclusion in Chapter Eight, where a final statement will be provided.

Theoretical framework

Diplomacy conducted through back channels has attracted the attention of many researchers over the last few years, and also partially inspired this dissertation. In order to explain clandestine diplomatic relations between Chongqing China and the Third Reich, there are two theories that appear most suitable. These are Back-Channel

Diplomacy and Secret Diplomacy, which I shall introduce and evaluate below. Although I have chosen BCD to explore aspects of clandestine Sino-German relations, it is still necessary to explain why this is the case, and why BCD offers a more convincing theoretical framework than Secret Diplomacy. Due to the fact that mediation plays a large role in BCD and recent research on BCD, I have decided to include certain aspects of mediation theory as well. The application of mediation theory as a whole would be too narrow for the exploration of Sino-German back channels, thus I decided to use certain aspects of mediation theory. BCD will provide the primary theoretical framework for this dissertation; however, the inclusion of mediation theory will help to highlight the low chances for success of the conflict-resolution BCD mediation efforts that were part of Sino-German back channels (see Bercovitch 2011).

Back-Channel Diplomacy (BCD)

A back channel in diplomacy refers to a “line of diplomatic communication which bypasses” an official diplomatic front channel (Berridge and James, 2003, 18). In more recent years, this approach in diplomacy has been widely linked with back channels that solved or attempted to solve major conflicts, such as the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, or the conflict between the British government and the IRA.

Foremost, however, diplomacy through back channels refers to clandestine communication that excludes official diplomatic channels. This definition is further specified by Wanis-St. John (2006, 120), and refers to *official* negotiations that are conducted in *secrecy*. The parties involved in BCD are sometimes in a conflict with each other, and may not even acknowledge each other's legitimacy (Ó Dorchtaraigh, 2011, 768). This state of conflict can refer to two states, or to a state and a terrorist organisation, such as Hamas or the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (hereafter PLO) during the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (Pruitt, 2006, 372). Other examples often cited in research into BCD include the Northern Ireland conflict between the IRA and the British

government, during which BCD was used to settle a decades-long conflict (see Ó Dorchtaraigh, 2011).¹

The initiation of talks originates either with the two conflicting parties at the highest levels, or can be proposed by a neutral intermediary, such as Norway did prior to the Oslo Peace Process in summer 1992 (Waage, 2005, 8). Only a handful of individuals know and participate in meetings, which take place in secrecy at neutral locations. The background of these participants can range from private individuals to active diplomatic staff (Wanis-St. John, 2006, 120).

At the same time, diplomacy through front channels may still take place, as the example of the early 1970s US-Soviet arms control negotiations highlights (Berridge and James, 2003, 18). The benefits of this system are that the two parties can discuss issues of conflict away from the often harmful influence of the audience, as it would otherwise put pressure on the two sides not to agree to too many compromises. As a result, BCD is the preferred means of communication when elements, such as an audience or political opponents, have to be excluded from the negotiation process (Ó Dorchtaraigh, 2011, 768; Wanis-St. John, 2006, 138), particularly when it comes to solving emotionally charged issues or conflicts. The term “audience” can refer to the public, or to official political opponents (which includes other countries as well) (Ó Dorchtaraigh, 2011, 768).

The best-researched BCD process is the Israeli-Palestinian talks in Oslo in 1992/1993. These took place for almost a year, resulting in the signing of the *Declaration of Principles* in September 1993. I will use these back-channel negotiations as an example to show how the theory of BCD is applied in practice.

Before any negotiations start, a willingness to talk has to be sought from both sides. In a BCD process, the conflicting parties then meet in neutral locations and in secrecy, with such meetings either facilitated through a neutral intermediary or on their

¹ More examples of the use of BCD will follow in this chapter.

own accord. Authorised by their leaders² to conduct negotiations and to make commitments (Wanis-St. John, 2006, 121), agents of the conflicting parties work on a solution, while continuing to inform their superiors of any developments. In the process of back-channel negotiations the two sides build up trust, which is crucial for the successful outcome of such a diplomatic approach (Putnam and Carcasson, 1997, 261). The role of the neutral mediator is to facilitate such talks, but also to smooth out any issues which might arise in the course of the negotiations. The Norway case followed a similar pattern, in which the Norwegian mediators facilitated meetings and fostered an intimate atmosphere between the Israelis and the Palestinians (Waage, 2005, 9). The Israeli and Palestinian agents had the backing of their respective highest government leaders,³ and the more the negotiations proceeded, the more high-level these agents became. After initial success, Israel upgraded the talks and these were taken over by diplomats on the Israeli side (Waage, 2005, 10). At the same time, the Norwegian foreign minister became actively involved in negotiations, especially when these were threatened by collapse (Waage, 2005, 12).⁴ In the following weeks and months the two conflicting parties were brought back to the table and a deal was hammered out, brokered through Norwegian mediation. In the end, the *Declaration of Principle* was signed, and this laid the foundation for new negotiations and set a timetable during which these had to be conducted (Wanis-St. John, 2006, 131).

As the above information suggests, current research on BCD focuses largely on clandestine mediation efforts through diplomatic back channels. In general, the term mediation refers to a “conflict management tool” that is applied in divorces as much as in peace negotiations between two states (Greig and Diehl, 2012, 2). Mediation in state-to-to-state conflicts “tends to be used in disputes characterized by high complexity... long duration, and unequal fractionated parties, and where the

² As Wanis-St. John (2006, 121) noted, the head of government in some cases is not aware of back-channel negotiations, but the negotiating agents have the support of some official decision makers.

³ Israeli Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres only learned about the BCD negotiations in Norway after the end of the first round of talks. During the first round, only Deputy Foreign Minister Beilin was aware of the talks (Waage, 2005, 8).

⁴ Waage (2005) describes this role of a negotiator in detail, and relies heavily on interviews conducted with the individuals that were present during the Oslo talks.

willingness... to settle [a conflict] peacefully is in doubt” (Bercovitch and Jackson, 2011, 153). Parties to a conflict that accept mediation may follow alternative objectives, which might not include solving the conflict. Instead, the mediation could be used to buy time, or to maintain the relationship with the third party (mediator) (Richard, 1998, in Greig and Diehl, 2012, 3). Without wanting to go into detail here, Chiang Kai-shek’s and his aides’ approach to the German back channels seems to fit in this last group. In order to further explore this theory, I will look at those back channels in this dissertation that constitute conflict-solution back channels similar to the Oslo Peace Process using factors of mediation that influence the success or failure of mediation, as theorised by Bercovitch (2011). There are certain factors that are seen as important to mediation, which are also crucial for BCD efforts, such as the neutrality of the mediator and (in some cases) the element of secrecy. Greig and Diehl (2012, 106) argue that the determination of the success or failure of a mediation efforts relies on the achievements made by the parties during the mediation stages, as well as the positive changes that occurred in the relationship between the two parties following a mediation effort. In regard to the conflict-solution cases in this dissertation, however, the ultimate outcome is known: failure. Chongqing China joined the Allies as one of the Big Four and emerged victorious from the Sino-Japanese conflict. As a result, it is my intention to look at what an analysis of the chances for success and failure of these conflict-solution back channels tell us about the objectives on the German and the Chinese side.

Bercovitch’s (2011, 8) research into the factors relevant for mediation success, in combination with BCD theory, will help to shed light on the conflict-solution efforts. Without wanting to go into too much detail at this point, three conflict-solution back channels in this dissertation will be explored using BCD and mediation theory aspects, ranging from German mediation in the Sino-Japanese conflict to Chinese mediation between the Washington administration and the German Resistance movement. As will

become clear in Chapters Six and Seven, the mediation attempts explored in this dissertation were all unlikely to be successful.

According to Bercovitch (2011, 8), the four elements common to mediation efforts with great influence on the outcome, are the parties, the mediator, the context of the conflict and the nature of the dispute. The parties to a conflict clearly play an important role in defining “the nature of the conflict and any subsequent approaches to it” (Bercovitch, 2011, 6). Chances for success in mediation depend on whether the parties in conflict accept the attempt, and on their internal situation. In regard to the Oslo Talks, the internal and external situation faced by Israel and the PLO meant the time for talks was ripe, a fact that aided the set up of back channel mediation (Bercovitch, 2011, 138-140). As Greig and Diehl (2012, 136) argue, the wrong time is often chosen by the third party mediator. As will become evident in Chapters Six to Seven, the German mediation approaches to China and Japan, however, took place when the time to negotiate was only ripe for one of sides. Additionally, the perception of an issue by the parties in conflict and possible power asymmetries further hamper mediation efforts (Bercovitch and Houston, 2011, 41-43).

Another factor that influences mediation success is the fact that the more a government is split into factions or fights for legitimacy, the lower the chances for a success in mediation (Bercovitch, 2011, 6). Even though Chiang Kai-shek was the highest Chinese decision maker, his government was notoriously split along factions, who competed over control and the Generalissimo’s support. While factions inside the Chinese government might have had an influence on German mediation efforts between 1938 and 1942, the question of legitimacy possibly carried more weight. Legitimacy tends to be connected to territorial disputes. According to Bercovitch (2011, 7) territorial, ideological and religious conflicts fall under the nature of a conflict. In such conflicts mediation success rates are very low (Bercovitch, 2011, 7). The Oslo talks clearly touched on territorial issues, and it has proven to be very difficult to resolve this conflict. Similarly, the Sino-Japanese conflict was also a territorial conflict. The question

of sovereignty and return of Japanese-occupied land to China were important questions, which more than once derailed mediation attempts. As already mentioned above, the nature of the mediator is supposed to be impartial and neutral (Bercovitch, 2011, 7). The question of mediator neutrality in BCD mediations is one that will be raised again below, and put into the context with other issues that can influence BCD mediation efforts.

As the example of the Oslo Peace Talks shows us, the outcome of BCD can be successful in the short run, but long-term results are difficult to predict. While the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process is still not resolved, other conflicts negotiated through BCD have been solved, such as the Northern Ireland conflict. BCD mediation clearly has its benefits and is suitable for solving conflicts that are emotionally charged on both sides. With the exclusion of the public and domestic political opponents, BCD participants are able to find a compromise that both parties can accept, often facilitated through a mediator. Moreover, the secrecy of back channels allows the parties enough time to facilitate such an agreement. This time is indeed needed, as a political backlash from opposition parties and the public is inevitable and can have negative consequences.⁵

In addition, there are other issues that can influence BCD. While earlier work has focused mainly on the parties to the conflict, only a few scholars, such as Waage (2005), have looked at the specific role of the intermediary in BCD processes. Ó Dorchtaraigh (2011, 768) noted this “paucity of work focusing on cooperation at the intersection between parties in back channels”. However, mediation theory contributes enlightening information on the role and importance of mediators in international conflict resolution (Bercovitch, 2011; Astor, 2007, Greig and Diehl, 2012, 5). Common to BCD theorists’ approach and mediation theory is the idea that the intermediary is a

⁵ The Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process derailed as a result of the hardened position of extreme right-wing parties in Israel and Palestine. Wanis-St. John (2006, 132) mentions the murder of Palestinians at the hands of an Israeli settler on 25 February 1994. Hamas initiated a new wave of suicide bombings, while Israeli settlers denounced Prime Minister Rabin (Wanis-St. John, 2006, 133).

neutral entity, such as Norway was in the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process. Even though an ally of Israel, Norway also acknowledged the PLO, and both sides of the conflict accepted her as an intermediary. In theory there is nothing wrong with this general definition, but back-channel theory does not consider all possible alliances that exist in the international community. I argue that BCD research does not include biased (non-neutral) mediators, perhaps for the reason that a biased intermediary is usually not accepted by one party in the conflict. Other scholars, such as Astor (2007, 222) and Bercovitch and Houston (2011, 45),⁶ have questioned whether mediation can indeed be neutral. While Astor (2007) discusses the influence of the mediator's own ethnic and cultural background on neutrality, this dissertation was confronted with the question of how the dynamics of BCD change if one party is officially at war/ in conflict with both the mediator and the other side of the conflict. These are dilemmas that have yet to be explored in the literature on back-channel theory and the closely associated mediation theory, yet it is also one which defined relations between Germany and Nationalist China during WWII.

Furthermore, I argue that much of the BCD research focuses too heavily on states that are in conflict, and leaves out other possibilities, such as states that are behind-the-scene *not* in conflict. If we go back to the simplest definition of BCD as a communication channel, then we need to raise the question regarding participants that officially are in conflict, but enjoy a not-conflicting, but un-official, relationship. In the course of this research I encountered this issue and had trouble classifying it as BCD, as too much weight in recent research is placed on the conflict-solving, rather than on the simple communication aspects. Simple back channels tend to be overshadowed by great cases such as the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, or the Northern Ireland one. I intend to bring the focus back on the simple communication aspect of back channels.

⁶ Bercovitch and Houston (2011, 45) quote: Faure, 1989; Kressel and Pruitt, 1985; Smith, 1985; Touval, 1985; Touval and Zartman, 1985.

Secret Diplomacy versus BCD

BCD and Secret Diplomacy are often conflated or treated as synonyms. Similar to BCD, Secret Diplomacy takes place unbeknownst to the audience (i.e. the population and other states). While BCD is often applied to explain behind-the-scenes diplomacy over the last 20 to 30 years, Secret Diplomacy has been widely associated with the 19th century, the years before WWI and imperialism. Loosely defined, Secret Diplomacy can refer to official, serious diplomatic negotiations, because the content of official diplomacy, even today, is secret in the first place. The public only sees the outcome of negotiations, but not the decision-making process. Post-WWI thinking attacked Secret Diplomacy, in particular as it was not known what kind of secret treaties were established between states (Berridge and James, 2003, 239-240), something which may have contributed to the outbreak of WWI.

By definition, major parts of diplomacy take place in secrecy between official diplomats who negotiate treaties and arrangements, mostly in the receiving country itself (Magalhães, 1988, 72). After Secret Diplomacy takes place, a final treaty or agreement will then be made public. Magalhães (1988, 73) argues that in Secret Diplomacy, at some point, one of the negotiation partners tends to leak information to the public to gain benefits. Such a move is possible when public opinion is to be influenced through propaganda “to make the people war minded”, as was the case prior to WWI (Neilson, 1956, 35).

Secret Diplomacy is often associated with the early 20th century and imperialism, in particular in the case of China. Elleman (1994), for example, provides a good example of Secret Diplomacy by looking at Sino-Soviet negotiations over the Eastern Chinese Railway in Manchuria in 1924/1925. Even though it promised not to use Secret Diplomacy and called upon other foreign powers to follow the Soviet example in China (Elleman, 1994, 459), the Soviet government continued to use Secret Diplomacy in negotiations. Elleman (1994, 460) points out that the Soviet Union’s image in China depended on the perception that she treated the Chinese differently from the other

powers. Officially, the Soviet Union therefore renounced the treaty rights she had inherited from Tsarist Russia, and this resulted in a boost in Chinese public opinion. Hardly known to anybody, however, was that the Soviet Union did *not* in reality relinquish her treaty rights, but “releged on the promises [she made]” (Elleman, 1994, 459).

At first glance Secret Diplomacy indeed seems like a fitting model to use when exploring clandestine Sino-German relations. On closer inspection, however, a careful comparison of the case and the two theories is mandatory to reveal that this is not the case. Let us remind ourselves of the important factors inherent in Secret Diplomacy: It is carried out by official diplomats on the orders of their respective heads of state. BCD in its initial stage, in contrast, can be carried out by agents who do not hold an official appointment, but who do nonetheless hold an official mandate.

The clandestine Sino-German channels that I shall examine in this dissertation did not run through official diplomatic channels; rather, they were carried out by individuals outside the control of the German and Chinese Foreign Office. Secret Diplomacy has been defined as a normal, everyday part of the diplomatic decision making process (Magalhães, 1988, 72). In general, however, back channels are defined as a communication line which runs alongside the official diplomatic front channel (Berridge and James, 2003, 18). Back channels are chosen over normal, public diplomatic channels, due to the possibility that a back channel’s secrecy can hide new political developments from opponents (Berridge and James, 2003, 18).

The desire to leave political opponents in the dark plays a strong role, and this surely influenced the decision for back channels in this case. Both governments in Chongqing and Berlin were plagued by political factions, and as I will point out later, the occupation of official posts in the foreign office by one faction may trigger the use of back channels by its rival to circumvent any obstacles that might arise. While this would hold true for German Chinese-friendly individuals, in the case of China, Chiang Kai-shek’s tendency to influence foreign relations through his own, non-professional,

special representatives (see Chapter Four) also supports the use of back channels. While BCD comprises a steady development of trust between each side, coupled with the upgrading of talks on a higher, formal level, Secret Diplomacy can rely on pre-existing official channels. The importance of trust in clandestine Sino-German channels will become clearer in Chapters Five and Six, where I introduce the agents and their conversation topics, respectively. This will set the scene and clear allegiances, before I present information on the clandestine communication between these individuals.

Secret Diplomacy also relies heavily on existing foreign diplomacy organisations and structures, while BCD places much focus on the individuals and their actions. Since individuals were the base of clandestine Sino-German wartime relations, Secret Diplomacy would be insufficient to analyse them.

While Secret Diplomacy is employed in either the sending country or the host country of a diplomatic mission, BCD relies on neutral locations or intermediaries. As we shall see, for example, post-1941 negotiations between Nazi German and Chinese groups took place in neutral Switzerland, which further makes the case for the application of BCD in this dissertation.

As Neilson (1956, 34) states, Secret Diplomacy always carries the option of war with it, and was used for example by pre-WWI countries to scheme amongst each other, such as Britain's and France's creation of the Entente Cordiale. In BCD, there is no threat to go to war with a country if the conditions are not met; rather, the idea of BCD is to *avoid* conflict. In much recent research, this idea also included the solving of conflict. Indeed, many BCD-practicing groups are already in conflict with each other when they commence negotiations. This would fit the case of the Third Reich and Chongqing China. Officially both sides entered into war in December 1941, but even before that relations had been severed in July 1941. From that time onwards there was no official diplomatic channel left, meaning that any kind of diplomatic communication could only run through clandestine back channels.

It could be argued that Secret Diplomacy is also clandestine, just as its name suggests. However, as part of Secret Diplomacy, propaganda is essential, as it puts pressure on the counterpart, or prepares the own and allied population for the event of war, as was the case in the run up to WWI (Neilson, 1956, 34). This element of Secret Diplomacy is clearly impossible to incorporate into this project, because the clandestine communication channels I explore in this dissertation took place at a time when Chongqing had already declared war on Germany. This means that any kind of propaganda about these channels would undermine their existence, and that absolute secrecy was therefore necessary.

As I hope to have shown above, there is a strong case supporting the use of BCD over Secret Diplomacy as the theoretical framework for this dissertation. This case might be further supported by other examples of BCD in the recent and more distant past.

BCD in history

Above, I introduced a number of well-known BCD cases, such as the Israel-Palestine Conflict, or the Britain-IRA Conflict. These two conflicts, however, are not the only ones in which the idea of diplomacy through back channels has been applied.

BCD theory cannot only shed light on modern day conflicts, but can also be used in retrospect. As the cases below show, BCD is not only applied in violent conflicts such as in the Middle East, but can also be used by ideologically conflicting parties (i.e. the US and the Soviet Union) to reach agreements in negotiations when the front channel is inefficient.

A prominent user of BCD, whose foreign policy actions have been well researched, is former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. Diplomacy through back channels was part of the SALT talks between the Soviet Union and the US, which began in 1969 and aimed to control missile arsenals (Steinberg, 1985, 267). During the SALT talks, Kissinger, President Richard Nixon and their Soviet counterparts created a

back channel, which discussed all issues that could not be dealt with in the front channel. Since the back channel proved more successful, the front channel was kept busy with false proposals (Steinberg, 1985, 268).

Diplomacy through back channels can go back much further than the 1970s, however, and there are even examples of this idea having been applied by historians to the ancient world (Marcos, 2012). Marcos (2012, 508) came to the conclusion that the use of an informal network by Roman representative Musonianus to initiate communication with Persia in 356 A.D. counts as back-channel communication, for example.

These two examples show a surprising shift of focus from modern-day conflicts to around 1700 year-old ones, and clearly point to the great adaptability of BCD as an approach. It can be used in retrospect, and in combination with new research material, and can reveal the existence of clandestine diplomacy. I intend to conduct similar research on Republican China's wartime diplomacy with Nazi Germany, combine intelligence and diplomatic history, and fill the gap in knowledge that previous literature has failed to recognise.

In conclusion, BCD theory emerges as the most suitable theory to explore and explain clandestine Sino-German relations during WWII. The comparison between Secret Diplomacy and BCD clearly shows the characteristics of this particular back channel between China and Germany. At all times, it was secret, avoided the German and the Chinese Foreign Offices and the two parties involved, Germany and Chongqing China, were from July 1941 onwards officially in conflict with each other. As will be shown in Chapter Seven, this communication channel also contributes to the general debate on BCD.

Chapter Two: Literature Review and Issues in Research

A note on research methods

Before I introduce the current state of research on wartime Republican Chinese foreign policy, it is necessary to highlight the research methods used and the issues I faced in the course of undertaking this project. Archival research represented the major part of my fieldwork and several archives were visited, mainly in Taiwan, the People's Republic of China (hereafter PRC) and Europe. Most researchers in the field would agree that the most important Chinese archives for this period are in Taipei (Taiwan) and Nanjing (PRC). Following the Nationalist retreat to Taiwan, the administration's documents were roughly split in two, and as a result, researchers have had to travel to archives on both sides of the Taiwan Strait (when these have been accessible) in order to form a fuller picture of available information. Academia Historica (Guoshiguan) in Taipei stores vast amounts of material related to Chiang Kai-shek, as well as the Republic of China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs files. These were examined in some detail for this project. While in Taiwan I also visited other archives, such as the Guomindang Party archive and the archives at Academia Sinica. Information on the Sino-German relationship in the post-1941 period proved to be sparse in these two institutions. As we shall see below, this in itself reflects the narrative of the relationship in wartime, and connections that were maintained through personal envoys rather than through the usual channels of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Nationalist Party itself.

Following fieldwork in Taiwan, I aimed to continue my research at the Number Two Historical Archives in Nanjing, and hoped to find more supporting, or even contradictory information that would complement the picture I had built up in Taipei. However, as it turned out, this institution has been closed indefinitely for the purpose of digitalising all files. Obviously, the archive closure proved to be a challenge to my research plans, which had to be adjusted accordingly. Instead of complementing the

information found in Taiwan with further Chinese archival sources, I was forced to rely on Chinese secondary literature.

This new research environment in the PRC has been subject to research by Carlson, Gallagher, Lieberthal and Manion (2010, 2), who take into account the increased availability of material, thanks to the new digital developments. Indeed, many researchers on Chinese history will agree, that while research in China has “become easier [it has also become] ... harder at the same time” (Göbel, 2011, 177). On the one hand, more information has become available to the researcher; on the other hand, the Chinese government is able to control the access to such information to a greater degree (Göbel, 2011, 177). Indeed, as the Republican past has become increasingly important in the PRC, so too has the need for the PRC government to control sources related to it. Even though Carlson’s et al. edition (2010) focuses on contemporary Chinese politics, their conclusions make just as much sense for scholars of modern Chinese history.

In order to take a transnational and objective approach to this research topic, I have also had to substantiate my East Asian findings with information from European and American archives. These have included the German Foreign Office Archive (the Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes), and the Bundesarchiv (the federal archive). The federal archive consists of several branches spread all over Germany, but the main branch is found in Berlin, and this stores material from the German Reich, including the Third Reich, as well as documents from the former DDR. As this project focuses relatively heavily on individual connections, including those between Chongqing and individual German military personnel, it was necessary to visit the military branch of the federal archive in Freiburg as well. I also visited the Institut für Zeitgeschichte (IfZ) in Munich, which stores several files on members of the German Resistance.

The last stop of my archival research took me to Berne in Switzerland, where the Swiss Bundesarchiv (federal archive) can be found. The Swiss archive cannot be ignored, as much of the back-channel negotiations took place in Berne and the surrounding area. As the Swiss authorities carefully monitored any intelligence operations and agents on their territory, they also maintained a number of records on both agents and diplomatic staff living in Switzerland. In consequence, I was able to search through files of the important mediators of the two back channels that Chiang Kai-shek maintained. However, contrary to my expectations, the Swiss files offer much information on US, British and German espionage during WWII, but little on specific Chinese intelligence—a fact that tells us much about the lack of importance Swiss authorities attached to East Asian affairs.

As part of the research in archives, I encountered several different citation regulations that were laid out by the archives themselves. In some cases, page numbers are asked for and are provided wherever possible. In other cases, the only reference provided by the archive is a record number, which will lead directly to the file in question.

As there existed connections between some of the individuals in question and the American wartime intelligence Office of Strategic Services (OSS), I also visited Princeton University, which holds the Allen Welsh Dulles Papers. This visit took place during my attendance at the 22nd Graduate Conference at Columbia University New York.

Financial and time constraints did not enable me to access other important collections held in the US or Japan, but I acknowledge that future research undertaken in such collections may help strengthen, or indeed complicate, the findings that I present in this dissertation.

As well as archival sources I have also accessed a number of personal diaries and evidence from oral history projects. A prominent (perhaps even fashionable)

source in Republican Chinese historiography at the moment is the Chiang Kai-shek diaries, held at the Hoover Institution in Stanford. I was unable to access the diaries, as I did not have the financial resources to travel to Stanford. However, I believe that the archival materials collected in both Europe and East Asia provide sufficient evidence for this project. Moreover, the Chiang diaries have been screened thoroughly by Yang Tianshi (2010b), who has included large amounts of diary content related to the German Resistance in his publications. The amount of evidence directly related to the Resistance which Yang cites from the diaries is rather limited in scope, which may suggest that the diaries themselves did not contain much information relevant to this topic.

Oral history projects are also a fascinating source, but the individuals who come to the fore in this project have not left significant material in this form. Additionally, while scholars such as Hsi-huey Liang, working in the 1970s, were able to directly interview many of the individuals involved in the Sino-German relationship, I have not been able to apply a similar methodology due simply to the fact that none of the key figures in my project are still alive.

Introduction to WWII Sino-foreign relations literature, 1937-1945

The War of Resistance (1937-1945) has attracted a significant amount of attention in Western and Asian academia over recent years. While in the early decades following WWII many scholars focused more on the question of “Who lost China”, in more recent years, Western academic research has shifted to the social, cultural, and economic developments and consequences of these crucial years on China’s population. Chinese academia, on the other hand, is currently creating and questioning its own narrative of wartime Republican Chinese historiography, which also includes foreign relations. This literature review provides a short overview of the current state of Chinese and Western research on Sino-foreign relations. It then moves on to focus

more deeply on literature on Sino-German relations during the war years. It also highlights the gap in research that this project intends to fill.

Chinese research on Sino-foreign relations

The history of the Republic of China before 1949 and, in particular, during WWII, has gained increasing academic and popular interest in China in recent years, with a rich Chinese literature continuing to flourish (Mitter, 2005, 524). Domestic change, ideological adaptation and increasing nationalism in the PRC have all coincided with a re-evaluation of the past, described by one American historian as a “new remembering” (Coble, 2007, 402) of the war.⁷ This trend is evidenced in a wide range of journals and publications, such as *Minguo Dang'an*, or *Kangri Zhanzheng Yanjiu* (Coble, 2007, 402), and the construction of memorials that commemorate the war dead, such as on the site of the Nanjing Massacre of December 1937 (He Yinan, 2007, 8).⁸

In contrast to Western academia, Chinese academic research focuses overwhelmingly on the crucial time of the Chinese War of Resistance, which started WWII in East Asia in July 1937. In connection with this period, a recent discourse on the role of Chiang Kai-shek, the Guomindang (GMD) and the presence of foreign powers in China has emerged. Kirby (1997, 436) argues that, since the 1990s, mainland Chinese scholarship has created good work in regard to the history of Republican Chinese diplomacy. Prior to this period well-researched literature on Chinese diplomacy had been published during the Republican period, but during the Cold War until 1990, successive Chinese governments limited archival access (Kirby,

⁷ Coble (2007, 402) termed this development China’s “new remembering”; a re-evaluation of China’s own past, which coincided with domestic change; the opening to the outside world and ideological adaptation. Prior to the “Reform and Opening period”, memory of the Sino-Japanese war hardly found its way into public life. If this period was discussed, it would have had to follow the narrative authorised by the CCP, which “privileged the revolution and the leadership of the Communist Party” (Coble, 2007, 395). The GMD’s or foreign participant’s role in these events was neglected. Only with the “Reform and Opening Policy” in the 1980s did a gradual rehabilitation of other historical topics find its way into public memory (Coble, 2007, 397).

⁸ *Minguo Dang'an* is a journal that publishes selected archival material and journal articles on the Republican Era. *Kangri Zhanzheng Yanjiu* publishes journal articles on the War of Resistance against Japan. Coble (2007, 402) noted that the journal published on topics that have been “previously off limits”.

1997, 436). In the last twenty years, Chongqing China's foreign diplomacy, however, played an important part in PRC-Chinese historiography, as it is used to reshape Republican China's image internally, re-evaluate her position in the pre-Cold War international community (Wang Zhen, 2003), and explain domestic WWII developments, as well as the structure of and competition between the Nationalist Chinese Foreign Office and additional organisations involved in China's foreign relations (Chen Yan, 2002b).

Within this literature on Sino-foreign wartime relations, the role of Chiang Kai-shek takes centre stage, and significant research redefines his character, motives and influence on events. Chen Renxia's research (2003a, 92) indicates that external developments (e.g. Hitler's obsession with the Soviet Union, the secret foreign policy of German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop) complicated Chinese foreign policy, and hindered Chiang Kai-shek's plans of good Sino-German relations.⁹ At the same time, Chen (2003a, 104) calls it "regrettable" that domestic Chinese academia hardly explored mid-1930s Republican Chinese foreign policy efforts directed at Germany and Japan. Amongst Chinese scholars working on Chiang Kai-shek, Yang Tianshi is arguably the most prolific, with much of his scholarship focusing specifically on the Chiang diaries at Stanford (Yang, 2007; 2011a and 2011b, in cooperation with Yang Yuping). The work of Yang and other scholars such as Chen Yan (2002b), indicates a research approach that, as Chen (2002b, 343-344) argues, was previously lacking in Chinese research. This approach calls for a focus on individuals involved in events, as this would help to explain domestic Chinese developments more thoroughly than before. Indeed, even more research has come out in the meantime that looks at individuals around Chiang Kai-shek and presents their role in the war, such as Deng and Wang (2012), who researched Chiang's main generals, one of which was Chiang Kai-shek's contact to the German side during WWII.

⁹ Chen Renxia (2003a, 92) attempts to rehabilitate Chiang Kai-shek by suggesting that the alliance between the Third Reich and Japan was out of the Generalissimo's control. Moreover, Chinese academia acknowledges the foreign relations difficulties the Nationalist government faced before 1937, which influenced events during the war (Chen, 2003a, 104).

Chinese academics' work focuses on the re-evaluation of a century characterised by the "shameful treatment" by World Powers, which started with the "Unequal Treaties" in 1842. The PRC's own increasingly influential role as a major political and economic power in the international community may also have contributed to the growing interest in the history of Republican Chinese foreign relations. As a result of the high level of foreign involvement in 19th and 20th century China, debate on the historical role of foreign powers in China is an important part of China's evaluation of her own role today. Current Chinese research tends to focus on Republican Chinese foreign policy in relation to China's role in the international community. In general, the tendency is to explore China's relations with several countries in one publication simultaneously (Li, 2012). In many cases, scholars such as Yan and Li (2008) link the US and Britain closely together, with the focus on US aid. The Soviet Union and Germany are treated separately, and are discussed, for example, in regard to the Soviet-German *Non Aggression Pact*. Often the impact such international developments had on China are explored (see Yan and Li, 2008, 157-174).¹⁰ Foreign countries which had once been identified with Imperialism (especially during the Mao years), tend now to be perceived more positively.¹¹ As an indication we can see the construction of museums that commemorate foreign individuals who fought in the WWII East Asian Theatre,¹² alongside memorials of the Chinese victims of WWII. This development, sanctioned by the CCP government, has been termed "history activism" by Reilly (2006, 190). Simultaneously, a number of recent publications do not shy away from casting former allies, such as the Soviet Union (and, for example, her negotiations with Japan in 1940), in a more negative light (see Yan and Li, 2008, 174).

¹⁰ For example see Xu Lan (1990). Xu Lan discussed the connections between the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war (July 1937) and the League of Nations Conference in Brussels from October 1937 until November 1937. Xu (1990, 102) criticises the behaviour of foreign powers (mainly Britain and the US) from abstaining from the conflict, and only looking after their own interests.

¹¹ The large amount of articles on the Nanjing massacre may have influenced the perception of foreign powers positively, while Japan's image still is largely defined by atrocities carried out during the war, not only in China but also in other parts of Asia.

¹² In the city of Chongqing a museum that commemorates US General Joseph Stilwell has opened, and shows among other objects, a bust of Stilwell.

As most Chinese publications cover China's relations with the most important countries in one single work, the reader can grasp the different intentions and motivations at work. On the other side, less time and space is devoted to single topics, and the information provided remains rather shallow. In Yan and Li (2008), for example, the period of the German-Soviet *Non Aggression Pact*, the Munich Crisis, the content of the pact, as well as international and Chinese reactions, are covered in about 20 pages. Through this process, however, Chinese academia is creating a new narrative and image of the Sino-Japanese war.

While Western Powers tend to be dealt with in the same publication, there is a myriad of publications that deal only with Sino-Japanese relations. Indeed, the Sino-Japanese war is, and has been, used by the Chinese CCP government to promote nationalism and to legitimise its own position (Reilly, 2006, 193). As a result of the increased nationalism that has been promoted in China in place of Marxism-Leninism, China's Japan policy has changed, and this has eventually led to an increase in references to atrocities committed by Japan during the war. At the same time China's role as a victim, but also as a victorious power, has been emphasised. Chinese universities and the Chinese public more generally, have now great access to articles that are concerned with Japanese atrocities, such as the Nanjing Massacre (see for example Wang Weixing, 2005).¹³ Unintentionally, but also interestingly, scholars interested in Sino-German relations can draw much information from these publications, because the Third Reich is usually mentioned on the periphery of Sino-Japanese relations.

¹³ The involvement of foreigners as leaders of the so-called "Safety Zone" in Nanjing during the massacre increasingly features in Chinese research, and finds its expression for example in the 2005 movie *Nanking*. The movie was based on the diaries of German Siemens manager John Rabe, and US missionary Minnie Vaultrin. This movie is a perfect example of the "new remembering". Wickert (1997) published the part of Rabe's diaries that described the Nanjing Massacre in German first, and these were then published in English under the name of Rabe with the title *The good German of Nanking: the diaries of John Rabe* (1999).

Chinese research on Sino-German relations

While there exists research on the Nanjing Massacre and also a translation of John Rabe's diary accounts of that event into English, another aspect that Chinese scholars have focused on are 1930s diplomatic relations between the Third Reich and China.¹⁴ The German foreign relation shift, away from Nationalist China and towards Japan between 1936 and 1938, has been subject to a substantial amount of Chinese research, and Germany's relations with these two East Asian nations have been seen as a "triangular" relationship (e.g. Chen Renxia, 2003b).

Research covering Sino-German relations exclusively deals mostly with trade, military and official diplomatic relations (see He Lan, 1997; Zhou Jianming, 2006). Western research carried out by scholars such as William Kirby in earlier decades has had a particularly great influence on modern Chinese scholars, but has also led to a narrow perception of Sino-German relations in the Chinese accounts. The German military mission and its role in the Sino-Japanese war have often been explored (see Fu, 1998a, 1998b), as well as their contribution to the Chinese fight against Japan. Sino-German economic cooperation has been explored with a wide range of topics, ranging from "Industrial Diplomacy" (Sun (2004) to a comparison of the economic benefits that China offered to Germany (raw materials, agricultural products) with the ones she finally gained from her alliance with Japan. These publications questioned why Germany even considered siding with Japan in the first place, if China had the much better trade relations with her. Such a question silently underscores research on Sino-German trade, which focuses on the economic boom years of 1936 and 1937 (see Cai and Wu, 2006a).

¹⁴ Siemens representative John Rabe headed the "Safety Zone" set up in Nanjing by a number of foreign individuals, e.g. from the US, and Britain (Wang, 2005, 106). Rabe's connections to the NSDAP and the German authorities contributed to the survival of the zone.

While the role of Sino-German trade and military relations, including the work on HAPRO,¹⁵ has been growing, there is little scholarship which looks beyond the end of official Sino-German relations in July 1941. In this specific aspect, Chinese historians do not differ much from their Western counterparts. Scholarship in English, German and Chinese tends to limit the story of Sino-German relations to the period of the 1920s, 1930s and until shortly before July 1941. It is commonly acknowledged, for instance, that with the end of official Sino-German diplomatic relations, in the wake of German acknowledgment of the Wang Jingwei Collaborationist government with Japan, all contact between Berlin and Chongqing ended. Despite this common timeline, however, there are some subtle differences in the ways in which Germany and her role during WWII are perceived by Chinese and Western academics.

Attitudes toward the Third Reich are, of course, diverse. Despite Germany's role as an Axis partner of Japan, many references in Chinese scholarship to her role in the war are positive. The Third Reich and her atrocities are far more prevalent in Western historiography and minds than in China. The reason for this is perhaps the positive way that the technological aid (in the form of military advisors and weapons that were sent to China by Germany between 1927 and 1938) are viewed in China today. The terrible events of the Holocaust, and the heavy fighting in and bombing of large parts of Europe by the Third Reich, represent the primary war experience for European countries. In this respect, almost all Western work on the Third Reich is coloured by this knowledge. Without wanting to downplay or discount such narratives, however, it is important to keep in mind that the Third Reich is not necessarily remembered in this way in China itself. Such differences are not necessarily new, either: as we will see below, this difference in the public memory of the war also influenced Churchill's and Chiang Kai-shek's perception of Nazi Germany and their approach to the German Resistance during WWII, respectively.

¹⁵ Handelsgesellschaft für industrielle Produkte (Trading Company for Industrial Products). A consortium of German business, including for example Siemens. The founder of HAPRO, Hans Klein enjoyed good connections in China, and secured major trade contracts for his clients.

In the last three years, a noticeable shift has taken place in Chinese academia which has opened up the field for research on the connections between Chiang Kai-shek and the German Resistance movement of 20 July 1944. Yang Tianshi (2010b) published his theory in the Taiwanese journal *Zhuanji Wenxue* and suggested that the German Resistance once asked Chiang Kai-shek to mediate with the Allies and to provide financial aid. With little evidence to substantiate his claims (beyond that which was found in Chiang Kai-shek's own diaries), Yang has been harshly criticised for such a notion in China.¹⁶

This dissertation attempts, amongst its other aims, to establish that such a link that Yang Tianshi (2010b) has suggested was indeed there, and to explore aspects of the clandestine connection between the German Resistance and Chiang Kai-shek. Yang's work in this regard is of help, but reaction to his work also highlights the shortcomings in the current field in China and Taiwan. One goal of my research is to encourage further research in this field by Chinese scholars.

While narratives of the German Resistance against Hitler are positive, references to Hitler and the Nazi government in Chinese publications are becoming more diverse. Bi Ye (1994, 52), for instance, argues that Hitler was tricked and pressurised by Japan into allowing relations with China to deteriorate. The argument is that Hitler and his government were not strong enough to resist Japanese pressure, and that if it had not been for Japanese meddling, Germany might otherwise have stood on China's side. In cooperation with Wu Jiajia (2006a), and in a cooperation with Wang Anping (2006b), Cai Sheng on the other hand is far more critical and uses a combination of strategic and ideological arguments to show why Hitler chose Japan over China. The reference to Hitler's ideological work *Mein Kampf* is used to highlight

¹⁶ For more information on the reaction to Yang's work see: Chapter Two and Chapter Six. The criticism Yang faced is referred to in more detail in Chapter 6, where I take up the case of his article again. For more information on the criticism Yang (2010b) faced, see: www.military.china.com (article from 03 March 2011, read on 20 May 2012, link: <http://military.china.com/history4/62/20110303/16409635.html>); www.mil.huongqiu.com, 01 May 2012, read on 20 May 2012, link: http://mil.huangqiu.com/Forum/2012-05/2676096_2.html); and www.chinataiwan.org (article from 02 July 2011, read on 20 May 2012, link: http://www.chinataiwan.org/wh/dsw/wh/txx/201007/t20100702_1439032.htm, probably taken from *Dongfang Zaobao*). Also see: Wang Rongzu (2013).

the theory that the Nazi German government harboured discriminatory feelings towards Chinese individuals, and only saw the cooperation with China as temporary (Cai and Wu, 2006a, 52-53). In essence, this approach can shed light on the question why Hitler chose Japan over China, despite the latter having good relations with and economic importance to the Third Reich.

I do not assume that this occasional positive depiction of the Third Reich is the pre-dominant perception in China, but in the course of research it became clear that very different perceptions of Nazi Germany exist in the realms of Chinese academia, and Europe.

Chinese scholarship has contributed greatly to a new and emerging image of the Republican Era, and has positively revisited and re-evaluated many of that period's main events. There exist a number of criticisms, however, for example that Chinese historical research on Republican Chinese foreign policy lacks a proper conceptual framework (Chen Yan, 2002b, 343). Also, the choice of research topics has been rather limited over the years, and has only recently started to broaden to include controversial facts of Republican Chinese history, for example the foreign relations of the Wang Jingwei Collaborationist government in Nanjing (Chen Yan, 2002b).¹⁷ Notable work has been published in this field by Western scholars such as John Hunter Boyle (1972) and Timothy Brook (2005), and cooperation in the field of Chinese wartime collaboration with Western researchers might help bring the two strands of scholarship closer together.

Further criticism can relate to the extensive use of oral histories and diaries, which are used while rarely questioning the writer's intention. Oral records of former diplomats and military personnel, such as those used by Li (2012), provide a fascinating insight into events, but have not provided any additional information to our

¹⁷ At this point I would like to mention that this thesis will not explore how the secret Sino-German connections were perceived by the Wang Jingwei Collaborationist government in Nanjing. Even though this aspect would clearly be of great interest, it would go beyond the scope of this paper. Future research can focus on such elements which have to be left out at this time.

understanding of Sino-foreign relations in this period. Without sufficient background information and evaluation, this information cannot be fully integrated into the wider context of Republican Chinese historiography.

Additionally, Chinese scholars have yet to fully exploit the possibilities presented by European or US archives (apart, of course, from Chinese-language material held at the Hoover Institution in Stanford). As an example, Yang (2010b) has been unable to further support his theory of links between the German Resistance and Chiang Kai-shek by substantiating his findings with non-Chinese evidence. More thorough work in, for example, the German archives, would have uncovered much evidence in support of Yang's argument. That there is indeed much evidence to be found in Western archives is a fact I hope to underline in this very dissertation. In particular, in fields such as foreign relations, such collections can prove vital to finding information in the country in question, be it Sino-German-, Sino-US- or Sino-Soviet relations. In this project it was vital to back findings made in East Asia with European or US material, as material in the field of clandestine relations is much harder to find.¹⁸

Additionally, research cooperation between Western and Asian academia is still limited, as the limited presence of Western research included in Chinese-language publications attests. This criticism is equally valid for Western scholars, who often have a tendency to overlook Chinese research, while incorporating East Asian archival material. Hu (1983, 431) argues many scholars in the West would either not know or deny Chinese academic tradition a similar credibility to Western traditions. Hu wrote these words 30 years ago, at a time when both academic sides had started to work with each other. In particular in the last 10 years, Chinese and Western academics have been working together, in order to explore Republican history and it is possible for both sides to learn from each other. Through research outcomes and archival access, scholarships in China and the West increasingly shape the other side's point of view and tradition.

¹⁸ Information are often stored in several files, under different subjects. Researchers in this field need to consider all kind of possible locations for their fieldwork.

Recent Western research on Sino-foreign relations

Following the war, much research on Sino-foreign relations was facilitated in the US. Like their Chinese counterparts, Western scholars were deeply influenced by past events and politics, most importantly WWII and the context of the Cold War. These events shaped the focus of discussions for decades to come.

The cold war paradigm saw a highly polarised scholarship on Sino-US, or Sino-foreign wartime relations. US Historians critical of the Nationalist government during WWII and on Taiwan faced difficulties during the 1950s, such as Owen Lattimore, who was accused of being the “shadowy Communist mastermind behind American policy in East Asia” that had resulted in the “loss of China” (Newman, 1992, x). This trend changed in the 1960s with the backlash of the Vietnam War. At this time critical discussion on Sino-US wartime relations and in particular of Chiang Kai-shek emerged (e.g. Gary May, 1979; Brian Crozier, 1977).¹⁹ I will not lay out academic research from the 1950s until the 1980s any further, as this would divert too much attention away from the focus on diplomatic history and the literature on Sino-German wartime relations.

The 1980s saw a lifting of the restrictions on substantial archival material in China, Taiwan, the US and Europe that had characterised earlier research. Ever since then, the historiography of Sino-foreign diplomacy and relations has been reshaped and reinterpreted. The number of publications on Republican China’s diplomatic history has been rather limited, compared to other aspects of research that focus more on cultural and social elements of the Republican period. As Kirby (1997, 436) argues, diplomatic history has all but been “chased...from that small patch of the Chinese field that has continued to study foreign relations”. Influential historians in the 1980s that have focused on Republican Chinese diplomatic history are John Garver (1988) and

¹⁹ The rapprochement between the US and the PRC in 1971 that culminated in President Nixon’s China visit on 21 February 1972 may also have played a role, as the Nationalist government on Taiwan came under increasing pressure to modernise.

John P. Fox (1982), amongst others.²⁰ Christopher Thorne (1978) also needs to be mentioned at this point. Even though Thorne's 1978 publication *Allies of a Kind: The United States, Britain and the war against Japan, 1941-1945* explores primarily US-British relations and their evolution before and after Pearl Harbor, at the same time, Thorne includes other countries in Asia such as China in his research.

The 1970s saw a number of publications on wartime peace feelers between the US and Japan as well as Japan and China. John Hunter Boyle's work (1972) stands out as one of the great publications on Sino-Japanese peace feelers, especially since it clearly showed the continued willingness of Japan to negotiate an agreement with Chongqing, before and after the acknowledgement of the Wang Jingwei Collaborationist government in Nanjing on 30 November 1940. Lack of Japanese confidence in Wang's government, indeed, resulted in several peace feelers throughout 1940 (Usui, 1983, 407). Chongqing China's motives on the other hand are not too clear, as the negotiations may have been genuine, or used to disrupt the cooperation between Wang and Japan (Usui, 1983, 415-416). While peace feelers to Chongqing represented one way to solve the Sino-Japanese war, post-December 1941, Japan also attempted to bring about an exit from the war through negotiations with the US in neutral states (Koshiro, 2001, 435). As will become evident, the field of Allied-Axis peace feelers is not new, but has so far lacked any connections between Chiang Kai-shek, Nazi Germany and Japan after the break of official Sino-German relations. The Third Reich is clearly omitted from the discussion on Sino-Japanese peace feelers, as academics may have concluded that Sino-German relations ceased to exist by July 1941. This dissertation, however, will shed light on a clandestine back channel network that allowed Chiang Kai-shek to maintain connections to *both* Germany and Japan

²⁰ For more information on Republican Chinese-British relations see for example Li (1992). The publication focuses more on CCP-British relations, but due to the close connections between GMD and CCP, the relations between the GMD and Britain are also featured. Other research on Sino-British relations focuses on the rather ambivalent relationship between Winston Churchill and Chiang Kai-shek, see for example La Feber (1975) and Lowe (1974). These publications represent only a fraction of the work on Sino-British relations.

after December 1941. Hence, adding further depth to our knowledge of clandestine behind-the-scene activities carried out by Chongqing China.

In relation to Garver's publication on Sino-Soviet relations, Slavinsky's (2004) work on the Soviet-Japanese *Neutrality Pact* may be of interest, as it covers Sino-Soviet and Sino-Japanese diplomacy on the periphery. Garver (1988) explored the dynamics and motivations behind Sino-Soviet relations, Soviet East Asian foreign policy and explained well the relationship triangle between the Soviet Union, the CCP and the Nationalist Government. The work was well received and praised for the richness of its sources, but also criticised for the author's attempt to "enhance Chiang's reputation as a diplomat" (Goldstein, 1990, 1058). Goldstein (1990, 1058) instead argues that Chiang Kai-shek's foreign policy approach saved China in the short term, but failed to establish long-lasting alliances. Foo (2011, 2-3), on the other hand, credits Garver with this re-evaluation and appears to agree with him. For this dissertation, Foo's comment (Foo, 2011, 6) that the role of Chiang Kai-shek's special representatives that were posted abroad by the Generalissimo himself is largely unknown, is of great interest. I intent to shed further light on this chapter of wartime Chinese diplomacy, and explore how Chiang's special representatives operated as part of back channels and upheld communication between Chiang Kai-shek and Germany. Moreover, this dissertation will show the negative influence the Chinese pragmatic foreign policy approach had on Sino-Allied relations. This will contribute to the debate on Chiang's foreign policy and diplomacy skills.

Despite a lack of research on diplomatic history, the most current publications on Republican China come as part of a new trend in the research of Republican Chinese wartime history. This new trend provides much stimulus to the exploration of Republican Chinese wartime diplomatic history, and this long-overdue re-evaluation needs to be addressed. My work will complement the new interpretation of Republican Chinese historiography already created by the researchers introduced below.

One of the most recent and critically discussed publications to appear in the last ten years has been Jay Taylor's *The Generalissimo: Chiang Kai-shek and the Struggle for Modern China* (2009). While often criticised for relying too heavily on selective passages from Chiang Kai-shek's diaries and not taking into account large numbers of archival material available on Taiwan (Tsang, 2010, 153), Taylor has succeeded in reshaping and questioning our perception of Chiang Kai-shek and his role in modern China, especially in regards to Chiang's actions during the war years. In Taylor's analysis, for example, the US is often presented as having been indecisive about her strategy in China during the war, as well as manipulative and even ready to assassinate Chiang Kai-shek if necessary. While many aspects of this publication are debated in academia, Taylor's work has emerged from a body of research that links leading Chinese individuals with modernity in Republican China.

Since the late 1990s and 2000 a good number of publications contributed to this new trend and the re-evaluation of China's role in WWII.²¹ Interestingly, it appears that Western academia has become a little too focused on the question of modernity at the expense of other topics. This can be seen in publications which often explore Chinese foreign relations in the wider context of Chinese modernity, for example in Laura Tyson Li's (2006) interesting work on Soong May-ling. Republican China's First Lady is always linked with Chinese modernity and the struggle for Sino-US relations, alongside her brother T.V. Soong (Tyson Li, 2006; Kuo, 2009). Increasingly, personal insights from former GMD civil servants are published with a focus on the role of such individuals in Sino-foreign relations (e.g., Foo, 2011; Hoo, 1998). Such publications of personal accounts further shed light on Chiang Kai-shek's own role in Chinese foreign relations. There is a debate in academia on Chiang's direct involvement in the wartime administration, a debate that Chang Jui-te (2007, 66) continued in research on the Generalissimo's use of "personal directives (*shouling*)", which may or may not have been responsible for the failure of the Chongqing Chinese administration. In this

²¹ Other research attempting to redefine Nationalist China is Wakeman Jr. and Edmonds, 2000.

research, Chang focused mainly on the impact Chiang Kai-shek's personal directives had on the military hierarchy in wartime China. This dissertation, however, will look at another field where Chiang Kai-shek likely issued personal directives: foreign diplomacy, or more precisely, BCD. Chen Yan (2002b) has already highlighted the administrative structure of the Nationalist administration that allowed Chiang Kai-shek to influence Sino-foreign relations.

Another example of a new type of scholarship and research focus is Rana Mitter's (2013) recent publication on the Sino-Japanese war. Moving away from an older view of China as a weak nation, Mitter redirects his focus onto the efforts that China made to the overall war effort in terms of resistance. Sometimes highlighted in previous publications, Mitter stresses that China's survival and fight were crucial for the outcome of WWII as we know it; a point that this dissertation supports and further elaborates on.

This new scholarship provides us with more of an insight into decision making in wartime Chongqing, as well as a view of the dynamics behind China's foreign relations and diplomacy, away from single foci on either the US or China. While research on the war years is largely dominated by Sino-US, Sino-Japanese or Sino-Soviet relations, Sino-German relations have been excluded from research. However, recent research has shown that Republican Chinese wartime diplomacy may have been more multi-faceted than we think. Therefore, it is important to redirect our focus to pre-war and wartime diplomatic history, which have received so little attention over the last 20 years, compared to social and cultural aspects of China's internationalism during the same period.

Since wartime Chinese diplomatic history is little researched, a combination of diplomatic and intelligence history, as applied in this dissertation, is rare. Chinese intelligence has been researched in the past (Wakeman Jr., 2003; Yu, 2006; Schoenhals, 2013), but its application in Chinese foreign diplomacy represents a gap in research that needs to be addressed. This dissertation will enrich our limited

knowledge of Chinese diplomatic history by exploring the use of intelligence channels in wartime Sino-German relations, thus opening a new chapter of research in Sino-foreign diplomacy.

Anglophone and German literature on Sino-German relations

In Western literature there exist two main strands of research on Republican Sino-German relations. One strand examines Sino-German relations primarily within the context of Republican Chinese economic performance, or as part of comparative work which explores the similarities between the Third Reich and Nationalist China. The main aspect of such work was to determine whether Chiang Kai-shek and the Guomindang were German-style fascists. Classic works in this vein were Lloyd Eastman's "Fascism in Kuomintang China" (1972) and Maria Chang's "Fascism and Modern China" (1979). While these publications remain an integral part of research and highlight important facets and questions, they have tended to push research on Sino-German relations into what might be termed a "fascism corner", in which questions beyond ideology are ignored.

Even though the question of whether Chiang Kai-shek was a fascist in the Hitler mode, and the extent to which he idolised or tried to emulate National Socialism, is still hotly debated (e.g., Taylor, 2009, 101-102), English and German-speaking researchers only started to detach research on Sino-German relations from this element of fascism in the 1980s and 1990s. Researchers to be credited with such work include William C. Kirby (1984), John P. Fox (1982), Hsi-Huey Liang (1978), Bernd Martin (1981, 2003), Mechthild Leutner (1998) and Stefan Berleb (2005). The focus of this scholarship tends to be on several aspects of 1930s Sino-German relations, including military, trade, and diplomatic relations. The picture that emerges from such scholarship is one of close cooperation between the German military and industry and the Nanjing government. The cooperation between the Germans and Chinese was initially confronted with a

reluctant German Foreign Office that rejected too close Sino-German cooperation, in particular in the military sector.

Other prominent scholarship by Fox (1982) unravelled the myth of a single German East Asian foreign policy, and clearly pointed out the conflict between Chinese-friendly and Japanese-friendly political groups inside the German administration and industry. The existence of several competing groups in Germany and China, and subsequently their influence on foreign policy is important to this dissertation, as I intend to show the involvement of factions in BCD and Sino-German relations. These clandestine back channels were indeed fostered in an atmosphere of continuous competition over foreign policy. This will broaden our understanding of the Sino-German and Republican Chinese foreign policy.

One pattern that emerges in this research field is a focus mainly on individuals, and predominantly those at the periphery of state institutions, such as the German Foreign Office. This is indeed the case in research carried out by Liang (1978, 1999) and Kirby (1984). Such an approach clearly has its benefits, especially in the case of Sino-German relations. Individuals and their connections with Chiang Kai-shek played a crucial role in the facilitation of trade and military relations in the 1930s. This dissertation will take a similar approach, since clandestine Sino-German channels ran outside the German Foreign Office through individuals. Furthermore, diplomacy through back channels tends to be limited to individuals, and seldom includes a governmental organisation until the end.

The complicated nature of Sino-German pre-WWII relations becomes clear in Liang's *The Sino-German Connection* (1978). This work contributes to our understanding of Sino-German relations, as it helps to unravel the different factions in both Germany and China. At the same time Liang also shows us again the importance of individuals in Sino-German relations, as it becomes clear that much contact during the late 1930s had already started to run through private channels, alongside official diplomatic ones. This work remains one of the seminal texts on the presence of

German advisors in Chiang Kai-shek's China, and it has been cited in further work on Republican Chinese military history (e.g. Sutton, 1982).

Liang is also one of the first scholars to have pointed out the connections between Chiang Kai-shek, his envoys to Germany and the German state intelligence service Abwehr (Defence). This hitherto seldom mentioned aspect of Sino-German relations had been overshadowed by official events, but provides a first stepping stone into my project to further link Chinese foreign relations with the European war and Chiang Kai-shek to diplomacy through intelligence. This dissertation will further explore the possible involvement of the Chinese Secret Service²² in Republican Chinese foreign policy, and will allow me to rectify the lack of "inquiries into the question of foreign participation in the German Resistance" (Liang, 1978, 143). Indeed, research on the German Resistance has not discussed the role of foreigners in its midst, with the vast amount of work focusing instead on the movement's relations with foreign powers outside the Third Reich. This started with Hans Bernd Gisevius' *Bis zum bitteren Ende* (Until the Bitter End, 1946), in which he came to term with first-hand experiences from his time in the Resistance movement. Over the last thirty years a number of researchers have explored the relations between the Resistance movement and the US and Britain, especially attempts made by the Resistance to seek Allied support for the toppling of the Nazi government (see Deutsch, 1981; Hoffmann, 1986; 1988; 1991).²³ China has not been included in this kind of research so far. The possibility of

²² Due to rife factionalism inside the Nationalist government of Chiang Kai-shek, there existed at least two "secret services", each run by a different body of people. Dubbed the "Chinese Himmler" (Yeh, 1989, 545), General Dai Li headed the Juntong, and worked directly for Chiang Kai-shek. In academia, the association of Dai Li with Chiang and the Blue Shirt Society (Lanyishe) tends to divert the focus more towards the already discussed issue of fascism in the Republican government. Despite this tendency, researchers have explored the links between Dai Li and foreign intelligence services; these were, however, limited to the US secret service (Wakeman, 1992, and Wakeman Jr., 2003). Any connections to the German secret service are not mentioned, even though Wakeman Jr. (2003, 55-84) establishes several links between Dai Li and crucial individuals involved in clandestine Sino-German relations. For more information on secret services in Chongqing China, foreign and Chinese, also see Elphick (1997) and Yu (2006).

²³ Members of the Resistance movement took up important positions in the German intelligence service Abwehr. German literature on the Abwehr is relatively numerous and very often focuses on the individual of Admiral Wilhelm Canaris, Resistance member and head of the service until February 1944. Already in the 1950's research on his person started, see for example Abshagen's (1954) *Canaris, Patriot und Weltbürger* (Canaris, Patriot and Citizen of the World). Focus on Canaris further increased in the 1970s with Höhne's (1976) *Canaris, Patriot im Zwielficht* (Canaris, Patriot under Twilight). With time, the research focus shifted more and more to the intelligence service itself and its actions—in German literature, in particular Oscar Reile's publication *Der deutsche Geheimdienst im II. Weltkrieg. Ostfront. Die Abwehr im*

Chinese contacts to the Resistance movement cannot be rejected, as Liang (1978; 1999) already showed. Based on his work, I intent to further explore the communication links between Chiang Kai-shek and the two German groups, “Berlin” and the German Resistance that made up wartime clandestine Sino-German relations.

Without wanting to downplay the importance of the above-mentioned research, I would like to note a number of problems that remain. As I mentioned, Western and Chinese language research on Sino-German relations shares two crucial characteristics. First, the deterioration of Sino-German relations in the process of German-Japanese rapprochement, the signing of the *Anti Comintern Pact* (November 1936), the recall of the German ambassador and the military mission in summer 1938, are all seen as the end to Sino-German diplomatic relations. As a result, many researchers treat the time until the official end of relations in July 1941 as a period with much less activity and importance. All research then stops at the point of July 1941 when Germany acknowledged the Wang Jingwei Collaborationist government in Nanjing, which prompted the breaking of relations with Chongqing. Very little prior research has gone beyond this point. The period during which these crucial events took place, 1938 until 1941, has been less thoroughly researched compared to pre-1938 Sino-German relations. Hence, changes in the dynamics of Sino-German relations are known to a certain degree, but lack further exploration. This dissertation addresses the issue and highlights the continuation of Sino-German relations, and the increasing switch from diplomatic front channels to clandestine back channels.

Kampf mit den Geheimdiensten im Osten (The German secret service during the Second World War. Eastern front. The *Abwehr* in the fight with secret services in the East) (1990). Besides the *Abwehr* there was also the SS-linked RSHA. The head of Department VI, “Foreign Espionage”, Walter Schellenberg, has been the subject of research in Germany by Reinhard Doerries (2003). English language publications, in particular British ones, tend to focus on German intelligence services clashes with their British counterparts. The “Venlo-Incident” often attracts researchers, most likely because the British intelligence service was tricked by the RSHA and its agents caught in a trap. The British SIS actions and missions are often portrayed in contrast to that of their German counterpart, the *Abwehr* (e.g. Fedorovich, 2005; Aldrich, 1998).

I fully agree with Liang (1978), who criticised the lack of research on the participation of foreign nationals in the German Resistance movement. Despite the good base that Liang's initial research (1978) into connections between Chiang Kai-shek and the German Resistance provided, this theory has not been picked up and further explored by other scholars. It is widely known that the Resistance movement tried to contact and engage with the Allies, however Chongqing China is always omitted from research on the foreign connections of the movement. The only exceptions, Liang (1978; 1999) and Yang (2010b) have failed to build on their findings, and to work for the inclusion of Chongqing China into the wider research on the German Resistance. Similarly, German and English-speaking scholars have failed to make the connections, even though Liang's research is available in English. Here again, certain facts prohibited this development. Primarily, Chongqing China has hardly been perceived as a crucial element in WWII in Europe, thus scholars of European history did not regard research in Chinese archives as important, and likely as a waste of time.

In this regard, the dissertation joins other recent research that attempts to re-define Republican Chinese historiography, and not only demonstrate China's importance during WWII to a wider audience, but also point out that Chongqing China did not stay aloof of events in Europe. That Chongqing China is primarily associated with the war in East Asia is evident in current research. Researchers, such as Taylor (2009), Mitter (2013), Boyle (1972), or even those who worked on Sino-Allied intelligence cooperation, such as Wakeman Jr (2003), or Yu Maochun (2006), focus on East Asia, leaving aside potential Chinese operations elsewhere.²⁴ The number of research exploring wartime Chinese involvement in Europe or the US is largely confined to the diplomatic realm, researching the work of men such as T.V. Soong and Fu Bingchang, as well as Soong May-ling's US journeys (Kuo, 2009; Foo, 2011, Tyson

²⁴ The great attention paid to Chiang Kai-shek's involvement in the Burma Campaigns, his trip to India and the resistance against Japan clearly indicate that Chongqing is primarily researched in relation to the East Asian theatre of war.

Li, 2006). The combination of diplomatic and intelligence history brings Germany back into the research on Republican China, but, in contrast to previous research, introduces her as a part of WWII Chinese historiography. It moves beyond the known facts that the Third Reich maintained diplomatic relations with the Wang Jingwei Collaborationist government, as both Axis Powers continued to see the Chongqing government as the more crucial game-changer.²⁵

As a result of limited willingness to research Chongqing China's involvement in the European war theatre and wartime Sino-German back channels, a number of interesting holdings in the Berne Bundesarchiv have been hardly consulted. Amongst the major academics who researched Sino-German relations in the late 1930s, Liang (1978) was the only one who visited the Berne archive. The exclusion of material by other scholars may also be related to the fact that important contemporary witnesses were still alive and could be interviewed. The information found in Berne complemented archival material from other sources and shed light on Chinese intelligence in war-torn Europe.

This dissertation moves the boundaries of research from July 1941 until the end of WWII, hence expanding the focus of research. The argument that Chongqing China and the Third Reich cut all official ties, and that therefore no communication took place will be challenged by this dissertation. On the contrary, it will show that clandestine communication between Germany and individuals in Chongqing continued.

Conclusion

With wider access to primary archival sources in the PRC and Taiwan and the introduction of new approaches into the field in the last 20 years, research on Sino-German relations, and the field of Sino-foreign relations more generally, was relegated to a far less prominent position. In its place, a new interest in Chinese urban history,

²⁵ The Japanese relations with Wang Jingwei and his Nanjing government are well researched by Boyle (1972).

consumer culture and socio-cultural change emerged (Mitter, 2005, 523). Economic historians such as Coble (2003; 2007) and Zanasi (2006), to name just a few, have also helped to promote new appraisals of the Nationalist Chinese economy and nation-building efforts (also see Gerth, 2003; Dikötter, 2008). As a result, over the last two decades, Chinese diplomatic history has largely been ignored.

This trend has been noted by some scholars, with Kirby noting even in 1997 (434) that “Diplomatic history has not been at the heart of Republican China studies”. It is my assertion in this dissertation, however, that there is scope to revisit this field.

On the surface, research on Sino-German relations appears saturated, with major contributions having already been made by Kirby (1984), Ratenhof (1987), Berleb (2005), Liang (1978, 1999), and Martin (1981, 2003). Similarly, China’s relations with other major powers have already been explored in great depth. None of this should distract us from the fact, however, that many questions about China’s relations with other great powers remain unanswered, and that there still exist a number of blind spots in the standard narrative of Republican Chinese foreign relations: the relationship between China and Germany *after* July 1941 is one such example.

The notion that “all has been researched” in Sino-foreign relations has been countered in the last ten years, during which time we have witnessed a re-emergence of diplomacy and a re-evaluation of China’s role in WWII. Very often such scholarship has attempted to either take an objective approach or clearly focused on the Chinese side (Mitter, 2013). I intend to follow this new approach and redefine our understanding of WWII Sino-German relations, and Republican Chinese foreign policy more broadly.

I will show that pragmatic, clandestine relations between Chiang Kai-shek and the two German groups, “Berlin” and the German Resistance, not only existed but formed part of a much larger pragmatic foreign policy approach. This project thus complements and builds on Boyle’s (1972) much earlier study of Sino-Japanese clandestine channels. Due to the fact that Sino-German wartime relations were clandestine after July 1941, I will apply an approach which remains novel in Chinese

historiography: a combination of diplomatic and intelligence history. Schoenhals (2013, 10) argues that the inclusion of intelligence history can refine existing “narratives of relations” between groups, individuals and institutions which we study. While Schoenhals has argued this case for research on 1950s Communist Chinese intelligence, his point could quite easily be applied to research on the Republican era. Maochun Yu (2006) has also looked at how intelligence went hand-in-hand with Sino-Allied relations. The nature of Sino-German relations examined in this dissertation leads to the conclusion that official diplomatic documents will be scarce, in particular after the break of official diplomatic relations. Hence, alternative sources had to be found. Given the strong intelligence affiliation of the agents that made up Sino-German back channels in Switzerland, additional archival material had to be stored in holdings on intelligence services and personnel. As a result, it can be concluded that a combination of diplomatic and intelligence documents is indeed the most suitable set of sources.

My intention in this dissertation is not to challenge the importance of the US in the history of wartime China or to suggest that Chiang Kai-shek considered any other possible alliances than the one with the US. However, I would suggest that we need to bring other powers back into a story from which they have often been excluded. Hans van de Ven (2003, 3, 5-6) noted the US-centric approach to understanding Nationalist China’s wartime diplomacy, which has tended to shift the focus away from the pragmatic nature of Chinese diplomacy, with notable exceptions such as Boyle (1972) and Chen Yan (2002b). Instead, scholars, such as Zanasi (2006, 208), Jonathan Fenby (2004), Jay Taylor (2009) and Laura Tyson Li (2006), focused overwhelmingly on Chiang Kai-shek’s strategy to gain US support. It is the intention of this dissertation to divert from this US-centric approach that characterised a significant number of scholarly works, and will bring Germany back into the field of Republican Chinese wartime historiography. Within this dissertation, I wish to highlight that Chiang Kai-shek’s foreign policy was driven by pragmatism. As this dissertation will reveal, such a

policy was influenced by interest groups surrounding Chiang Kai-shek, as well as the Generalissimo's own involvement in foreign relations, which in turn were affected by the image and actions of foreign powers.

This dissertation will contribute to the new interest in re-evaluating China's WWII past. While Mitter and others focus parts of their re-evaluation on Sino-Allied relations, I intend to challenge our narrative of Sino-German relations and further extend previous research (such as Liang, 1978; 1999; Wakeman Jr., 2003; Yang, 2010b) into the post-1941 era, hopefully resulting in a much more comprehensive picture of Sino-foreign relations in wartime.

Chapter Three: Germany and China: An Overview

As with many other European powers, Germany had maintained a presence in East Asia since the late 19th century. At that time, she was one of a range of imperialist powers that had sought to gain benefits from trade with China. A full discussion of Sino-German relations would be beyond the scope of this dissertation, and has in any case already been explored in works by Martin (1981), Kirby (1984) and Berleb (2005), to name just a few. Suffice to say at this stage, however, that while the trajectory of Germany's relations with China up to the period of WWI was largely in keeping with those of other European powers, Sino-German relations, and subsequently German East Asian foreign policy, changed drastically in the aftermath of Versailles. The new dynamics of the Sino-German relationship would continue to hold sway until the 1930s, and nourish the hopes of Chinese and German factions for a lasting Sino-German alliance.

Before the historical overview starts, a short note on the classification of different names for the Nationalist Chinese government is necessary to ensure that different periods are not confused with each other. Much information in this dissertation originated from the time after September 1939, during which the Nationalist government had already shifted its capital to Chongqing, in Sichuan province. Therefore, the majority of time the Nationalist government will be referred to as the Chongqing government or Chongqing China. Any mention in the period before December 1937 (the fall of Nanjing) will refer to the Chinese government as the Nanjing government or Nanjing. From the fall of Nanjing in December 1937 until the end of October 1938, the capital of Nationalist China was Wuhan, which means that the Chinese government during this time is termed the "Nationalist wartime government

in Wuhan”.²⁶ The government of Wang Jingwei, which was set up on 30 November 1940 in Nanjing, is referred to as the Wang Jingwei Collaborationist government.

The 1920s

While political developments in China and Germany did not take place at the same time or at the same pace, developments within both countries had a profound impact on diplomatic relations between the two states throughout the 1920s and 1930s. With the end of WWI, the newly established Weimar Republic inherited the political legacy of the war from the *Kaiserreich* (Empire). Accused by the German people of being saboteurs and backstabbers, who had worked toward the German defeat, the new republican government signed the *Treaty of Versailles* in November 1919. The post-war demands were perceived as a national shame, because amongst other things, Germany had lost all her overseas colonies, concessions and leased territories, including the ones in China (Ratenhof, 1987, 275). She was forbidden from dealing in weapons and lost the right of extraterritoriality in China. As a result, every German national in China was placed under Chinese jurisdiction from then onwards.

The Weimar Republic was not the only country that felt mistreated by the terms of Versailles. The young Republic of China also suffered a perceived “national humiliation” (*guochi*), when the former German territories in Shandong were awarded to Japan, as a reward for her participation in WWI (Mitter, 2013, 32). This was even more of a shame, since the Chinese government in Beijing had declared war on Germany in 1917; hence she was one of the victorious Powers. In the course of the Versailles Peace conference, the Chinese delegation refused to sign the treaty. As a consequence, the Weimar Republic and the Beiyang government engaged with each

²⁶ In previous research, Wuhan is referred to as Hankou (Hankow). The name Wuhan is a generic term “referring to the three... cities of Wuchang, Hankou and Hanyang” (Spence, 1990, 250 n.).

other outside the Versailles framework and negotiated the Sino-German *Friendship Treaty*, which was signed on 21 May 1921.²⁷

Germany's East Asian foreign policy therefore started on a new international relations basis, setting standards that other powers would come to copy in due time.²⁸ Indeed, Germany was the first of the imperialist nations to give up extraterritoriality, even though this change occurred only as a result of the *Treaty of Versailles*, and not voluntarily. This did not stop Chinese publications and work written by Chinese citizens to quote Weimar Germany as an example for other foreign nations, and some work from the 1930s reads like a promotion for the end of extraterritoriality (i.e. Feng, 1936).

Even though Germany's new standing in China would soon pay off in a rejuvenated China trade (Osterhammel, 2003, 209), the German Foreign Office and the Weimar administration remained ambivalent towards China. Diplomatic activities were limited to the exchange of diplomatic staff and the appointment of ambassadors (Muehlhahn, Leutner, Trampedach, 2003, 156). Sun Yat-sen's Guomindang government in South China was never recognised by the Weimar Republic; instead, formal relations were sought with the Chinese government in Beijing (Berleb, 2005, 46).

With an eye on a revision of the demands of Versailles, German foreign policy preferred to focus on relations with the European Entente powers (Berleb, 2005, 31). In certain sections of the political classes in China and Germany, however, the shared feeling of humiliation at the hands of the Entente led to the perception of each other as potential allies, and in the establishment of bonds between the two countries that had, ironically, been officially at war with one other during the later stages of WWI.²⁹ These circles in Germany included German industry and the military, and these groups started

²⁷ The treaty regulated, amongst other agreements, the end of German extraterritoriality. In the words of Causey (1942, 366), Germany "had shown full respect for the sovereignty and independence of China". The treaty had been confirmed again in 1928 (Martin, 2003, 39).

²⁸ Officially, Russia abolished her tsarist treaty rights on 25 July 1919 in the "Karakhan Manifesto" (Elleman, 1994, 460). At the same time as Germany had to relinquish her treaty rights, both Austria and Hungary renegotiated their relations with China. Over the course of the 1920s and 1930s, several Latin-American countries gave up their extraterritoriality (Wang, 1937, 748). The US and Britain would only abolish their treaty rights in 1942/43, when a signal of goodwill helped strengthen Chinese resistance against Japan.

²⁹ After WWI, Weimar Germany was not perceived as a threat any more by China (Berleb, 2005, 31).

to circumvent the cautious foreign policy of the German Foreign Office, and engaged in un-official diplomacy (Berleb, 2005, 12, 38). Early successes of Sino-German trade and relations would come about as a result of this un-official diplomacy, and of Germany's new positive standing in China.

Effectively, the new Sino-German relationship represented a huge symbolic achievement for a number of educated, patriotic Chinese who longed for recognition.³⁰ The Weimar government practiced and upheld strict neutrality in China, and avoided becoming "a pawn of the colonial powers in China or a tool of...Chinese factions" (Berleb, 2005, 37). This time also saw Sun Yat-sen proposing Sino-German cooperation, the proposals, however, were all rejected by the Weimar government, as long as they included military issues (Kirby, 1984, 34).³¹ Despite the German Foreign Office's reluctance to engage with China, Germany's new diplomatic, equal relationship with the Chinese Beiyang Government contributed to a positive post-WWI image that resulted in several calls for German mediation between China and other foreign powers in 1927 and 1929 (Berleb, 2005, 36). In cultural areas, Chinese admiration for Germany as a cultural and scientific centre remained high (Spence, 1990, 396). Culture was an accepted tool of foreign policy making in the German Foreign Office, and helped to influence and win the hearts and minds of the country that hosted a cultural or medical organisation (Martin, 2003, 46). Feng Djen Djang (1936, 217) even concluded that Germany "had made a favourable impression upon the Chinese mind". At later stages in 1935, former Chinese students, who had returned from Germany, sponsored the establishment of the Sino-German Cultural Association in Nanjing, at a time when Sino-German relations had reached their peak (Feng, 1936, 217).

In contrast, Chinese perceptions of Britain reached a low point with the May 30th Movement in 1925. The Shameen Incident of 23 June 1925 was the result of the killing of Chinese protesters by the Shanghai Municipal Police on 30 May in Shanghai. Close

³⁰ Throughout the 1920s and 1930s the Republican government, and later the Nanjing government (1927-1937) engaged in revision of the "Unequal Treaties", first at the Washington Naval Conference in 1922, and changed its approach to treaty revisions through diplomatic means in 1928 (Fung, 1987, 808).

³¹ Throughout WWI, Sun had rejected the Beijing government's declaration of war against Germany on 14 August 1917 (for more information see Kirby, 1984, 29).

to the foreign concessions on Shameen Island in Guangzhou, British soldiers opened fire on Chinese protesters a month later, killing 52 Chinese (Spence, 1990, 340). The killings resulted in the boycott of British goods, and the blockade of Hong Kong by the Nationalist government of Sun Yat-sen in Guangzhou (then Canton).³² While the British government lost most of its prestige, the Weimar Republic was able to position itself as a trustworthy, neutral element. During the Shameen Affair, the Weimar consulate in Guangzhou acted as a mediator between Britain and the Chinese authorities (Feng, 1936, 205).³³

The major event that shaped the political landscape in China was the Guomindang's 1927/1928 Northern Expedition that saw the Nationalist army conquering major parts of Eastern China. In mid-1928, the Nanjing government was established, with Chiang Kai-shek firmly set as the Chairman of the State Council (Spence, 1990, 365).

Modernisation in the GMD-ruled areas favoured the development of heavy industry, the improvement of infrastructure and military modernisation. China was an agricultural country which also had huge resources of raw material, like tungsten. In a time when Europe was preparing for a new war, tungsten was one of the crucial war-related metals. China's tungsten therefore could fetch a high price on the international market, but for that, the resources had to be exploited. German technology would help to build the necessary industrial base for the exploitation of raw material. Despite this rather long-term investment, China at the same time was looking for a trade partner that would provide immediate and practical help (Kirby, 1981, 213).

China's push for modernisation thus turned her towards German industry, which was well known for its technological knowhow. Military leader Chiang Kai-shek looked for foreign investment, but also for military and technological advisers (Martin, 2003, 44). With the 1927 purge of the CCP and the Soviet advisers, Chiang was in dire need of new staff, and proposed the appointment of German officers and experts. Officially,

³² For more information on this blockade see: Orchard (1930) and Roosevelt (1926).

³³ Feng (1936, 205) quoted: Gr. Brit. Parl., 1926, Vol. XXX, China No. 1 (1926), pp.7-8.

the German Foreign Office rejected the employment of German ex-military personnel in unstable regions, because German involvement and military trade in a region such as China could be interpreted as a possible breach of the *Treaty of Versailles* by the Entente, as the treaty forbade any engagement of former German military staff in military capacities outside of Germany (Kirby, 1984, 22). These powers had already accused Germany of breaking her obligations, and accused her of being one of the largest arms dealers to China during the 1920s. This accusation has since been challenged by Berleb (2005, 73), who has proved that many German WWI weapons were actually sold by the nations to whom they had been rendered at the end of WWI, and not by Weimar Germany, but at the time the allegations were widely believed.

Due to the reluctant position of the German Foreign Office, Chiang Kai-shek focused his attention on German industry and the military, which were both eager to get a foothold in the China market. The loss of this market after WWI dealt a heavy blow to German business, which had initially flourished and taken a strong position amongst other major trading powers. After the war, German businesses were eager to regain their pre-war share of the China market, so they quickly returned only to find that their trading position had improved significantly (Kirby, 1984, 17). Chiang Kai-shek's newly employed German military advisors further created a profitable link between German industry and the Chinese government between 1927 and 1938, because these men had worked as agents for German technology and weapons companies in the past (Geyer, 1981, 57). The first leader of the adviser mission was Colonel Max Bauer, who took up his post as adviser in late 1927.³⁴ After Bauer's sudden death on 6 May 1929, the German military mission had four more leaders until its recall to Germany in summer 1938.³⁵ The period in which the military mission was most active was characterised by the consequences of the Stock Market Crash of 1929 and increasing

³⁴ A very interesting and useful work on Bauer has been written by Vogt (1974).

³⁵ These men were Hermann Kriebel (until summer 1930), Georg Wetzell (summer 1930 until spring 1934), Hans von Seeckt (spring 1934-spring 1935) and Alexander von Falkenhausen (spring 1935 until summer 1938) (Vogt, 1974, 465-467).

Sino-Japanese tensions (for more information on the German military mission see Kirby, 1984; Berleb, 2005; Liang 1978; Vogt, 1974; Martin, 1981).

Since the end of WWI, China and Japan had shared an ambivalent relationship, with the latter increasing her influence in coastal regions of China. Leading Japanese circles increasingly supported the idea of a “Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere” (Spence, 1990, 390), in which China and Japan would work together. China did not give in to this proposal, which would have placed her under Japanese leadership. Throughout the 1920s, the difference of Chinese and Japanese perception of China, her role in East Asia and the perceived increase in communist influence in China, determined relations between the two nations.³⁶ At the end of the 1920s, and the beginning of the 1930s, Japan saw herself faced with great economic difficulties, and radical elements in the army took charge of events (Mitter, 2013, 54).³⁷ The Kwangtung Army occupied resource-rich Manchuria and established a client state by the name of Manchukuo. These events came to be known as the Far Eastern Crisis of 1931. From this moment onwards, any foreign intervention to strengthen the Nanjing government of Chiang Kai-shek ran diametrically opposed to Japanese interests in China, and was therefore rejected; this also included the German military mission (Kirby, 1984, 223).

The deteriorating Sino-Japanese relations complicated the international situation, as well as the domestic standing of the Nanjing government. The Nanjing government of Chiang Kai-shek saw itself faced with constant calls to counter the Japanese occupation of North East China throughout the 1930s. Chiang, in contrast to his fellow countrymen, believed a war with Japan to be disastrous at this point in time

³⁶ The 1920s Sino-Japanese relations were less tense as at the time of the Twenty-One Demands in January 1915, and in 1922 Japan returned the former German concessions in Shandong to China as part of the *Nine Power Treaty*. Increasingly, Japan engaged in International Conferences “that were supposed to strengthen China and help it gain greater economic autonomy” (Mitter, 2013, 46). The Nationalist-Communist cooperation during the Northern Expedition raised fears in Tokyo over too much communist influence in China, and violent clashes between Japanese and Nationalist troops occurred (Spence, 1990, 388).

³⁷ The 1929 Stock Market Crash had significant impact on the Japanese industry, and resulted in a 40% drop of Japanese exports to the US. Japan faced unemployment and agricultural decline (Spence, 1990, 389).

(Taylor, 2009, 95).³⁸ Internationally, the Far Eastern Crisis of 1931 highlighted the inability of the League of Nations to act (Sun, 1993, 33). The League was only able to send a commission to Manchuria, and the so-called “Lytton Report” was “not an outright condemnation” of Japanese actions (Burkman, 2008, 170). The image of the League as a peace guaranteeing body, with a role to prevent aggression, such as the Japanese occupation of Manchuria, has been tarnished ever since. As a member of the League, Germany was reluctant to take any major actions that might have harmed Germany’s relations with the Entente. Since the Entente Powers abstained from any involvement in the Far Eastern Crisis, so did Weimar Germany. Furthermore, Germany had to fight an increasingly difficult domestic situation that led to an increase in extremist views on both sides of the political spectrum. The outcome of this process would influence Sino-German relations and German foreign policy for years to come.

The 1930s

The early 1930s were of course marked by major territorial and political changes in both countries. After a positive start in China,³⁹ 1931 was greatly influenced by the Manchurian Crisis and internal fighting in the GMD (see for example Mitter, 2013, 56; Fox, 1982; Spence, 1990, 388-396). In the following years, and up until July 1937, Chiang Kai-shek faced several smaller skirmishes with the Japanese army, which resulted in concrete economic and military measures taken by the Nanjing government to counter any future Japanese attacks (Mitter, 2013, 58). German technology and knowledge was part of this modernisation strategy, and Sino-German trade continued to flourish. Hitler’s rise to power in January 1933 resulted in no visible major change in

³⁸ Instead, Chiang argued that the CCP had to be fought first and only then could China resist any power from outside. His slogan was: “first internal pacification, then external resistance (*xian annei, hou rangwai*)” (So, 2002, 213).

³⁹ The Nanjing government made progress in its modernisation efforts in China, and the process of treaty revision. In 1930 for example, the Nanjing government regained control over tariffs (Mitter, 2013, 51). Tariff autonomy not only meant increasing revenues but also had a highly symbolic meaning for the Chinese public. According to Gerth (2003, 40), tariff autonomy became synonymous for China’s undermined sovereignty. In the following decades it became evident that the public wished the autonomy issues to be addressed and for China to regain control of her customs more than “expanding economic activity and raising per capita incomes” (Gerth, 2003, 41).

East Asian foreign policy, as the German Foreign Office maintained its position of neutrality in East Asia. Sino-German trade, on the other hand, visibly increased. China had found a willing trading partner, which would trade on an equal level, something Fu (1981, 188) regards as one of the main reasons why the good Sino-German relations lasted until 1938.

Another reason for the strong progress in Sino-German relations was the fact that China enjoyed support from influential Chinese-friendly Germans in the Wehrmacht and the Ministry of the Economy (Kirby, 1984, 126/127). These were, for example, the Minister of Economic Affairs Hjalmar Schacht, and the head of the Defence Economy and Armament Department General Georg Thomas. As this dissertation will reveal, Thomas and Schacht in particular played an important role in the maintenance of clandestine back channels between Chiang Kai-shek and the German Resistance during the 1940s.

Even Adolf Hitler considered closer Sino-German relations, above all because of China's huge natural resources (Berleb, 2005, 174). Old, un-official connections via the German military mission were increasingly channelled through state-sanctioned business conglomerates, such as HAPRO.⁴⁰ The 1934 *Treaty for the exchange of Chinese Raw Materials and Agricultural Products for German Industrial and Other Products* (hereafter: the *HAPRO Treaty*) secured the exchange of German industrial products for Chinese raw materials, including tungsten of which China controlled major deposits (Xue Yi, 2004, 715).⁴¹ HAPRO secured for the German industry (represented by companies such as Otto Wolff) orders for power stations and railway construction, to

⁴⁰ China was not the first attempt of Germany's military to benefit from military business and relations with other states. The most prominent example is its involvement in Soviet Russia in the 1920s. It can be argued the business in Russia followed similar patterns as in the case of China. In both cases the German military established ties with the respective government, in this case the Soviet one. In order to channel its business with Russia, the Reichswehr established a shadow-company called Gesellschaft zur Förderung gewerblicher Unternehmungen G.m.b.H (Company for promoting business projects, with limited liability, GEFU) (Gatzke, 1958, 578).

⁴¹ Tungsten is used for ferro alloys, which means that metallic elements are covered with iron, with tungsten or with other metals, and used as cutting tools (Stevens, 1999, 539). It is crucial for modern warfare and the construction of weapons, tanks and other war material. Tungsten would create "tough, heat resistant steel" (Stevens, 1999, 539). Germany purchased much of its tungsten before the war from China, and after 1939 Portugal emerged as an important source, which the USA and Britain tried to control (Stevens, 1999, 539).

name just a few (Kirby, 1984, 194-200). On the other hand, HAPRO “soon became the chief agent of the Sino-German arms trade” (Berleb, 2005, 228), and provided China with equipment such as howitzers, anti tank guns, Mauser rifles and armoured cars.⁴² As Yu (Zhang Baijia, 6 in Yu, 2006, 4) shows, Republican China imported war related material worth 389 million German Reichsmark between 1934 and October 1937. In July 1937 alone, German shipments totalled 50 million Reichsmark.

The mid-1930s were marked by excellent Sino-German relations, but events were about to change. From the Chinese point of view Sino-German relations appeared very promising. The German Foreign Office even started to recognise the value of Germany's China trade, and is today described by scholars as part of the China-friendly groups in the German administration (Berleb, 2005, 176). The China-friendly lobby inside the German army also welcomed developments, and even toyed with the idea of a Sino-German military alliance (Ratenhof, 1987, 465).⁴³ In 1936, the signing of an additional piece of the *HAPRO Treaty* during the visit of General Walter von Reichenau might have raised hopes of an official acknowledgement of the German military mission.⁴⁴ As Spence (1990, 402) states, a “senior German general [Reichenau] who was visiting Nanjing suggested that Germany might even aid China in its ‘struggle against Japanese hegemony’... “. This would have resulted in Germany committing herself to China in the eyes of the world and Japan. However, Army chief von Reichenau travelled to China in 1936, not knowing that Hitler had already started clandestine negotiations with Japan (Berleb, 2005, 175). The *Anti Comintern Pact* thus dealt a heavy blow to any alliance plans between China and Germany in November 1936.

⁴² Berleb (2005, 230-231) quotes: Rostek, Horst (1989), “Zur Rolle der deutschen Militaerberater bei der chinesischen Nationalregierung 1928 bis 1938“, in: [Anon.] (Ed.) (1989) *Bulleting Faschismus/ Zweiter Weltkrieg*; Sonderheft 1989, Berlin: Zentralinstitut fuer Geschichte, p.120; PA AA R 85705.

⁴³ Ratenhof (1987, 465) quotes: “Aufzeichnung Ribbentrop“, 16 August 1936, ADAP, CV, Nr. 509; Fox (1981, 235).

⁴⁴ Members of the German military mission had been privately employed by Chiang Kai-shek, and the mission was denounced by the German Foreign Office during the 1920s and early 1930s on a regular basis (for more information see: Kirby, 1984; Martin, 1981).

The reason for this sudden change of heart lay, amongst others, in the structure of the German administration and Hitler's own ideology. The Chinese-friendly lobby in Germany was rivalled by a Japanese-friendly clique that found one of its strongest supporters in future Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop. The lack of trust between Hitler and the German Foreign Office (Jacobsen, 1968, 24) created a vacuum that von Ribbentrop quickly filled, after he gained Hitler's trust. From his "Ribbentrop Bureau" von Ribbentrop negotiated the *Anti Comintern Pact*, and meddled in German foreign relations.⁴⁵ Without questioning any of Hitler's orders, von Ribbentrop pursued a Japanese-friendly foreign policy line, which led to the destruction of the German Foreign Office's neutral diplomatic position in East Asia. Ideologically, Hitler had also always preferred Japan over China, and his ideological opus *Mein Kampf* distinguishes between China, "a barbaric and uncivilised country" and Japan, a "culture carrying" society (Cai and Wu, 2006a, 52). As a result of this internal conflict, German foreign policy split into two strands by 1936: a "German" and a "Nazi" foreign policy (Fox, 1982, 335). The "German" foreign policy that focused on military and trade relations with China clashed increasingly with the Japanese-friendly "Nazi" one. Initially the goals of both strands complemented each other. However with increasing Sino-Japanese tensions, these goals drifted more and more apart (Fox, 1982, 335).

The outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese war in July 1937 and China's improving relations with the Soviet Union form just one side of the overall picture that led to the deterioration of Sino-German relations. Japan's increasingly stronger position in East Asia indicated to the Japanese-friendly political elite in Germany that Hitler's *Weltanschauung* (ideology) on Japan and China was right, and that only Japan could support Germany in the upcoming war. In the following months until the summer of 1938, Sino-German relations deteriorated, and Japan started to pressurize the Third Reich to cease aid to China and to recall the military mission (Bi Ye, 1994, 52). The

⁴⁵ The Ribbentrop Bureau took control of German-Japanese relations through secret channels, after the German Foreign Office rejected Hitler's increasingly Japan-friendly foreign policy in 1933/1934 (Fox, 1982, 337).

German Foreign Office was unable to claim back its rightful control of foreign relations and even the mediation of German Ambassador Oskar Trautmann between China and Japan in autumn 1937 did not help. Additionally, Chiang Kai-shek signed the Sino-Soviet *Non Aggression Pact* on 21 August 1937 that, despite Chinese assurances to anti-communist Germany, led to an association of China with the Soviet Union (Kirby, 1984, 234 and 238).⁴⁶

Hitler's deteriorating perception of Nationalist China coincided with the consolidation of the Nazi administration and the elimination of all opposition (*Gleichschaltung*) in February 1938. The Nazi leadership "took complete control of Germany's foreign policy" (Berleb, 2005, 257). Chinese-friendly individuals in the Ministries of the Economy, War and the Foreign Office were replaced by loyal Nazis. For example, von Ribbentrop took over as Foreign Minister in February 1938.⁴⁷ His now official Japan-friendly foreign policy course included the recall of Germany's ambassador to China (Trautmann), and of the military mission, as well as German recognition of Manchukuo. Japan had requested these measures since the signing of the *Anti Comintern Pact* in November 1936. The shift from China to Japan aroused the anger of German industry though, which had invested heavily in the Nanjing government's projects. German arms exports to China alone had risen to 83 million Reichsmarks by 1937 (Berleb, 2005, 238).⁴⁸ Their arguments about the benefits of Sino-German trade were countered by the Nazi administration, which justified its move with reference to the vast resources Japan controlled in occupied China, as well as Japan's promise to grant Germany favoured nation status (Berleb, 2005, 240-241).⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Kirby (1984, 238) quotes: NA (National Archives, Washington), T-120, ser. 195, roll 164, 137456-463, Kung to Hitler, 3 September 1937; MA, RW 5/315, particularly "Bericht Hans Klein ueber Besprechung mit K'ung", 10 December 1937.

⁴⁷ The Ministry of Economy was taken over by Hermann Göring, and the Minister of Defence Werner von Blomberg was forced to resign by Hitler. Contrary to post-war perception, it was not difficult for the Nazis to gain the foreign office's support, because the majority of senior members sympathised with National Socialism, while younger members seemed to have joined the NSDP out of career considerations (Conze, Frei, Hayes, Zimmermann, 2010, 67).

⁴⁸ Berleb (2005, 238) quotes: Ruland, Bernd (1973), p.196.

⁴⁹ Early on in the 1930s Japan-friendly circles already had great interest in Manchuria and its economic capabilities. Ferdinand Heye, a businessman linked to Hermann Göring, travelled to Manchuria to intensify trade, and as a result would have accepted Japanese presence in North East China (Ratenhof, 1987, 447). Ignoring the warning of the German Foreign Office, Heye promised Japan the recognition of Manchukuo in

By the summer of 1938 Sino-German relations had reached a low point, but neither side was yet willing to fully give up on its years of cooperation, in particular not China. Hitler was not willing to give up neutrality in the Sino-Japanese conflict, which meant keeping open relations to China (Presseisen, 1958, 130). Trade with China did not cease but continued for a while through third channels (Berleb, 2005, 240-241).⁵⁰ The Third Reich also kept her embassy in Chongqing, which was run by a Charge` d`Affairs, as no new ambassador was appointed. The fact that this humiliation was accepted by Chiang Kai-shek suggests that he hoped for a return to a good diplomatic relations between both nations.⁵¹ The appointments of Ambassador Chen Jie in summer 1938 and of General Gui Yongqing as military attaché in autumn 1940 prove this fact. This military attaché would then go on to become one of the agents of the clandestine Sino-German relations in 1941.

In the end, Berlin's recognition of the Wang Jingwei collaborationist government lead to the break in Chongqing China's relations with Nazi Germany. Only six months later, and after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor (8 December 1941), Chongqing sided with the USA and declared war on the Axis Powers. This state of war between Nationalist China and the Third Reich made any further official connections impossible to maintain.

In hindsight, the impact of external and domestic events in China and Germany, and on German foreign policy becomes clear. As I have shown above, 1930s Sino-German relations and official German foreign policy did not always correspond, but rather influenced each other. Due to the blending of official and un-official diplomatic forces in German foreign relations, Germany's East Asian foreign policy appeared

exchange for preferred trade agreements (Fox, 1982, 28). The promises of benefits from German trade with Japanese-occupied China did not pay off, as both economies (Japan and Germany) were too equal and demanded the same resources.

⁵⁰ Berleb (2005, 240-241) quotes: *ADAP, Serie D, Band 1*, Document 504. Memorandum of Counsellor von der Heyden-Rynsch, Berlin, 22 October 1937.

⁵¹ German reluctance to replace Ambassador Trautmann, while China kept her ambassador in Berlin, was increasingly perceived as an affront by Chiang Kai-shek in October 1939. German Charge` Bidder reported on 19 October 1939 that Chinese sources recommended the Third Reich to rectify this issue by appointing a new ambassador. (PA AA Peking 1, 165, *Chinesische Botschaft in Berlin 1939-1945*(Chinese Embassy in Berlin).

contradictory at times. The mid-1930s internal fight over the direction of German East Asian foreign policy caused considerable damage to the German position in East Asia, but any attempt by China-friendly forces in Germany to rectify the course of foreign policy in favour of China failed with the Nazi consolidation of power in 1938.

It appears that German East Asian foreign policy seemed only focused on Japan from 1938 onwards, and excluded China. This was not the case, however. The excellent Sino-German relations of the mid 1930s had clearly created a wish for closer Sino-German relations in sections of the German government. The efforts that Chinese-friendly Germans and German-friendly Chinese put into the maintenance of Sino-German relations during the late 1930s speaks for their continued interest. Many of the individuals who supported Sino-German relations, on both sides, could rely on personal connections established during the 1930s.

Chapter Four: Official Republican Chinese wartime foreign policy

As I argue at the end of Chapter Three, the findings of this dissertation do not fully correspond with the official image and message of Sino-foreign relations shortly before and after the outbreak of WWII in Europe. Before I further elaborate on these findings in Chapter Six, however, I will present a summary of official Chinese WWII rhetoric and the official foreign policy message that Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalist government presented to the international community. Though not entirely representative of the Nationalist foreign policy more broadly, these publications provide an insight into the official foreign policy guidelines pursued by Chiang Kai-shek. The content of these messages is further enriched with background information on the status and developments of international relations during the years 1938 to 1940. Furthermore, I will highlight that Chiang Kai-shek used special envoys to further support his messages with “people on the ground”, who lobbied through back channels in favour of Chongqing. The combination of foreign policy messages and special envoys contributed to Chongqing’s inclusion in the Big Four. However, as we will see in Chapters Five and Six, the presence of special envoys pursuing foreign relations outside of the framework of the Chinese Foreign Office is also noticeable in Sino-German relations in 1940 and 1941.

Chongqing China’s official wartime message

Propaganda is, and has always been, an important tool in times of war, for the Allies as well as for the Axis Powers. Chiang Kai-shek’s China was no exception and spread her wartime message in several forms, for example through Soong May-ling’s radio addresses and the tour to the US in 1943 to rally for support (Tyson Li, 2006). Any radio address, newspaper article or speech carried a message that reflected Chinese official foreign policy, as well as transmitting overtures or warnings to the

world. Many of these messages were published on anniversaries or followed crucial events in either wartime China or in other countries.

The speeches presented in this chapter reflect the official position adopted in Nationalist Chinese foreign policy, which was reached after intensive debate throughout the 1930s. The mid-1930s were characterised by a gradualist foreign policy which saw China appease Japan while preparing for a future military conflict (Sun, 1993, 42). The two years between 1935 and 1937, on the contrary, saw a drive for national unity in China, which culminated in the establishment of an anti-Japanese United Front between the CCP and the GMD (Sun, 1993, 63).⁵²

Following the departure of Wang Jingwei from Chongqing in December 1938, the peace-faction the latter had represented lost much of its influence in Chongqing. As a result, the so-called resistance-faction directed the course of foreign policy.⁵³ In the following section, I will briefly lay out some of the characteristics of the resistance-faction's foreign policy approach. I will then present the official line as it was articulated in foreign policy speeches by Chiang, as well as details on the international situation China faced between 1938 and 1941.

The resistance-faction, of which Chiang Kai-shek was a part, believed throughout the 1930s and early 1940s that Japan would inevitably clash with either the Soviet Union or the Anglo-Saxon nations, all of which had economic interests at stake in China (Sun, 1993, 157). From November 1937 onwards, after the failure of the Brussels conference, foreign aid and the hope for foreign intervention remained the only tool to maintain Chinese morale (Sun, 1993, 92). Chinese foreign policy, thus focused overwhelmingly on establishing ties with either the US and Britain, or with the Soviet Union, though by the end of 1939, this plan excluded the Soviet Union (Sun, 1993, 126).

⁵² For more information on the development of Nationalist China's foreign policy see: Sun (1993).

⁵³ The terms "peace-faction" and "resistance-faction" are used by Sun (1993, 105), and adopted for this thesis.

Chiang Kai-shek's wartime foreign policy objectives can thus be summarised as follows: the Generalissimo planned to fight the war on the side of the Western democracies and, after a decline in Sino-Soviet relations, the Anglo-Saxon powers emerged as the preferred partners of Nationalist China (Sun, 1993, 141).

The Chongqing-based Central News Agency and Nationalist publishers did much to propagate this official foreign policy line in the early years of the war against the Japanese. A number of Chiang Kai-shek's official speeches made in Wuhan and later in Chongqing were translated, re-published and distributed throughout sections of the world where the Nationalists sought support. The Vita Nova publisher printed such a collection of Chiang Kai-shek's speeches in Lucerne in 1940. This publishing house was founded by German refugee Rudolf Roessler in Switzerland, who himself was involved in espionage against the Nazis, and published anti-Nazi material.⁵⁴ Roessler's anti-Nazi position would explain the publication of Chiang Kai-shek's anti-Japanese and anti-Axis speeches that cover a period from 1937 to 1940.

The topic of pamphlets distributed in China and in foreign countries (friendly and neutral ones) likely differed and transmitted specific messages for certain audiences. The Vita Nova publication addressed European audiences, hence had a very specific reference to WWII Europe, and the international situation on the periphery. In contrast, *The Anthology of Speeches of the Chairman* in its 8th and 9th volume (published in 1942) addressed mainly Chinese audiences, ranging from military and civilian individuals to the National Political Consultative Council (*Guomincanzenghui*).⁵⁵ In this publication, the Chinese endurance and fighting spirit is far more emphasised.

⁵⁴ Roessler was part of the spying "Lucy", which provided intelligence on the Third Reich to the Soviet Union. "Lucy" itself was part of a much larger intelligence network that operated in Switzerland (Mulligan, 1987, 236).

⁵⁵ On 6 July 1937, the National Political Consultative Council met for the first time in Wuhan (Shen, 2002, 82). It included the CCP, the China Youth Party and others. This council was meant to act as the highest consulting organ in regard to National Defence. Furthermore, the council had the power to listen to administrative reports by the Nationalist Government, as well as make suggestions, inquiries and investigations. Any decisions, however, could not be enforced on the Nationalist Government.

Most strikingly, but not surprisingly, Japan and the invasion of China featured dominantly in all of the speeches read for this dissertation, no matter whether these addressed a foreign or a Chinese audience. Apart from that, the single messages focused differently on the danger Japan represented for either the international community (Vita Nova publication) or China's survival and modernisation (addressed to a Chinese audience). As well as foreign powers and the Chinese, Chiang Kai-shek also addressed the Japanese people, similar to Western Allied attempts to inform Germans through radio during the war years (Mann, 1943). Such a particular speech to the Japanese people was held on the second anniversary of the outbreak of the War of Resistance, on 7 July 1939.⁵⁶ It conveyed a message of Chinese power and endurance, and meant to transmit to the Japanese audience that their country would never win the war. Such a message targeted as much the Japanese audience as the Chinese one, and can also be translated as a message of perseverance.

Far different words, however, characterised a Vita Nova-published speech from 24 July 1939, which came as a reaction to the British-Japanese *Craigie Arita Agreement*. In essence, this agreement stated that Britain would not counter any measures Japan deemed necessary to maintain order in China, meaning that Japan could do whatever she wanted in China. Many observers compared this agreement to the *Munich Agreement*, signed by Hitler and British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain on 29 September 1938 (Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1975, 7); hence it was also referred to as a "Far Eastern Munich" by critics (e.g., Clifford, 1963, 147).⁵⁷ Chiang Kai-shek attacked this British appeasement policy in the East, as there indeed was a possibility that the Western powers might reach a *Munich Agreement*-style decision on China with Japan. With the Third Reich neither siding with Japan or Chiang Kai-shek's

⁵⁶ Shanghai Municipal Archive (SMA) Y13-1-23, *Zongcai yanlun xuanji* (Anthology of remarks of the Chairman), Volume 8, 9: *Waijiao, Jiaoyu, Yu Xunshu; Zhongguo Guomindang Zhongyang Zhixing Weiyuanhui*. Published in September 1942; p.1895: This speech was a letter by Chiang Kai-shek to the Japanese people on the second anniversary (on 7 July 1939) of the outbreak of the War of Resistance in 1937.

⁵⁷ The *Munich Agreement* refers to the British-German *Munich Agreement* signed on 29 September 1938. It awarded the German-speaking regions in the western part of then Czechoslovakia to the Third Reich, in an attempt to appease Hitler.

China, and the US isolationist foreign policy, the British appeasement policy may have been regarded by the Chinese administration as a possible example to other foreign nations on how to avert any issues with Japan in East Asia. Indeed, the danger of either a British or Soviet appeasement of Japan posed a serious threat to Chongqing, and, as Sun (1993, 141) argues, resulted in the focus on Sino-US relations, in contrast to Sino-Soviet ones.

As a result of fears over possible rapprochements between Japan and the Western powers, Japan's foreign policy and actions were scrutinised by the Chinese government. In Chiang's speech that summarised the policies of the Abe Cabinet from 1938 until January 1940, Japan was accused of harbouring "hidden agendas" that would be detrimental to the Western Powers. One of these hidden agendas was Japan's rejection of involvement in the European war (Chiang, 1940, 53-54). Chiang (1940, 54), however, argues that by limiting the Western Powers' rights and interests in East Asia, Japan involved herself in the European conflict. By arguing so, Chiang Kai-shek linked the European and East Asian theatres of war. This comment clearly reflects the wide-spread thinking in Chongqing that Japan's drive for hegemony in East Asia would damage British and US economic interests (Sun, 1993, 23).

Indeed, the Japanese threat to Western economic interests was frequently cited in relation to the *Nine Power Treaty*. At the same time, Japan tried to foster relations with all sides of the conflict, including Germany, Britain, the US and the Soviet Union (Chiang, 1940, 55-56). Mention of the *Nine Power Treaty* in this speech suggests that Chiang was trying to influence Western-Japanese rapprochement. By linking Japanese aggression in China with the *Nine Power Treaty*, Chiang clearly targeted the US administration, which had been vocal over the "Open Door" policy included in the treaty. After accusing Japan of violating the Open Door policy, Chiang (1940, 60) positioned Chongqing China on the side of the US, describing it as a nation that was willing to

uphold the *Nine Power Treaty*⁵⁸. Other promises to the Western democracies included continued resistance of the Japanese invasion, and a rejection of the *Anti Comintern Pact* (Chiang, 1940, 60). There were obvious reasons for such messages, as Chiang faced an international community in which “there were only interests and no sentiments” (Guo Chang-lu, 43 in Sun, 1993, 123).

China’s position in the world and her alliances were not secure in 1939/1940, even though, as shown above, Chiang Kai-shek advocated relations with Britain and mainly the US. The early years of the European war were difficult for Chongqing China. According to Kirby (2011, 7-8), Chongqing was without an official partner until December 1941. Sun (1993, 1) also argues that China had great difficulties until December 1941 to receive “formal commitment...from any power”. I partially agree with these two statements, because the Nationalist government struggled to gain significant financial support and weapon shipments from the Western Powers, with the exception of the Soviet Union. In contrast to both Britain and the US, the Soviet Union stepped up as new supplier of arms and military advisors after Germany had vacated that role in summer 1938. Up until December 1941, Soviet support to China totalled approximately US \$250 million; hence far exceeding that provided by other major powers at the time (Young, 1965, 345, quoted in Ratenhof, 1987, 492). Shipments of war-related materials included fighter planes and tanks. In addition, around 500 military advisors as well as 2000 Soviet pilots were stationed in China (Ratenhof, 1987, 492).⁵⁹ In total, the Soviet Union provided China between 1938 and 1941 with, amongst others, 900 aircrafts, 82 tanks, 10,000 machine guns and 2,000 trucks (Yu, 2006, 13).⁶⁰ The total amount of Soviet aid far exceeded that of German shipments between 1927 and 1937.

⁵⁸ “The 1922 *Nine Power Treaty* affirmed the sovereignty and territorial integrity of China” and made the US “Open Door” China Policy international law (Spence, 1990, 379). It was signed by major European Powers, the US, China and Japan. The “Open Door” Policy referred to the US proposal that would allow all nations to engage in trade in China and “not to deny others access to their spheres of influence...” (Spence, 1990, 231).

⁵⁹ Ratenhof (1987, 492) quotes: Johnson, Peking, to Secretary of State, 24. 2. 1938, FRUS 1938, III, pp.106 “*Neue Zuericher Zeitung*”, 4.7. 1938, HWWA, B 94/qNR. 2IIb. Bowden, pp.54.

⁶⁰ Yu (2006, 13) quotes: Li Jiagu, *Cooperation and Confrontation*, 85-99; and Liu Zhiqing, *Seventy years of Sino-Soviet Relations*, 242-243.

Soviet assistance was forthcoming because Chinese resistance focused much of Japan's attention on the Sino-Japanese conflict, hence protecting the Soviet Union from a Japanese attack.⁶¹ Despite the substantial amount of aid, however, Chiang never fully trusted the Soviets (Garver, 1988, 90). Indeed, the Soviet-German *Non Aggression Pact* of 1939 had shattered Chinese hopes for Soviet military intervention on the side of China. Instead, Chinese foreign policy then "aimed at forestalling any Soviet-Japanese collusion" (Sun, 1993, 126).

The Soviet Union was the only foreign Power that offered assistance to Nationalist China from 1938 until June 1941. The US and Britain both refrained from being drawn into the unfolding Sino-Japanese conflict. While US-public opinion and isolationist policies stopped President Franklin D. Roosevelt from engaging in an international conflict, the US sent supportive signals to China, such as the abrogation of the US-Japanese *Treaty of Commerce and Navigation* (Taylor, 2009, 166), and a US' \$25 million loan in December 1938. Ratenhof (1987, 495) argues that the shift away from an isolationist US foreign policy coincided with great economic losses for the US in East Asia, due to Japan's control of the major commercial centres along the Chinese coast.⁶²

The British reaction to the Sino-Japanese conflict is debated in academia. A number of scholars called Whitehall's East Asian foreign policy an appeasement policy (Ratenhof, 1987, 493; Lowe, 1974). More interested in the maintenance of economic interests, London only supported the Nationalist government with a loan of US \$2,3 million in December 1938, a fraction compared to Soviet aid (Ratenhof, 1987, 494). Other scholars, such as Thorne (1978, 67) point out that while British East Asian foreign policy behaviour may not have always received the support of the Chinese, British officials believed that morale support of Chinese resistance was vital for British interests. Winston Churchill, who was known to deny China an equal position amongst

⁶¹ This drew attention away from the Soviet Union, which had clashed with Japan in the past and feared that Japanese anti-communism might turn into an offensive in Siberia after China had been occupied (Ratenhof, 1987, 492). Ratenhof (1987, 492) quotes: Boyle, pp.116; Clubb, Century, pp.227.

⁶² Ratenhof (1987, 495) states that the US fell from the first position amongst the nations trading with China to the third position in 1938/1939. Ratenhof (1987, 495) quotes: A. Young, Effort, Appendix 23.

the Big Four, informed Chiang Kai-shek in May 1940 that “we [Britain] shall do all we can to help China to maintain her independence” (Thorne, 1978, 67).⁶³ In general, British reaction to events in East Asia can be described as morally supportive of China, and critical of Japanese actions, without being too harsh or vocal in either regard (Lowe, 1974, 45). Instead, much of London’s attention rested on Europe and the looming war on that continent. Germany was perceived as a far greater danger to the British Empire than Japan.⁶⁴

From the above it is clear that the most powerful Western nations with which China maintained contacts in the late 1930s were concerned primarily with their own well-being, and aided China only to a certain degree, while not actually taking sides in the Sino-Japanese conflict. The continuous flux in diplomatic developments provided Chongqing China with “tough choices” (Sun, 1993, 123), as signed agreements could easily be broken. One example might be the German-Soviet *Non Aggression Pact* of summer 1939. The signing of this pact surprised Chinese policy makers, who began to entertain different scenarios as a result of German-Soviet rapprochement. First of all, the Soviet Union suddenly emerged on the opposite side to Britain and France, and secondly, the chance of either British or Soviet appeasement of Japan became a real possibility (Sun, 1993, 123). These sudden changes were considerable, especially if we consider that Chongqing had, at one stage, advocated an alliance with the Soviet Union and Britain against the fascist powers. According to scholars such as Mitter (2013, 213), the German-Soviet pact harmed Chinese plans to draw the Soviet Union into the Sino-Japanese conflict. Mitter’s position on this issue, however, is not shared by all scholars, as some (Yang, 2010a, 38; Ratenhof, 1987, 499) argue that Chongqing politicians, such as Sun Fo, actually welcomed the German-Soviet Pact, as it meant the *Anti Comintern Pact* of November 1936 was made void. In return, Sino-German

⁶³ Thorne (1978, 67) quotes: PREM 4, 42/8.

⁶⁴ For more information on Britain’s East Asian foreign policy in the 1930s and early 1940s see Lowe (1974); Hosoya (1981).

relations were expected by Soviet- and German-friendly Chinese politicians to improve.⁶⁵

As a result of continuous changes and developments in international relations, the choice for a pragmatic foreign policy is clear. With Japan's increasing affiliation with the Axis Powers, much of Chiang Kai-shek's focus rested on the US, whose decision to enter the war would decide the outcome of it. Gaining US support proved rather difficult, however, as Chongqing decision makers had to take into account both the administration as well as American public opinion. While the US public sympathised with China, it preferred a "non-entangling" foreign policy (Rofe, 2007, 6). The Roosevelt administration thus faced a situation in which both the Left and Right in American politics favoured a policy of isolationism which would enable the US to stay out of any conflict, including the Chinese one (Doenecke, 1977, 221). Moreover, US reservations about assisting China stemmed from the perception that Chiang had evolved into a "Far Eastern Hitler" (Ratenhof, 1987, 494).

A significant number of wartime speeches addressing the US were actually given by Soong May-ling prior and after her much publicised visit to the US in 1943, who appealed to the US public with her American upbringing and Christian faith. I will not go into more details on Soong May-ling's wartime speeches, but focus once more on those made by Chiang Kai-shek. The reason for this decision is that Soong May-ling adopted a clearly US-friendly foreign policy, while Chiang Kai-shek, in addition to his US-friendly speeches, followed a much more pragmatic approach that attempted to keep all diplomatic doors open behind-the-scenes.

Despite Chiang Kai-shek's focus on drawing the US into the war, in the majority of his foreign relations speeches, Chiang addressed several democratic Western Powers, and sided clearly with Britain and France. Believing that moral support for China's resistance against Japan was important, Churchill informed Chiang Kai-shek in

⁶⁵ Sino-German relations had suffered greatly after the declaration of the Sino-Soviet *Non Aggression Treaty* of 1937. Individuals in Chongqing believed that the new German-Soviet alliance could mean that Germany was open to relations with China, instead of with Japan (Kirby, 1984, 245).

May 1940 that “we [Britain] shall do all we can to help China to maintain her independence” (Thorne, 1978, 67).⁶⁶

While singling out the Western Democracies as Allies, Chiang Kai-shek had the international relations situation carefully watched, as he declared in front of the National Political Council on 9 September, just a week after the outbreak of war in Europe, that China’s objective was to end the war with Japan as quickly as possible. Even though this should happen with support from the Western democracies, China would keenly observe the development of international relations and of her own wartime diplomacy (Leutner, 1998, 133-134).⁶⁷ This statement, made in front of a non-foreign audience, clearly highlights the pragmatic behaviour that influenced Chiang Kai-shek’s foreign policy long after the events of Pearl Harbor, as this dissertation will show below.

The clearer international split, which followed the outbreak of hostilities in September 1939, encouraged Chiang to link the Chinese and the European war. On 10 October 1940, Nationalist China’s National Day⁶⁸ and the day Germany, Italy and Japan signed the *Tripartite Pact*, Chiang addressed a number of military and civilian individuals, and called Japan “the arch enemy of the Three Principles [the Three Principles of the People]” and of China’s modernisation.⁶⁹ Delivered to an obviously domestic audience, this speech still addressed the international community when Chiang Kai-shek linked Germany and Italy with Japan, and described them as enemies of the “righteous states”.⁷⁰ The image and message of this speech cannot be clearer,

⁶⁶ Thorne (1978, 67) quotes: PREM 4, 42/8.

⁶⁷ Leutner (1998, 133-134) printed the following record: Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek’s War Speeches, (1944, 51-54).

⁶⁸ On 10 October 1911 the Wuchang Eight Engineer Battalion mutinied, and attacked the military forts at Wuchang, which marked the end of the Qing Dynasty (Spence, 1990, 263).

⁶⁹ SMA Y13-1-23, *Zongcai yanlun xuanji* (Anthology of remarks of the Chairman), Volume 8, 9: *Waijiao, Jiaoyu, Yu Xunshu; Zhongguo Guomindang Zhongyang Zhixing Weiyuanhui*. Published in September 1942, p.1950: On 10 October 1940, Chiang Kai-shek is addressing a group of military and civilian individuals. The *Tripartite Pact* situated Japan officially in the fascist camp, which had negative influence on US-Japanese relations (Cohen, 1990, 124).

⁷⁰ SMA Y13-1-23, *Zongcai yanlun xuanji* (Anthology of remarks of the Chairman), Volume 8, 9: *Waijiao, Jiaoyu, Yu Xunshu; Zhongguo Guomindang Zhongyang Zhixing Weiyuanhui*. Published in September 1942, p.1951.

as Chiang showed that Japan chose to be part of the Axis Powers, and thus became an enemy of the Western Powers and should be dealt with accordingly.

This link to the European war was no coincidence, but calculated propaganda.⁷¹ Before the outbreak of the Pacific War, the two conflicts in Europe and China were difficult to link, as China had not declared war on Germany and equally, Britain had not declared war on Japan. External developments, such as the *Tripartite Pact*, German recognition of the Collaborationist government in Nanjing and the attack on the Soviet Union, however, played into Chongqing's hands, and raised hopes for Allied intervention in China, as Japan and Germany were increasingly perceived as members of the same camp. A preferred argument was the split of the world into "harassing, aggressive countries" and "democratic countries that defend justice",⁷² with China being one of the latter. This dichotomising of the world into "peace-loving" and "war mongering" nations had been evident in Chinese foreign policy discussions throughout the 1930s (Sun, 1993, 99), and correlated with Chinese attempts to discredit Japan in the eyes of the Western powers, while lobbying for support.

In a speech on 23 January 1940, Chiang Kai-shek addressed the issue of the Wang Jingwei agreement with Japan, and appealed to all friendly nations to support Chongqing China. While the Generalissimo addressed "all friendly nations", he singled out nations that were "immediately bound up with Pacific affairs" (Lowe, 1944, 58), or more precise the US and Britain. The speech would go further and criticise the continued trade between the US and Japan, which actually supported the Japanese war machine. By January 1940, this did not result in a call for the US to go to war, but to curb, or better to stop their trade with Japan. With an end to US trade with Japan, Japan would have to end her war in China and peace would return (Lowe, 1944, 59). This strategy would appeal to the powerful isolationists in the US, who could support

⁷¹ The publication of these speeches in 1942 was also part of propaganda, likely meant to signal and support the close connections between Chongqing China and the Western Allies.

⁷² SMA Y13-1-23, *Zongcai yanlun xuanji* (Anthology of remarks of the Chairman), Volume 8, 9: *Wajijiao, Jiaoyu, Yu Xunshu; Zhongguo Guomindang Zhongyang Zhixing Weiyuanhui*. Published in September 1942, p.1969, this speech was titled: "Solving the Japanese incident" and it was held on 17 November 1941, at the second (General Assembly) opening speech of the Second National Political Consultative Council.

Chongqing China, without jeopardizing their objectives. The final event needed to gain US support was the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. China's constant Anglo-Saxon-friendly propaganda and her strong resistance against Japan turned the US administration and public in favour of a Sino-US alliance (Sun, 1993, 133, 136-139).

With the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, events unfolded and irrevocably linked the Sino-Japanese war with the European theatre, thus creating a truly global World War. The attack on the US American Naval base rallied the US public behind President Roosevelt's declaration of war against Japan, which automatically made Chongqing China and Washington allies. In the mind of the US public, indeed, Japan was regarded as the main enemy, a position that was not shared by its British counterpart (Thorne, 1978, 714). The War of Resistance and China's strategic importance to the Allied war strategy raised China's international profile. This development culminated in China gaining a seat amongst the Big Four, which some twenty years earlier would have been unthinkable. Even in 1942, British Prime Minister Churchill objected the inclusion of Chiang Kai-shek to the Big Four, but had to accept the plans of President Roosevelt (Yu, 2006, 97).

Moreover, both Chongqing and Washington declared war on the rest of the Axis Powers, Germany and Italy. The Western Allies, USA and Britain committed themselves to fight Japan, while the Soviet Union abstained from any war declaration, which would have meant a break of the April 1941 Soviet-Japanese *Neutrality Pact* (Mitter, 2013, 308).⁷³ Chinese celebration over her newly won allies suffered slight setbacks in the course of 1942, however, as it became clear that Roosevelt's focus was on Europe and the defeat of Germany first ("Europe first strategy"). China only played a minor role, and was given enough aid to keep Japan's forces occupied, "but...not necessarily...enough [aid] to win"(Cohen, 1990, 133). British wartime East

⁷³ As a result Chiang Kai-shek and Stalin never met at any wartime Allied conference, and the US and Britain had to arrange for separate forums. Meetings with Japan's enemy China could have been interpreted as a violation of the *Neutrality Pact* (Mitter, 2013, 308).

Asian policy also led scholars to define the Allies as “unreliable” (Shai, 1984, 56; Mitter, 2013, 14).⁷⁴ Thorne (1978, 70), however, argues that British support for China has largely been overshadowed by US aid from 1941 onwards; hence creating the image that Britain “had never cared for the cause of China in the first place”. The ease with which Japan occupied British colonies in South East Asia baffled Western Powers (Dower, 1986, 6). As a result, the British fight in Asia was also undertaken to regain her lost colonies, an aspiration that clashed with Chinese and US plans in this area.⁷⁵ The Churchill administration was eager to make up for the death of “the legend of the invincible European” in Asia (Shai, 1984, 11). Additionally there existed blatant racial prejudice in Downing Street. Shai (1984, 23) puts it in the following words: “...Churchill could not accept the idea that Britain and China were mentioned in the same breath. Equality between the two countries and their peoples were, as far as he was concerned, simply unthinkable”. Tyson Li (2006, 232) further argues that Churchill was “an unabashed racist”. Chiang Kai-shek on the other hand represented a staunch anti-imperialist position, which brought him into conflict with Britain over issues such as independence for British India and the return of Hong Kong to China (Yan and Li, 2008, 267).

The above selection of speeches does not reflect the full scope of Republican Chinese foreign policy, but does provide a window through which we can examine the official guidelines pursued by Chongqing. As a result of such analysis we can conclude that the official message Chiang Kai-shek and the Chongqing government distributed in 1939 and 1940 was one of Chinese resilience against foreign invasion and her fight for freedom and democracy. The lines were clearly drawn between the factions: in light and darkness, non-aggressive and aggressive. China was portrayed as willing to fight, but still in desperate need of foreign aid and support. These speeches were meant for

⁷⁴ Scholars differ in their opinion about Britain’s role in East Asia during WWII, with Thorne (1978, 70) taking a more positive stance by highlighting that Britain supported China as much as she could. Other scholars, such as Shai (1984) and Mitter (2013) take a more critical stance.

⁷⁵ For more information on US plans for South East Asia and how China was involved see: La Feber (1975).

an Allied, anti-Axis audience, which is further supported by the fact that an anti-Nazi magazine was chosen to publish Chiang Kai-shek's speeches.

Chiang Kai-shek's special envoys

Public speeches were one tool for gaining allies; another, very different, method, however, seems to have been preferred by Chiang Kai-shek to "reset the broad train of foreign policy" (Strauss, 1998, 154). As the final decision maker in Chinese politics, Chiang Kai-shek also had the possibility to influence Chinese foreign policy practices (Martin, 2003, 42). This influence resulted in the appointment of several special envoys and representatives to major countries during the 1930s and 1940s, the US and the Soviet Union. Academic research again has a US-centric view in this field, as much research focuses on the envoys sent to the US, and a much smaller number also covers envoys to the Soviet Union. Hardly anything has been done on envoys to Britain or to the Third Reich, respectively.

This fact is important for this research, as I will point out the assignment of yet more special envoys in back channels during 1940-1944 to maintain contact with the Third Reich. Even though much of Chiang Kai-shek's attention was on Sino-US relations, research on special representatives to Germany will further deepen our understanding of Chiang Kai-shek's foreign policy approach. Foo (2011, 6) highlighted the lack of research in this area, and this dissertation will add more information to the already known cases that are presented in this chapter.

The special envoy system is closely linked with Chiang Kai-shek's own involvement in Republican Chinese foreign relations, which operated through channels removed from the Chinese Foreign Office. According to Chen Yan (2002b, 63) the Junshi Weiyuanhui, the Military Affairs Commission, operated as a "foreign relations headquarters", and was headed by Chiang Kai-shek. Much in favour of non-professional diplomatic foreign policy, Chiang relied heavily on trusted aides and family

members, whom he used to staff and operate multiple diplomatic channels at the same time (Chen Yan, 2002b, 259-261). This was due to the fact that the professional Chinese Foreign Office staff did not meet the Generalissimo's expectations, and were perceived as timid (Chen Yan, 2002b, 261-262).⁷⁶

Republican Chinese history knows several well-researched cases of back channels through special envoys, and such research contributes to the understanding of the usage of un-official diplomacy measures. Arguably the most important of these envoys was Chiang Kai-shek's brother-in-law T.V. Soong, who arranged several US loans to China prior to Pearl Harbor (Kuo, 2009, 222).⁷⁷ Initially, the American-educated T.V. Soong was sent to the US in June 1940, when the American administration had not yet determined whether to enter the war. Despite a very influential Chinese-friendly lobby in the US, that also included many missionaries (Cohen, 1990, 120),⁷⁸ Soong received the order to manage and improve Sino-US relations (Kuo, 2009, 219), as well as to lead the Military Procurement Office (Taylor, 2009, 192), which he did successfully. Throughout his time as a special representative, Soong met with leading US and British politicians and diplomats, such as President Roosevelt, Secretary of State Gordon Hull, Minister of Finance Henry Morgenthau Jr. (Chen Yan, 2002b, 232) and British ambassador Lord Edward Halifax (Wu and Kuo, 2008, 353). Presidential aide Lauchlin Currie served as Soong's channel to President Roosevelt and further as channel for Chiang Kai-shek's Personal Advisor Owen Lattimore (Thorne, 1978, 81, 113).⁷⁹

While Soong's initial work in the US took place through back channels, and, hence, side-lined the Chinese Foreign Office, he was later appointed Foreign Minister

⁷⁶ Chen Yan (2002b, 262) quotes: Academia Historica, Jiang Jieshi Dangan, Wenwu Tushu zhi "Jiang Jieshi Shilue", 1938, October, 1.

⁷⁷ For more concrete information on the topics Soong and Chiang Kai-shek discussed see Wu and Kuo (2008).

⁷⁸ Encouraged by the presence of a Christian Chinese leader, American missionaries joined the ranks of the Republican Chinese Administration or lobbied for China's case in Washington (Cohen, 1990, 120). Jespersen (1996, 77) has highlighted this combination of American missionaries, their perception of China (shared by the US administration) and the US media by focusing on the persona of Henry R Luce, the founder of *Time Magazine*.

⁷⁹ Thorne (1978, 113), quotes: Morgenthau, Presidential Diary, 10 July 1941. Thorne (1978, 81) quotes: Lattimore to Currie, 25 Jan. 1941; FDR to Hull, 21 Nov. 1941, Roosevelt Papers, PSF box 37.

in December 1941, and represented China in Washington until autumn 1943 (Kuo, 2009, 219-220).

Lesser known envoys include Jiang Tingfu, who was sent to the Soviet Union by Chiang Kai-shek at least twice, and General Yang Jie, who later served as ambassador to Moscow from 1938 until 1940 (Garver, 1988, 16). The appointment of these two individuals underscores the importance of the Soviet Union for Chiang's foreign policy strategy in the early 1930s and the early years of the War of Resistance, as well as highlights the pragmatism in Chiang Kai-shek's foreign policy approach, since Germany and Nanjing had a good relationship at that time. Jiang Tingfu received the order from Chiang Kai-shek personally to "sound out the Russians on the possibility of cooperation" in October 1934 (So, 2002, 239),⁸⁰ and was told that the Soviet Union indeed wished to foster better relations with China. Two years later, Jiang Tingfu was appointed ambassador to Moscow in November 1936, where he worked for a year and made a name as an advocate for closer Sino-Soviet relations as a tool to counter Japanese pressure on China (Foo, 2011, 28). Jiang Tingfu was replaced in June 1938 with the first "General ambassador" Yang Jie (Chen Yan, 2002b, 211). Yang Jie had also served under Chiang Kai-shek in the Northern Expedition (Foo, 2011, 28). The initial appointment to Russia took place under the cover of an industrial inspection commission, headed by Yang. The mission was a major success, and led to the signing of a \$50 million US Dollar Soviet loan to China (Chen Yan, 2002b, 211).⁸¹ Yang Jie would continue to work as Chiang's private representative to Russia (Li, 2012, 187), and was sent on further missions to secure foreign aid, for example to France in 1939 (Chen Yan, 2002b, 235).

The direct involvement of Chiang Kai-shek in Chinese foreign policy and the appointment of special representatives are further visible in the case of the last Nationalist Chinese ambassador to Moscow, Fu Bingchang. The appointment of Fu to

⁸⁰ So (2002, 239) quotes: Wang Zhen, 1993, 37-39; Jiang Tingfu, 1984, 153; ZSWJ, 210-14.

⁸¹ Chen Yan (2002b, 211) quotes: Hu Lizhong, Jin Guangyao, Chen Jishi (1994), *Cong Nibuchu Tiaoyue dao Yeliqin fang Hua* (From the Treaty of Nerchinsk to Jelzin's visit to China – 300 years of Chinese-Russian and Chinese-Soviet relations), Fujian Renmi Chubanshe, pp.218-220.

Moscow in 1943 had been highly influenced by Chiang Kai-shek, who hand-picked Fu on the grounds that he had strong links to Sun Yat-sen's son Sun Fo, and would be welcomed in the Soviet Union (Foo, 2011, 1). This assumption is also based on the fact that Fu had accompanied Sun Fo on the latter's mission to Moscow in 1937/1938 (Li, 2012, 174). A member of the "Prince Clique" that surrounded Sun Fo (Li, 2012 3), Fu had two missions in 1943: one was to increase China's international standing; the other was to curb and restrain Soviet influence in China, particularly in resource-rich Xinjiang province (Foo, 2011, 123). Despite being officially appointed ambassador, Fu maintained a direct line of communication to Chiang Kai-shek, through which he could ask for financial support (Foo, 2011, 39). By doing so, Chiang diverted some communications away from the Chinese Foreign Office, which at the time of Fu's appointment, was under the control of T.V. Soong.

There exists more evidence for the frequent use of special envoys in relative close proximity to Chiang Kai-shek before and after the outbreak of WWII. As I will point out in more detail in Chapter Six, plans emerged and failed in March 1938 to send special commissioner Zhu Jiahua to the Third Reich, to foster Sino-German relations.⁸² Moreover, Sun Fo and, again, Zhu Jiahua were chosen to travel to the Soviet Union and Germany, respectively to work as special envoys in July 1940.⁸³ Even though this plan failed, it emerges that the same individuals had been closely linked to a certain foreign nation, such as Sun Fo to the Soviet Union and Zhu Jiahua to Germany, respectively, and were called upon repeatedly to serve as special representatives in each of these. Throughout this time, Chiang Kai-shek's China maintained official

⁸² Zhu Jiahua was, like Chiang Kai-shek, a native of Zhejiang Province, born in 1893 (Boorman, 1967a, 437) and studied in Germany. He gained significant influence over the course of the 1930s (Walsh, 1974, 503). After completing his PhD in Germany in 1922, Zhu initially worked in China's rapidly emerging academia sector (Boorman, 1967a, 438). From 1932 onwards, Zhu Jiahua became a member of the GMD government and served in different posts, such as "minister of communication (1932-35) and vice president of the Examination Yuan" (Boorman, 1967a, 437). In 1938, Zhu took over the post as secretary general of the GMD headquarters, a post he held until 1944, and even after his retirement on Taiwan, Zhu remained close to Chiang Kai-shek as a major advisor (Boorman, 1967a, 439).

⁸³ PA AA Peking 176, Peking 1, Bestand Peking, Akten der Deutschen Botschaft in China, Chinesische Gesandtschaften und Konsulate; 1940-1941 (Records Peking, Files of the German embassy in China, Chinese legations and consulates; 1940-1941). The *Shanghai Times*, 31 July 1940, "Chungking Delegates to Berlin, Moscow".

representations in the countries in question; hence these special envoys would have represented a simple back channel for Chiang Kai-shek.

As we are seeing, all these cases, to a higher or lesser extent, avoided the Chinese Foreign Office and its embassies. If Sun and Zhu had been successfully appointed to the Soviet Union and the Third Reich respectively in 1940, these special envoys would have likely communicated with Chiang Kai-shek directly, and would have been recipients of the Generalissimo's *shouling* (personal directives). The characteristics of this foreign policy approach reminds us of the theory of BCD. As laid out in Chapter One, BCD in its simplest form avoids official front channels, and is usually used "to maximise secrecy" (Berridge and James, 2003, 18). While the actions of T.V. Soong could hardly be called secret, the latter acted outside the control of the Chinese embassy and diplomatic front channels. Similarly, the actions of the other special envoys to the Soviet Union or Germany (1938) were also either fully or partially controlled by Chiang Kai-shek, and bypassed official channels, thus representing back channels.

I would argue, and this dissertation will further discuss this argument in Chapter Seven, that the here presented special envoy or special representative strategy is an expression of BCD. As research in the historiography of Republican Chinese foreign relations shows, special envoys were a tool in Chinese foreign relations. The envoys usually had close links to Chiang Kai-shek, and as the main decision maker in Chongqing, Chiang had the means and the ability to run such clandestine missions. In the process, the Chinese Foreign Office and official diplomatic channels were bypassed, hence fitting the description of BCD.

In the next part of this dissertation, Chapter Five, I introduce, amongst others, the special envoys Chiang Kai-shek appointed to the Third Reich, and show the continuance of Chiang's involvement in Chinese foreign policy through special envoys. In Chapter Six I will then present the content of the clandestine communication

between these envoys, and analyse this special relationship in Chapter Seven, where the connections to BCD will emerge.

Chapter Five: Agents

At the end of Chapter Four, I presented information on the special envoy BCD carried out by Chiang Kai-shek and circles in Chongqing from 1937 until 1943. Moreover, I argued that a modified special envoy back channel existed as part of Sino-German relations from 1940 until 1941, and that these special envoys then upheld communication between Chiang Kai-shek and the two German groups, way beyond July 1941 until the end of 1944. Before I lay out the detailed clandestine Sino-German communications, however, I will introduce in this chapter the Chinese and German individuals who acted as agents of Chiang Kai-shek, the German Resistance and the RSHA respectively.

These individuals, their backgrounds and links, are too complex to be just mentioned in passing in this dissertation. The structure of this chapter is based on the communication channels, and clearly links the agents who worked together. It will start with a brief introduction of the main Chinese decision maker, Chiang Kai-shek, and the possible forces and motives behind the maintenance of the secret network. As the single individual that had contact with both German groups at the same time, Chiang needs to be discussed outside the communication channel framework. There will be no repetition of Chiang's own background history, as this would go much beyond the range of this dissertation's topic.

After this, the rest of the network is introduced, each agent according to their communication channels. This means that the sections start with the Chinese agent, continue on to the German contact and finally end at the German decision-making body. According to this structure, the first agent of the "Berlin-Chiang Channel" to be introduced is Gui Yongqing. His introduction is then followed by that of German agent Kurt Jahnke, and finally Jahnke's employer, the RSHA intelligence service.

The "German Resistance-Chiang Channel" introduction will be structured in a similar way. It starts with Chinese agent Qi Jun. In this case, however, I encountered

difficulties in identifying a single Resistance agent, as Qi's German contacts changed over the course of time. In Berlin, Qi was in contact with different individuals than in Switzerland. As a result, this section will cover the individuals Qi encountered in both Berlin and Berne. As the leading members of the German Resistance do not play an obvious role in this channel (there is no information about their active involvement), they will not be introduced.

Chiang Kai-shek

The decision of Chiang Kai-shek to use special envoy back channels to uphold relations with the Third Reich was based on several reasons, and was influenced by domestic and international developments. At its heart lay Chiang Kai-shek's pragmatic foreign policy approach that called for the maintenance of communications with all sides of the conflict, even with enemies. This was clearly visible in the existence of clandestine Sino-Japanese connections until late 1940 (Boyle, 1972; Sun, 1993, 145).⁸⁴ According to Sun (1993, 158), Chinese foreign policy tended to become more flexible whenever the Western Powers did not meet Chinese expectations of foreign support against Japan.

Interestingly, scholars such as Boyle (1972) and Sun (1993) did not anticipate the existence of clandestine channels that linked Chiang Kai-shek with Berlin. These channels not only represented a communication pipe-line to Berlin, but also a possible connection to Japan via a third country.

In addition to the pragmatic foreign policy approach, German-friendly cliques in the Nationalist administration and army lobbied for closer relations with the Third Reich; hence they prevented an early decision in Chongqing to side only with Britain and France. Their cause was supported by the Third Reich's initial war successes in 1940

⁸⁴ Sun (1993, 145) quotes: Chiang's diary, October 31; Keiji, *The Secret Records*, 12:61-62.

and 1941. German-friendly circles believed that in her powerful position, Germany had the potential to influence Japan's China policy in favour of Chongqing.

The Nationalist government's foreign policy is regularly described as pragmatic by Western academics, and the fact that China fostered relations to three of the most powerful nations (US, Germany, Soviet Union) during the 1930s and early 1940s is an indicator of this pragmatism. As previous research conducted in this field shows, China did not foster relations with these three countries at the same time, but each foreign partner served different needs in different situations (Kirby, 2011, 33).⁸⁵ As I mentioned in Chapter Two, the standard narrative of Sino-German, and Sino-foreign relations respectively, would argue that by late 1938 the Third Reich had lost much of her standing in Chongqing. Hence, Germany was slowly omitted from the equation.

However, this dissertation will reveal that the pragmatic foreign policy approach kept all doors open, and allowed Chiang Kai-shek to gather intelligence as well as updates on all areas of the war, including the European theatre of war, and developments inside Germany. Hence, diplomatic relations with the Western democracies existed alongside relations with the Third Reich.

This conscious approach complicated Chinese foreign policy making, as it increased the pressure that lobby groups could put on Chiang Kai-shek. These cliques, convinced that their supported foreign nation would be most suitable for China, would rally for better relations to the side in the conflict they supported, be it Germany or the US. The cliques were responsible for much of the political change (Tien, 1972, 47) during the war years.

Political closeness to Chiang Kai-shek was one of the determining factors for the influence these groups actually exercised, war developments being another factor. I will not go into detail on Japanese-friendly or US-friendly cliques in Chongqing, as there has already been a substantial amount of research written surrounding these (e.g.

⁸⁵ From the early 1930s until mid-1938, Germany supported the modernisation process of the Chinese industry and army. In a time of crisis, when no other partner was available, the Soviet Union stepped in as a bridge until the US finally joined the war in December 1941. For more information see Kirby (2011, 33-35).

as part of Tyson Li's (2006) work on Soong May-ling, Tien (1972), Wakeman Jr. (2003) and Boyle (1972); rather, the sole focus here will be on the German-friendly elements in Chongqing.

German-friendly influence has been repeatedly identified amongst the Nationalist civil administration and the army, in particular by contemporary observers in Chongqing, but has not featured overwhelmingly in research focusing on wartime Chongqing China.⁸⁶ This has happened despite the fact that a substantial number of Chinese army officers had either been trained by the German military mission, or enjoyed military training in Germany. These officers made up a substantial part of the Nationalist Army's command structure, and wielded significant power. As members of the Whampoa Clique (Tien, 1972, 45), named after their military academy, these men swore loyalty to Chiang Kai-shek and represented a backbone of support for the German-friendly course of the Generalissimo (Kirby, 1984, 158; Martin, 2003, 44). The Whampoa Clique did not include any members of the CCP, and carried out "quasi-military and secret activities" (Tien, 1972, 53). Several high-ranking military officers would go on to become founding members of the "Society for Vigorous Practice" or Lixingshe.⁸⁷ One of these men was Gui Yongqing, who served as military attaché and Chiang Kai-shek's informant in Germany in 1940 and 1941.

The Nationalist administration also recruited a substantial number of its personnel from returned students who had either studied in Europe or the US, and who harboured positive feelings for their former host countries. Students who had returned from studies in Germany occupied essential positions amongst the Nationalist administration, such as Minister of Education Zhu Jiahua or the head of the Ordnance

⁸⁶ On British observations of German-friendly sentiments in Chongqing see: TNA, (PRO) HS 1/165, Far East China: OSS/SOE Co-Operation; 11 May 1943, copy of long document summarising the background on OSS/SOE cooperation and Chongqing; British Library, India Office Records (IOR), L/ P&S/ 12/ 2293, China, Sino-British Relations File 15, Sep 36-April 46. Government of India, Supply Dept. to Secretary of State for India. Calcutta 20 March 1942, Chungking to Foreign Office, from Sir H. Seymour, 2 April 1942. Much research on wartime Chinese relations focused on Sino-US or Sino-Soviet relations, mentioning German-friendly individuals on the periphery, without further exploring them.

⁸⁷ Gui Yongqing was also founding member of the Lixingshe (Wakeman Jr., 2003, 57-58). The translation for Lixingshe in this thesis is based on the translation used by Frederic Wakeman Jr. (2003, 46).

Department, Yu Dawei (Boorman, 1967b, 74).⁸⁸ In particular, Zhu Jiahua has been identified by scholars as a German-friendly individual (Kirby, 1984, 43). The contact between Chiang Kai-shek and the Resistance movement, Qi Jun, had also studied in Germany.

These German-friendly groups could rely on Chiang Kai-shek's own positive view of Germany (Taylor, 2009, 101), but the impact of their lobbying on the Generalissimo's foreign policy was closely linked to the initial German war successes in 1939 until 1941, which shaped Chinese perception, and turned many government officials in favour of closer Sino-German relations. This was a point in time when China had not officially joined any side in the conflict yet and still received Soviet aid, but also faced a neutral US, a Britain primarily occupied with events in Europe, and Soviet-Japanese rapprochement. Decision makers in 1940/1941 Chongqing failed to convince the Western democracies of China's importance for besieged nations, such as Britain. This is despite the fact that Churchill's May 1940 message clearly reflected the perception in London that Chinese resistance was important and that Britain feared Chiang Kai-shek might decide in favour of the Third Reich.⁸⁹

Despite Western nations' wariness of Chongqing's objectives and Chinese perception of a lack of official foreign commitment, the Chinese Foreign Office upheld an anti-Axis foreign policy for obvious reasons. A close association with Germany would have closed many doors for Chiang Kai-shek in Britain and the US, while it was not guaranteed that a Sino-German rapprochement would actually come to be. After all, the Third Reich was still allied with Japan in the *Anti Comintern Pact* and the *Tripartite Pact*, which received strong Chinese criticism. Despite this criticism of German-Japanese alliances, the Chiang Kai-shek used special envoy back channels, hidden

⁸⁸ Like Zhu Jiahua and Chiang Kai-shek, Yu Dawei was born in Zhejiang Province, in the year 1899. Yu also pursued studies in Germany (ballistic and mathematic), where he stayed until 1926. A few years later he was back in Germany, where he served as liaison commissioner in Berlin's "Commerce Department" during the early 1930s (Boorman, 1967b, 73).

⁸⁹ TNA, (PRO) WO 208/232, China, Chapter 1: Political; Chungking Government's Relations with Germany. 5 August 1941, Correspondence by Sir A. Clerk Kerr, from Chongqing to the British Foreign Office in London.

amongst the Chinese embassy staff in Berlin, as a possible solution to maintain Sino-German relations, without jeopardizing Sino-US/British relations.

The “Berlin-Chiang Channel” agents:

Gui Yongqing

Gui Yongqing was a career soldier in the Nationalist Army, who rose to the level of General before being appointed as military attaché to Berlin, where he arrived in autumn 1940. Born in China’s Jiangxi province (Cheng, 2001, 55), Gui graduated from Whampoa Academy’s first cohort of students (Wakeman Jr., 2003, 57) in 1925. These early graduates were described by scholars as Chiang Kai-shek’s “personal followers” (Ch’ien, 1948, 242). Five years of military service were followed by advanced military training in Germany in 1930 (Xu, 1991, 643), in which Gui familiarised himself with German war strategy and training procedures. Moreover, Gui made the acquaintance of German military officers, one of whom was Hermann Göring (Deng and Wang, 2012, 233).⁹⁰ The two men would meet again in the 1940s during Gui’s time as military attaché in Berlin. By that time, Göring had been made Reichsmarschall and the head of the German Luftwaffe (air force). As Hitler’s designated successor, Göring was one of leading Nazis that competed for Hitler’s favour and support.

The acquisition of German military knowledge was then put into practise in China, where Gui helped to establish the Zhongyang Junxiao Xibei Junxiao (Central Military Academy Northwest Military School) in 1933 (Deng and Wang, 2012, 234). During the 1930s, Gui Yongqing rose to be commander of “the German-trained Model

⁹⁰ In Germany, Gui may have come into contact with fascism and National Socialism, because he placed a picture of Adolf Hitler right next to the photo of Chiang Kai-shek in his office (Deng and Wang, 2012, 235). Deng and Wang (2012, 233) also state that Gui met a General *Gelin*, who I assume was Hermann Göring.

Division, which successfully fought the Japanese in 1938” (Belden, 1944, 153-180, in Liang, 1978, 163).⁹¹

Aside from his life as a military officer, Gui engaged in political activities. In late February 1932, Gui and other officers of the armed forces founded the “Society for Vigorous Practice”, or the Lixingshe (Wakeman Jr., 2003, 57, 411n), and elected Chiang Kai-shek as their leader (*lingxiu*). The society was closely related with the rise of Chiang Kai-shek’s personality cult in the early 1930s, and is often linked with groups such as the “Blue Shirts”, which have been associated with fascism (e.g. Eastman, 1972). Members of the Lixingshe and in particular of the Whampoa Academy were known for their nationalism and anti-imperialism, which they shared with Chiang Kai-shek. Gui Yongqing helped to organise the Fuxingshe (the Renaissance-Society), a satellite organisation of the Lixingshe (Deng, and Wang, 2012, 234).⁹² It can be established that Gui took a German-friendly stance, even arguing that Germany had Hitler to revive her, and China had Chiang Kai-shek and was in need of reviving [by Chiang] (Deng and Wang, 2012, 234). In 1937, Gui became involved for the first time in Chinese foreign policy when he joined H.H. Kung’s “Chinese Study Commission” to Germany. During the trip, Kung met with several German industrialists and politicians, including Hitler, and it is very likely that Gui accompanied him on a number of these visits (Liang, 1978, 121).

This early experience with Germany and her politicians may have predestined Gui for the job as military attaché to Germany. Surely, Gui’s loyalty and political support for Chiang Kai-shek, as well as his work as a military officer played a role as well. Besides, Germans interested in better Sino-German relations vouched for Gui’s diplomatic skills, and declared him to be “the ablest diplomat the Chinese ever sent to Germany” (Liang, 1978, 163). Gui’s appointment as military attaché to Germany occurred in April 1940, and Gui arrived in Berlin in autumn of the same year. The duties

⁹¹ Belden (1944, 159) refers to the battle against “Doihara along the southern banks of the Yellow River in 1938”. He accompanied Gui Yongqing on the battlefield and later wrote his work *Still Time to Die* in 1944. Gui was the commander of the 27th Corps.

⁹² The translation of the Fuxingshe is based on Frederic Wakeman Jr. (2003, 69).

of Gui (and Qi) included, amongst other matters, the order to observe, investigate and to make “powerful” friends in the German authority (Yang, 2010b, 4).⁹³ During his time in Berlin, Gui established contact with German intelligence agent Kurt Jahnke, and the two men met on a weekly basis and exchanged “views on matters of foreign policy” (Liang, 1978, 164).

The appointment of a follower of Chiang Kai-shek to the post of a military attaché in Berlin aroused suspicion in European capitals. This suspicion was not unreasonable, as military attachés can be involved in espionage and are linked to their country’s secret service (Berridge and James, 2003, 243). The Third Reich also mistrusted foreign military attachés, and had found evidence in May 1941 that showed the intelligence activities of attachés from neutral countries in Berlin.⁹⁴ In addition to espionage, a military attaché may find himself “having to serve different – and sometimes competing – masters” (Berridge and James, 2003, 243). In Gui’s case, one of these masters was Chiang Kai-shek. Moreover, foreign observers in the British embassy in Chongqing suspected that Gui was the leader of a Chinese military mission to Germany. Suspicion further increased due to the fact that Gui did not take the initially agreed route via India and Burma (now Myanmar), but travelled via Hong Kong under an assumed name. British observers explained Gui’s mission as being an attempt by Chongqing China to get a foot into the German camp, and “to provide a sop for Pro-German elements [German-friendly] in [the Chinese] Government”.⁹⁵

As a result, the British Foreign Office requested the US embassy in Berlin to keep an eye on Gui’s actions.⁹⁶ As I will lay out in Chapter Six, Gui’s actions in Berlin do indicate a wider range of orders than those normally expected of a military attaché.

⁹³ Yang put a footnote close to this information, but does not state where his sources are coming from. He refers to Chiang Kai-shek’s reception book information, several different archives and the Human Resources Office of the Presidential House. No exact names or locations are given for these references; see Yang (2010b, 16).

⁹⁴ PA AA R101997, Akten betr. Abwehr + Allgemein (Files regarding Abwehr and General). 21 May 1941, “Rundschreiben an sämtliche Abteilungsleiter, gezeichnet Kramarz” (Writing to all heads of departments).

⁹⁵ TNA, (PRO) WO 208/232, China, Chapter One: Political; Chungking Government’s Relations with Germany, 19 August 1940, Telegram: Special Distribution and War Cabinet.

⁹⁶ TNA, (PRO) WO 208/232, China, Chapter One: Political; Chungking Government’s Relations with Germany, 5 September 1940, telegram to the Marquess of Lothian (Washington) from Chongqing sent via Shanghai.

The break of Sino-German relations in July 1941 dealt a blow to Gui's diplomatic mission, but the General's work was adapted to the situation, and he continued to serve as a communication channel between "Berlin" and Chiang Kai-shek. After Chongqing announced the closure of its embassy in Berlin, almost all of the staff returned to China, with the exception of Gui, who instead stayed in Berne in Switzerland, where he was to spend most of the war years.

During this time, Gui's official position as well as his work becomes questionable, and information is at times conflicting. Some scholars (Chen Yan, 2002b, 182) set Gui's active time as military attaché in Germany and Switzerland from August 1940 until September 1942, after which Gui was appointed military attaché to Britain.⁹⁷ Chen's information is further supported by Swiss archival material. As will be further discussed in more detail in Chapter Six, the Swiss authorities did not welcome the arrival of what they had been told was a new military attaché for Chongqing China.⁹⁸ Contemporary witness Hu Shizhe (Hoo, 1998, 64-65), however, stated that Gui was appointed to the position of Counsellor of the Legation and Charge d'affaires,⁹⁹ which Hu had held himself in late 1941. From this information it can be deduced that Gui's position in Switzerland was relatively high and influential.

German records, in contrast, stated that Gui's work was unknown, indeed it was speculated that he was "*ohne amtlichen Character*" (without official appointment) and served as a private observer for the government in Chongqing.¹⁰⁰ A very vague term, "private observer" may refer to the possibility that Gui worked as an intelligence agent, which would be further backed by the attaché's potential intelligence links, such as the

⁹⁷ Chen Yan (2002b, 182) does not specifically state that Gui lived in Germany, but says that he was temporarily stationed in Switzerland. In his letter to General Alexander von Falkenhausen on 7 August 1941, Gui Yongqing mentioned that the Chinese embassy corps had left Germany on 10 July and arrived in Switzerland on 11 July. Except Gui Yongqing, almost all embassy members continued their journey to China (BArch N/246(Nachlass Falkenhausen, Korrespondenz mit Chinesen und Japanern, sowie wegen ostasiatischer Angelegenheiten/12 (Falkenhausen Documents, Correspondence with Chinese and Japanese). Fiche 89 and 90.

⁹⁸ CH-BAR#E2001D#1000/1553#1271*; contains the dossier on Kwei Yun-Chin, Legationsrat.

⁹⁹ According to Berridge and James (2003, 59 and 174), the title of a "counsellor" is synonymous with that of a "minister", who in the diplomatic service ranks below an ambassador. The term Charge d'Affairs can refer to an interim head of the mission, who takes over in the absence of the ambassador. Similarly, this term can also refer to the "head of a mission which is neither an embassy nor a legation" (Berridge and James, 2003, 36-37).

¹⁰⁰ PA AA, Bern 3604. "An das AA in Berlin, Brief von Köcher aus Gesandtschaft Bern", 24 November 1944.

link to Jahnke and the RSHA. The superior officer of German agent Jahnke, Walter Schellenberg, recalled in his memoirs that the main centres of the Nationalist Chinese intelligence service in Europe were located, amongst other places, in Berne, which was also one of the reported locations of one of Jahnke's main contacts, Vichy in France being the other.¹⁰¹ Other sources, such as the German military attaché in Berne, Iwan von Ilsemann, reported on 27 January 1944 "that all Chinese embassies and consulates were under the control of Gui" (lit. translation).¹⁰²

Towards the end of 1944, Gui was appointed as military attaché to Britain, which met with certain reservation from the British side, which presumed that Gui's political position had been influenced by fascist ideology while he worked in Berlin. Chongqing China denied such developments, and London had no chance to reject the choice of Gui, as a rejection might be perceived negatively by the Chongqing government.¹⁰³

In conclusion, an image emerges of a German-friendly Chinese general, who was completely loyal to Chiang Kai-shek, and who gained experience with Germany and the leading elite of the Third Reich during the early 1930s. In his role as a military attaché Gui was able to move relatively independently from interference by the Chinese embassy, and answered very likely directly to Chiang Kai-shek. Gui had at his disposal connections to the German party intelligence service RSHA and the agent Jahnke, while he was in contact with the Chinese intelligence service.¹⁰⁴ The back-channel intelligence role of Gui, and the use of a public office as cover, took on a wider dimension in Switzerland, due to the fact that Sino-German communication officially

¹⁰¹ IfZ, ED90, Schellenberg, Walter, SS-Gruf. Memoiren 1939-1944, Volume 4, p.629.

¹⁰² BArch, RW/4(Fernost: Japan, China, Indien)/693, (Far East: Japan, China, India). Fiche 0247166. Partial copy of report of German military attaché in Berne, 27 January 1944.

¹⁰³ TNA (PRO) WO 208/ 216, Chinese missions; Coronation delegates and visits to Allied forces in Europe and Asia; 12 July 1944 from M.A. Chungking to the War Office, to D.M.I.

¹⁰⁴ German records mentioning Gui Yongqing tend to randomly romanise his Chinese name. During interrogation by the British secret service, Schellenberg stated that the Chinese general Jahnke was in contact with was named Coue. Coue is a romanised approximation of the surname Gui. For reference see: TNA, (PRO) KV2/755, Jahnke Kurt; Copy of translation of report by Walter Schellenberg, Head of Amt VI of the RSHA, on Herrn Jahnke and his authorities, 23 August 1945.

ceased to exist in July 1941. Gui merged his very likely role as an intelligence agent with clandestine diplomacy, something that Scott (2004, 330-331) identified as a sign of governments (here more likely Chiang Kai-shek) using secret services to conduct foreign policy. The discussion of Gui's actual role in Switzerland proves to be challenging, but will be continued in Chapter Six of this dissertation.

Kurt Jahnke

Jahnke is a rather elusive individual, and information on his movements and career is scarce and scattered throughout different archives. There is no written memoir or set of papers left by Jahnke himself, with all information about him narrated by others who knew or worked with him. Archival material on Jahnke's missions is also rare, as research in the Swiss and German archives highlights. The nature of Jahnke's profession and the secrecy associated with it might be one of the reasons for such scarcity, but also the destruction of major parts of Berlin and surroundings towards the end of WWII contributed to this issue. As a result, researchers are faced with problems whenever they try to create a picture of this man. Several interviews with Jahnke's secretary Carl Marcus, carried out by Liang, have been included in *The Sino-German Connection* (1978). The addition of Jahnke to his 1978 publication earned Liang some criticism, as Presseisen (1980, 170) argued that "such shadowy figures as Kurt Jahnke" should have been excluded from the book. This opinion cannot be shared, as new research carried out for this dissertation suggests that Jahnke played a much more crucial role in Sino-German relations than many scholars had previously anticipated.

In addition to Marcus' interview with Liang, the British National Archive stores the Allied interrogation reports of Marcus and Schellenberg. The latter also published his memoirs in 1956 and these have been translated into English as well (Schellenberg, 1956a, 1956b). The original manuscript of this document is located at the Institute for Contemporary History (IfZ) in Munich. The lack of sources makes Schellenberg's memoirs one of the best sources available on Jahnke. Naturally, these memoirs have

to be read with caution, due to the fact that after the war many former Nazi Party members published their accounts of events, in an aim to whitewash their own participation in the Third Reich machinery, and Schellenberg is no exception to this.¹⁰⁵

There is little known about Jahnke's earlier life, except that he was born in 1889, and worked as a German agent during WWI in the US, where he carried out acts of sabotage. Rumours also pointed to his work as a British-German double agent (Spence, 1996, 92). While in the US, Jahnke made a fortune by shipping tin-covered caskets of dead Chinese citizens to China (Schlie, 2001, 91).¹⁰⁶ After the war he reportedly spent some time in China, where he may have worked as an intelligence instructor (Blancke, 2011, 68). In addition to his work in China, Jahnke made the acquaintance of the Soong Family and Sun Yat-sen (Spence, 1996, 92). Rumours that have been picked up by scholars¹⁰⁷ through the decades even suggest that Jahnke was made an honorary member of Sun's family in some capacity, in order to honour his service to the Chinese (Schellenberg, 1956a, 43). In contrast to the published memoirs, Schellenberg's manuscript stated that Jahnke "was invited by the family of Sun Yat-sen, of which Mrs. Tschiang Kaischek is a part".¹⁰⁸ Whether Jahnke was made a member of the Soong or Sun family is outside our current knowledge, as no record in Chinese supports these claims, and we do not know whether Jahnke was actually given any kind of honorary status. Nonetheless, Jahnke's work in East Asia provided him with an excellent network of contacts, which may have included influential Chinese such as members of the Soong family, in China and in Japan.

In Nazi Germany, Jahnke increasingly became involved in state intelligence, while maintaining a semi-independent position amongst the competing factions of the

¹⁰⁵ On several occasions the Schellenberg memoirs (1956b, 436) point out how many lives Schellenberg apparently saved and how peace loving he was. This however, does not fit with the image given by Gisevius (2009, 36), in which Schellenberg is described as being abusive and sadistic.

¹⁰⁶ Jahnke made a fortune by helping the relatives of deceased Chinese to ship the corpses from the US back to China for the funeral. US authorities did not allow the shipment of corpses for hygienic reasons. Jahnke therefore had the coffins covered with tin, to seal them air-tight. For each body he charged \$1000 (Schellenberg, 1956b, 40).

¹⁰⁷ See for example much recent research by Schlie (2001, 91).

¹⁰⁸ IfZ, ED90, Schellenberg, Walter, SS-Gruf. Memoiren, 1939-1945, Volume 4, p.471.

Nazi government. By mid-1930, Jahnke worked for Hitler's Deputy Rudolf Hess in the so-called *Büro Jahnke* (Jahnke Bureau) (Schellenberg, 1956a, 44). From this bureau, Jahnke distributed information on foreign intelligence to different groups, including the intelligence service, and the German Foreign Office. The bureau successfully stayed above the notorious competition of other government bodies and agencies in this period, and maintained contacts to the Abwehr, and the secret service of the SS (RSHA), and of the Wehrmacht (Schlie, 2001, 92), but was unable to shoulder Hitler's wrath after Hess' flight to Britain in October 1941. On the order of the NSDAP, Jahnke's bureau was closed and he was transferred to Department VI (foreign intelligence) of the RSHA, which made excellent use of Jahnke's East Asian connections to keep open a channel to Chiang Kai-shek.¹⁰⁹

Jahnke's connections to China ran, as far as we know, through several German individuals that had excellent connections to, and had earned the trust of Chiang Kai-shek. There were, for example, General Alexander von Falkenhausen and Walter Stennes.¹¹⁰ Falkenhausen, as well as Stennes, first met Jahnke during the *Ruhrkampf*, a resistance movement against the French occupation of the Ruhr area in the 1920s (Drage, 1982, 89),¹¹¹ and stayed in contact from then on. With the death of Chiang Kai-shek's fourth chief military advisor Hans von Seeckt (1936) and the recall of von Falkenhausen (1938), Stennes turned out to be the closest of Jahnke's agents to Chiang Kai-shek and Chinese Secret Service chief Dai Li (Westad, 2012, 196). According to Kirby (1984, 247), Stennes headed an organisation under the name of

¹⁰⁹ The National Archive in Kew stores the interrogation reports of Schellenberg. Schellenberg stated that this Chinese General "Coue", with whom Jahnke was in touch, had been posted in England at the end of the war, which was exactly the case of Gui (Chen, 2002, 182). For reference see: TNA, (PRO) KV2/755, Jahnke Kurt. Copy of translation of report by Walter Schellenberg, Head of Amt VI of the RSHA, on Herrn Jahnke and his authorities, 23 August 1945.

¹¹⁰ TNA, (PRO) KV2/755, Jahnke Kurt, 22 May 1945, Letter by M.N. Forrest to Captain Walmsley. Schlie (2001, 104) mentions investigations of the Jahnke Bureau, following Hess' flight to Scotland. Schellenberg also recalls that Himmler and Heydrich mentioned such a possibility to Hitler (Schellenberg, 1956a, 202). See also Schellenberg (1956b, 270). Hans von Seeckt and Alexander von Falkenhausen both led the German military mission in China, while Walter Stennes headed Chiang Kai-shek's bodyguards.

¹¹¹ The reference to Jahnke's cooperation with Falkenhausen during the *Ruhrkampf* is in: BArch N/246 (Falkenhausen Nachlass, Ueberarbeitete Fassung der Memoiren, Kap. I-XIV)/48 (Falkenhausen memoirs, Revised Version, Ch. I-XIV), p.129. Drage (1982, 90) states that Stennes and Jahnke went to Bavaria when they realised that the *Ruhrkampf* had no success. In Bavaria the two men met with national forces, which also included Adolf Hitler.

“The Generalissimo’s Air Transport Squadron” and engaged in intelligence that relied only on foreigners.¹¹² For an intelligence man such as Jahnke, this kind of connection would be valuable. Stennes’ importance may have decreased due to the increasingly difficult situation in Chongqing (Tyson Li, 2006, 160) and, foremost, the arrival of Gui in Berlin—a connection that has hitherto hardly been noted or evaluated by any scholar working on Jahnke.¹¹³

The importance Jahnke attached to his Chinese connections was strong, and was rooted in his post-WWI goals for Weimar Germany to improve the country’s international standing. Detailed information about Jahnke’s political proclivities do not exist, but contemporary witnesses explained that he “pursued a two-fold [agenda]: to break up Germany’s encirclement by the Western Powers and Russia, and to fight the Communist world revolution” (Liang, 1978, 117).¹¹⁴ The Nationalist China of Chiang Kai-shek, with her anti-communist position (after 1927) and increasing economic importance emerged as a solution to improve Germany’s international standing (Liang, 1978, 117). Jahnke, who had engineered the 1920s cooperation between the German and the Red Army, also planned a “Eurasian partnership with China” (Liang, 1999, 343), meaning he may have been involved in the successful 1930s Sino-German trade relations.¹¹⁵

From previous publications it is difficult to define whether Jahnke was a loyal Nazi or worked for the German Resistance. Liang’s work (1978, 1999) appears to

¹¹² Kirby (1984, 247) quotes: Drage (1958); Utley (1940, 9) & Liang (1978, 117).

¹¹³ Apart from Liang (1978; 1999).

¹¹⁴ German public perception of the 1920s saw the *Treaty of Versailles* and in particular French behaviour as encircling, and threatening to the country (Layne, 1994, 37).

¹¹⁵ According to sources, Jahnke was also involved in events prior to WWII. Schellenberg states that Jahnke attempted to prevent war with England during what he called the “Polish Crisis”, and planned for a British emissary to be seen by Hitler. The only obstacle to reconciliation between England and Germany was Ribbentrop, who changed Hitler’s mind. This is also reported by Hsi-Huey Liang (1999, 358), who interviewed Jahnke’s secretary Carl Marcus. While Schellenberg is stating the year 1938/1930, Liang points towards 1937. Nonetheless, from both sources (in particular Schellenberg) it becomes clear that Jahnke thought little of Ribbentrop and did not work together with him. Schellenberg reports that Jahnke called Ribbentrop an idiot. (For reference see: TNA, (PRO) KV2/755, Jahnke Kurt, 23 August 1945, Copy of report of translation of Walter Schellenberg. “Polish Crisis” probably refers to the 1938/1938 Danzig Crisis between Germany and Poland. Hsi-Huey Liang (1999, 357) is referring to the year 1937 in a situation very similar to what Schellenberg described.

support the latter theory and portrays Jahnke as a man who wanted the best for his country. On the other hand, other scholars (Doerries, 2003; Schlie, 2001) highlight Jahnke's work for the RSHA, the party intelligence service. I do not attempt in this dissertation to question or answer any of these issues, but will present the actions of Jahnke in his capacity as part of the "Berlin-Chiang Channel", without trying to find out whether he was a Nazi or not. My findings in this dissertation hopefully will therefore contribute to the discussion on Jahnke, and complement the fragmented picture we currently have of this man.

The information provided above shapes our understanding of Jahnke and his intelligence work. We can see that Jahnke pursued a Chinese-friendly agenda from the shadows of his Jahnke Bureau, and linked Germany's future with Chiang Kai-shek's China. As we will see below, the Nazi government's drive towards a Japanese-friendly foreign policy threatened the plans Jahnke harboured for Nationalist China and Germany. During the 1930s and mainly 1940-1941, Jahnke was able to expand his intelligence network to General Gui, and emerged as the main German communication channel to Chiang Kai-shek once the official diplomatic channels ceased to exist. The Nazi leadership was aware of Jahnke's contacts with Chongqing, and used these to uphold Sino-German connections, despite China's allegiance to the Allies.

Berlin: the RSHA and its motives

In the network of wartime Sino-German relations, Jahnke takes a central stage on the German side. His actions were largely controlled by the RSHA, which emerges as an un-official player in German foreign relations. Controlled by SS and Gestapo chief Heinrich Himmler, and SD-Chief Reinhard Heydrich,¹¹⁶ the RSHA was one of several Nazi institutions that competed with each other for Hitler's favour. As is the case in authoritarian regimes, information meant political survival, and the RSHA

¹¹⁶ Heydrich only played a role in clandestine Sino-German relations until his death in Prague on 4 June 1942.

foreign intelligence allowed Himmler and Heydrich to rival von Ribbentrop's information that the German embassies and consulates sent. Hitler himself had created this system of internal competition, but as Shore (2005, 6) states:

By rarely confiding in his [Hitler's] advisers and by pitting each against the other, he [Hitler] produced a constant sense of uncertainty within the regime. Uncertainty grew to a climate of fear as state-sponsored violence and intimidation affected even the leading decision makers. Yet instead of making his advisors more cautious, the frenzied environment fostered greater risk. They tightened their grip on information and advocated more dangerous policies.

In the hierarchy of the RSHA, Jahnke's first person of contact was Walter Schellenberg, the head of Department VI, responsible for foreign intelligence. The two men discussed extensively Sino-German clandestine connections, with the results then being reported by Schellenberg to his superiors Himmler and Heydrich. These two men would decide which information to forward to Adolf Hitler, and which to withhold. After finally reaching Hitler, new orders were likely issued in the same way, though in the opposite direction via Himmler/Heydrich and Schellenberg. Jahnke would then inform Gui, who himself was in contact with Chiang Kai-shek. As I will show in Chapter Six, hardly any German Foreign Office staff (apart from von Ribbentrop) played a role in the "Berlin-Chiang Channel", suggesting that the Third Reich's foreign policy making was as equally dominated by factions as was the case in Chongqing.

Current narratives of and research on intelligence channels controlled by Schellenberg mainly focus on the latter's contact with the chief of the Swiss military secret service, Roger Masson. While Jahnke maintained the channel to Chongqing China open, Schellenberg directly conversed with Masson over Swiss-German relations and Swiss neutrality. Given the much more serious repercussions such a communication line between the RSHA and the Chief of the Swiss military intelligence service would have had, information on these events are more frequently available in the Swiss federal archive, and have been subject to research in the past (e.g. Braunschweig, 1989; 2004). While Swiss authorities observed many espionage attempts on their territory, the Sino-German "Berlin-Chiang Channel" has not found

entry into the records stored at Berne. As I will show below, even the information on members of the “German Resistance-Chiang Channel” are scarce. This can imply a number of developments. On the one hand, the scarcity of material may imply that these channels were not taken seriously by the Swiss authorities. Alternatively, and perhaps more likely, Swiss authorities were largely focused on intelligence operations by the powers involved in Europe, and the China theatre seemed distant from events in Europe. Given that Swiss authorities feared primarily for their country’s neutrality, any actions related to the war in Europe, such as requests by the Axis Powers for transit rights for soldiers through Swiss territory, had a much higher importance.¹¹⁷

Nazi German interest in Chongqing stemmed from German dissatisfaction over the execution of German-Japanese wartime cooperation, a development that surely undermined the position of Japanese-friendly Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop. Increasingly, and despite the public image of a strong bilateral relationship, new scholarship suggests that German-Japanese relations were never as close as the early post-war research suggested (Dobson, 1999, 179). Foreign policy actions and reactions on the German and Japanese side had damaged relations in the run up to the war. From November 1936 until August 1939, the alliance between the Third Reich and Japan seemed stable, but the German-Soviet *Non Aggression Pact* in August 1939 surprised the Japanese government. Nonetheless, faced with an increasingly hostile US and in anticipation of German-Soviet cooperation, a new Soviet-Japanese rapprochement was initiated.¹¹⁸ Previous Japanese complaints over the Soviet Union’s aid to China in form of weapons and military advisors subsided. For a while, it seemed that both anti-communist Germany and Japan considered the option of the Soviet Union to join the *Tripartite Pact*. Stalin indeed showed interest, but was stopped by Hitler, who believed that Soviet amendments to the pact would “curb German appetites”

¹¹⁷ TNA, HW 1/1620, From Chinese Legation Berne to Foreign Office Chungking, 17 April 1943, British administration sent out note on 20 April 1943.

¹¹⁸ Japan indeed looked for ways to “keep the Soviet Union out of the war “(Hasegawa, 2005, 3).

(Slavinsky, 2004, 9). The new German shift towards war with the Soviet Union then ran against Japanese plans, as the new Japanese-Soviet *Neutrality Pact* in April 1941 forbade Japan to enter into war against the Soviet Union with Germany. Moreover, the Japanese leadership did not want to engage in a two-front war in the Pacific and in North Eastern China. German demands for Japanese support therefore remained unanswered.¹¹⁹ This resulted in sections of the Nazi hierarchy turning to China again, in a bid to influence the war. These individuals contacted Chiang Kai-shek without going through the German Foreign Office, and the RSHA faction made sure that the wartime "Berlin-Chiang Channel" remained open.

The "Resistance-Chiang Channel" agents:

Qi Jun

If Gui Yongqing's time in Germany qualified him to serve as military attaché in Berlin, Qi Jun was equally skilled to work there. Along with his two cousins, Qi spent his teenage years with a German family in the province of Brandenburg. He attended school there and spoke German fluently.¹²⁰ In later years he studied in Potsdam and Munich (Kirby, 1984, 309-310, notes to the pages 178-181). Qi's fluency in German enabled him to serve as translator for the same study mission to Germany that Gui had joined in 1937. Throughout the 1930s, Qi then worked in China as a translator for the military mission leader Hans von Seeckt (until 1934) and later as secretary for the National Resource Commission and for Chiang Kai-shek (Kirby, 1984, 309-310).¹²¹ Informed German observers described Qi as a member of a German-friendly group,

¹¹⁹ The very interesting topic of German-Soviet-Japanese relations during the years 1939-1941 cannot be further discussed in this thesis, as it would divert from the intended topic of Sino-German relations. Interested readers are recommended to read Slavinsky (2004).

¹²⁰ Andreas Chi, Interview by Hsi-Huey Liang, Taipei 9 August 1972; and Robert Chi, Interview by Hsi-Huey Liang, Lucerne, 26 July 1973. For more information see Liang, 1978, 5; BArch N383, Nachlass Foerster (Foerster Papers).

¹²¹ At the time of the Kung study mission, Qi had already assumed his position as secretary to Chiang Kai-shek (Kirby, 1984, 238).

without defining this particular group any further.¹²² Apart from this information there is not much else known about Qi. In contrast, information about Gui is widely available in bibliographical dictionaries on Republican Chinese individuals (Xu, 1991, 643).

The break of Sino-German relations in July 1941 saw Qi return to China, from where he was quickly reposted to Berne in Switzerland in January 1942 as Economic Attaché at the Chinese legation (Yang, 2010b, 11).¹²³ The reason for this change will be further explored in Chapter Six. Suffice it to say at this stage that British observers in Chongqing informed the British Foreign Office in London of these events, which in turn identified Qi as a possible “pipe-line” between Chongqing and Berlin.¹²⁴ Despite the fact that British observers correctly anticipated the existence of such a communication pipeline, they erred in regard of the actual agent, which was General Gui Yongqing, who had been overlooked by the Allies. In reality Qi was the main contact for members of the Resistance movement against Hitler, and these members had requested Qi’s presence in Europe to serve as a contact to Chiang Kai-shek. As a result, Chiang indeed sent Qi to Switzerland in order to work together with the German movement (Yang, 2010b, 11).

The Resistance Agents:

While it was certainly the case that Gui, Qi and Jahnke represented the main agents in the complex network of clandestine relations between Nationalist China and Germany, the picture was also complemented (or rather complicated) by the inclusion of a number of Resistance members and sympathisers. There were a number of individuals, such as former Minister of Economic Affairs Hjalmar Schacht and General Georg Thomas, who very likely had backing by the highest movement leaders, to seek

¹²² PA AA Peking 1, 165, Chinesische Botschaft in Berlin 1939-1945 (Chinese embassy in Berlin 1939-1945). 10 November 1940, telegram from German consulate Chongqing to the German Foreign Office in Berlin, in which the personality and background of a new embassy staff member (Guan Doe Mou) is discussed. Qi and Guan belonged to the same German-friendly group.

¹²³ Reference on the appointment as Economic Attaché to Berne see: British Library, IOR, L/ P&S/ 12/ 2293, China, Sino-British Relations File 15, Sep 36-April 46. Government of India, Supply Dept. to Secretary of State for India. Calcutta 20 March 1942.

¹²⁴ British Library, IOR, L/P&S/ 12/ 2293, China, Sino-British Relations File 15, Sep 36-Apr 46. Chongqing to Foreign Office from Sir H. Seymour, 2 April 1942.

contact with Chiang Kai-shek in summer 1941 (Klemperer, 1981, 351/352).¹²⁵ With the break of relations, however, the epicentre of clandestine Sino-Resistance connections shifted to Switzerland, similar to the “Berlin-Chiang Channel”. Here, other individuals took over the role as middlemen and informants, leaving Schacht and Thomas in Berlin. These men were Hans Bernd Gisevius, a Resistance member, and Hans Klein, a former merchant and a long-term sympathiser of China.

Resistance members with China contact

Research on Sino-German relations had already uncovered many of the links between Nationalist China and the Chinese-friendly groups in the German Ministry of Economy and the German army during the 1930s. I will not outline the previous research again, but it is suffice to say that two prominent, Chinese-friendly individuals were the Minister of Economic Affairs Schacht and General Thomas, who maintained Sino-German trade as long as possible. By the time Sino-German relations ended in July 1941, Schacht had long been out of office, and the German administration and army had been following a Japanese-friendly policy. However, this did not stop both men from approaching and talking to Qi over their involvement in the German Resistance. It was certainly true that Schacht and Thomas asked Chiang Kai-shek to appoint Qi as middleman between the Resistance and Chongqing in Switzerland (Yang, 2010b, 8). There Qi was informed of the presence of another German Resistance member by the name of Hans Bernd Gisevius.¹²⁶

One of the few survivors of Hitler’s revenge on the German Resistance movement, Gisevius provided testimony at the Nuremberg Trials which gives us an insight into the Resistance’s involvement with Chongqing China. Chinese archival sources further underscore these links. Initially employed by the Abwehr as an intelligence agent, Gisevius was posted to Switzerland to take up the post as vice

¹²⁵ Klemperer (1981, 351-352) argues that the movement’s leaders Beck and Goerdeler were aware and backed overtures to foreign governments.

¹²⁶ AH, “*Dui Deguo waijiao* (Foreign Relations with Germany (6)”, “*Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu*”, *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-080106-00060-008, Entry Number: 002000001283A, p.48 of Qi Jun’s report.

consul in 1940. During his time at the German consulate-general (in Zurich), Gisevius established contact with foreigners, such as the head of US intelligence in Europe, Allen Welsh Dulles (Hoffmann, 1998, 4, in Gisevius, 2009), and with Gui.¹²⁷ Evidence for these encounters can be found in Taiwan, as Gisevius himself never mentioned meetings with Chinese individuals in his memoirs. The reason for this could be the general post-war focus on the relationship between the German Resistance and the Western Allies, and the perception of Chongqing China having stayed aloof from events in the European theatre.

Apart from Gisevius, there was also another Chinese-friendly individual who lived in Switzerland, and who turned out to be a supporter of Qi's work. Hans Klein is usually known in academia as the HAPRO founder and weapons merchant of 1930s Sino-German relations (see Kirby, 1984; Fox, 1982; Fu, 1981b). The story of his relationship with China, however, usually ends in 1938/1939 when Sino-German relations and trade suffered a heavy decline. In this project, new information on Klein and his role in Sino-German relations emerges, and challenges the hitherto dominant perception of Klein's role as being solely limited to trade and commerce. Instead, an Abwehr report details Klein's meeting with an agent, during which it is revealed that Klein served as host for Qi and as China's honorary consul in Switzerland.¹²⁸ Swiss archival information further elaborates on the role of Klein, his background and connections to staff at the Chinese embassy in Berne.

The Resistance-Chiang network:

What was summarised above was the inner core of the Sino-German network. Next, however, we need to understand how the individuals on the peripheries of the

¹²⁷ AH, "Geguo qingbao (Intelligence reports on various countries) (3)", "Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu", *Guoshiguanfang*, Document Number: 002-080107-00003-001, Entry Number: 002000001306A, p.62.

¹²⁸ BArch R/58(Aussenpolitische Ziele der USA und GB. Insb. Verhaeltnis zur Sowjetunion. Meldungen von V-Leuten ueber Aeusserungen von Staatsangehoerigen dieser Laender und neutraler Staaten und Pressemeldungen)/1123. (Foreign relations objectives of the US and Britain, especially relations to Soviet Union. Information collected by informants on statements of citizens of those states, neutral countries and press).

network also helped to establish and even maintain clandestine Sino-German relations in the late 1930s. Even though these individuals do not play a major role in this dissertation, their existence and actions helped to establish the post-1941 clandestine back channels. Moreover, highlighting the 1930s connections between German and Chinese individuals as well as potential intelligence exchanges, show that the clandestine channels explored in this dissertation did not appear overnight, but were based on substantial foundations laid in the 1930s.

The most important of these peripheral figures was General Alexander von Falkenhausen, a Resistance member who contacted and met Gui during the latter's active time as military attaché in Berlin.¹²⁹ Through Gui, Falkenhausen maintained contact to Chiang Kai-shek, and supported the Generalissimo with military advice, and probably with inside knowledge of war developments in Europe.¹³⁰ Known mainly for his role as the last head of the German military mission, Falkenhausen was called back into active service after the beginning of WWII in Europe, and was appointed Military Governor of Northern France and Belgium. Falkenhausen's active service did not prevent the exchange of communication with leading Chinese, such as Yu Dawei,¹³¹ to whom he wrote as late as 20 September 1941.¹³² Chiang Kai-shek still accepted Falkenhausen's services and military memoranda (Liang, 1978, 140), and had Gui

¹²⁹ Gui and Falkenhausen likely knew each other from the latter's time in China. As commander of the German trained model troops, Gui may have been in contact with the German military mission and Falkenhausen.

¹³⁰ TNA, (PRO) WO 208/232, China, Chapter 1: Political; Chungking Government's Relations with Germany. 4 August 1942, From Chungking to Foreign Office, Sir. H. Seymour. The British Foreign Office on 4 August 1942: "VERY CONFIDENTIAL: Reliable Chinese Source [h]as admitted to member of my staff that General von Falkenhausen is still trying to give the Chinese government 'good advice' through contacts in Berne."

¹³¹ Yu also pursued studies in Germany (ballistics and mathematics), where he stayed until 1926. A few years later he was back in Germany, where he served as liaison commissioner in Berlin during the early 1930s (Boorman, 1967b, 73). When General Hans von Seeckt took up his post as head of the German military mission, Yu Dawei was chosen as appointed director of the ordnance department (until 1944) (Boorman, 1967b, 74).

¹³² BArch, N/246(Nachlass Falkenhausen Korrespondenz mit Chinesen und Japanern sowie wegen ostasiatischer Angelegenheiten)/13, (Falkenhausen documents, correspondence with Chinese and Japanese on East Asian matters), Fiche 40-41. Falkenhausen writes to Yu Dawei on 4 July 1941.

deliver letters to Belgium upon his arrival in Germany.¹³³ In return, Falkenhausen also informed Chiang Kai-shek of his own impressions of the European war.¹³⁴

That Chiang Kai-shek knew of the Resistance and its plans is further underpinned by the fact that he stood up for these men after the end of the war. Together with Schacht, Thomas and other members of the Resistance movement, Falkenhausen was imprisoned after the failed coup of 20 July 1944. At the end of the war, the group was freed by American soldiers, but quickly re-arrested over their involvement in the Third Reich. On receiving news of the arrest of these men, Chiang Kai-shek ordered T.V. Soong (then ambassador to the US) to speak in favour of them in Washington on 15 May 1945.¹³⁵ Moreover, Falkenhausen named Chiang Kai-shek as the first and most important witness to vouch for his membership in the German Resistance.¹³⁶

Prior to the arrival of Gui and Qi in Germany, much of the intelligence exchange passed through two different channels. The first channel was a member of the Chinese Commerce Department in Berlin by the name of Tan Baiyu (also known as Tan Beue), who worked as First Secretary of the Chinese embassy in Berlin in 1937 (Liang, 1978, 119). Information sent to Chiang Kai-shek covered different topics, amongst others the work of Falkenhausen. Other information was of a much more important nature for Chongqing, for example the news of the French surrender to Japanese demands regarding the French colonies in Indochina in summer 1940.¹³⁷ Prior to this, Chongqing

¹³³ Ibid., Fiche 79, Gui Yongqing wrote letters to Falkenhausen, on 28 September 1940. The authors were General Chang Chen, Minister of War Cheng Chen and presumably Chiang Kai-shek.

¹³⁴ AH, “*Dui Ying Fa De Yi guanxi* (Material on relations with Britain, France, Germany and Italy) (6)”, “*Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu*”, *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-090103-00016-187, Entry Number: 002000002105A.

¹³⁵ AH, “*Dui Ying Fa De Yi guanxi* (Material on relations with Britain, France, Germany and Italy) (1)”, “*Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu*”, *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-090103-00011-227, Entry Number: 002000002100A.

¹³⁶ Military Government of Germany, “Fragebogen” in FP-“De-Nazification” Box, quoted in Liang (1978, 172).

¹³⁷ In the summer of 1940 the Japanese government repeatedly pressured the French Vichy Government to stop shipments for China from passing through the Indochinese colonies. With the German occupation of France, the Vichy government had gained control over the colonies. Shipments to China were still allowed because the government was supposedly neutral (Mitter, 2013, 221).

had tried to use the German government to stop Japanese advances in Vietnam, which were threatening some of the life-lines of the Nationalist government.¹³⁸

Tan Baiyu's information was further complemented with intelligence material from a private, non-governmental, source: Lin Qiusheng. Lin was also the first Chinese to establish ties with the German Resistance, on which Qi could build upon in 1940/1941.¹³⁹ A professor and member of the Chinese Supreme National Defence Council, Lin reported directly from Berlin to Chiang Kai-shek from 1936 to 1940 (Liang, 1999, 356).¹⁴⁰ While lecturing at Berlin University, Lin also published the weekly propaganda bulletin *China Post* (Liang, 1999, 356), supported by Falkenhausen, Jahnke, his secretary Marcus and Chiang Kai-shek's son Jiang Weiguo (Liang, 1978, 137).¹⁴¹ This early connection between Jahnke and China was no coincidence, if considering his plans for a Sino-German alliance. Through Falkenhausen and other military officers, Lin gained access to the German Resistance, and informed Chiang Kai-shek about plans and developments.¹⁴² This included, for example, the planned attack of Germany on the Low Countries, four days before the attack took place on 10 May 1940.¹⁴³ While this kind of information would come through the intelligence channel of Gui Yongqing on later occasions, Lin's connections to the German Resistance likely laid the groundwork for cooperation with Qi Jun. The major difference between Qi and Lin was that the first had been officially appointed to Berlin and it was

¹³⁸AH, "Geming wenxian - dui De waijiao (Politics Document on Foreign Relations with Germany)", "Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu", *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-020300-00044-060, Entry Number: 002000000398A.

¹³⁹ Apart from archival material in Taiwan, the only other source on Lin Qiusheng is Liang (1978) who researched Lin's pre-war activities substantially.

¹⁴⁰ See for example: AH, "Yiban ziliao yi chengbiao huiji (General Information) (100)", "Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu", *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-080200-00527-066, Entry Number: 002000001916A. 6 May 1940, Lin reported on the planned attack on the Netherlands and Belgium through the German army, four days before the actual event occurred. Liang (1999) quoted: Interview Lin Tsiu-sen Taipei 1972. *China Yearbook* (1975, 558). In interviews with Lin Qiusheng, Liang (1999, 368) was shown diaries by Lin that contained coded messages he had sent to Sun Fo and Chiang Kai-shek.

¹⁴¹ Liang interviewed Prof. Lin in his home in Taipei in 1972. *China Post* was a news bulletin, which passed on news from China to the German press, which Lin saw as being too anti-Chinese (Liang, 1978, 137). Jiang Weiguo lived in Germany during the later 1930s and received a military education.

¹⁴² Lin's connection to the German Resistance was Captain Heinz (Liang, 1978, 140). In order to prevent the war happening in the first place, intelligence officers from the German secret service Abwehr used to inform the Allies and western European countries of the planned tactics as early as 1938 (Deutsch, 1981, 327), and, for example, urged Neville Chamberlain not to give in to Hitler's plan regarding Czechoslovakia during the Munich Crisis (Hoffmann, 1991, 437).

¹⁴³ See for example: AH, "Yiban ziliao yi chengbiao huiji (General Information) (100)", "Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu", *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-080200-00527-066, Entry Number: 002000001916A. 6 May 1940.

likely known that he had worked with Chiang Kai-shek directly in the past. Hence, Qi may have constituted a much more official connection for the Resistance movement to Chiang Kai-shek than Lin.

Lin stayed in Berlin until July 1941 “still seeking political contacts to the friends of China among the German opposition” (Liang, 1978, 144), before relocating to Berne, Switzerland. Interestingly, Lin claimed that there existed no contact between the Resistance and members of the Chinese embassy and that he was the only contact for Jahnke and Falkenhausen to “transmit political initiatives to Chungking” (Liang, 1978, 141). This statement will be challenged in this dissertation, as I can show that communication did not run through Lin alone.

From the above information we can obtain concise impressions of the early back channel and intelligence contacts between Chiang Kai-shek and the German groups, as well as of the clandestine communications network that Chiang Kai-shek supported. International, as well as domestic Chinese and German, developments did not hinder the continuation of communication through back channels. Nominally at war, the two German sides and Chiang Kai-shek circumvented any communication issues by arranging for back-channel meetings in Switzerland. The Chinese agents were stationed there, with their German counterparts travelling between the Third Reich and Berne. Communications passed along these clandestine lines, and side-lined both the German and the Chinese Foreign Offices, as well as maintained the secrecy that was so crucial for the Resistance and Chiang Kai-shek.

While there is no recorded link between the Resistance movement and the RSHA personnel, archival material show that Gui was aware of the Resistance movement and had been visited by Gisevius several times in 1942.¹⁴⁴ Apart from this

¹⁴⁴ AH, “*Geguo qingbao* (Intelligence reports from various countries) (3)”, “*Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu*”, *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-080107-00003-001, Entry Number: 002000001306A, p.62, p.72, p.79.

intersection, the two communication channels seem to have been left apart, very likely for security reasons.

Chapter Six: Sino-German back channels, 1938-1944

The previous chapter outlined the backgrounds and allegiances of the two German communication back channels with Chiang Kai-shek and the main decision-making bodies. Chapter Six will present the archival information that was gathered in East Asia and Europe in the course of my research. This chapter represents the core of this dissertation and provides the main evidence which supports my argument that Sino-German relations continued beyond July 1941, served as a channel to keep doors open and as a tool to gather intelligence on developments inside Nazi Germany. I have divided the chapter into three sections for the reader and the following paragraphs will provide a brief introduction.

In Chapter Two, I criticised existing research which has sometimes underrated the period after the summer of 1938 and through to the break of relations in summer 1941. I intend to give some additional information that will highlight some of the dynamics that characterised Sino-German foreign relations and policy during that time. I do not intend to repeat already known facts which have been put forward by Fox (1982) or Kirby (1984), but I will present findings made in archives with secondary literature which adds more information to our current knowledge of this period. In particular, I will show that several lines of diplomatic communication ran alongside each other, and that official and clandestine back-channel diplomatic efforts characterised German Foreign Policy in this period. I am hence extending Fox's thesis (1982, 254) on Chinese-friendly and Japanese-friendly forces, and Germany's use of official and unofficial channels to Japan, by adding the possibility of the evolution of clandestine Chinese-friendly Sino-German back channels and continued efforts by a German-friendly Chinese lobby to direct German foreign policy away from Japan. Particular focus will be on clandestine efforts, due to the fact that these evolved into post-1941 back channels. This includes the use of clandestine measures on the Chinese and the Chinese-friendly German side. Interestingly, this period is also characterised by

developments from simple back channels to more complicated, conflict-resolution back channels, in which German individuals served as mediators between Japanese circles and Chongqing.

The second section of this chapter deals with the internal competition in Chongqing over Sino-foreign policy in the years 1940 and 1941, and how this shaped the appointment of Gui and Qi to Berlin. I will lay out the relationship between internal and external events on the standing of a German-friendly lobby in Chongqing, for example the consequences of events such as the three-month Burma Road closure in 1940, the US non-intervention policy, and a new Soviet-Japanese rapprochement. With this background, I will then show that the appointment of Gui and Qi occurred at a time when Chiang Kai-shek had gained greater control over Chinese foreign relations, used special representatives in other nations and also upheld clandestine connections to Japan through agents in East Asia.

Despite his official anti-Axis rhetoric, Chiang Kai-shek did not consider Chongqing China to be at war with Germany (Tyson Li, 2006, 160). The pragmatic foreign policy practiced by circles in Chongqing called for all doors to be kept open, and also ordered the maintenance of connections to Germany. In order to do this and considering the public US/British-friendly stance, Chiang Kai-shek fell back on a modified version of his successful special envoy tactic. In contrast to T.V. Soong, the special informants Gui and Qi were placed among the Chinese embassy staff in Berlin, probably to mask their actual orders. Gui's appointment as military attaché was no coincidence either, as an attaché does not necessarily fall under the ambassador's management, can act more freely, and does not answer to the Foreign Office. My arguments are substantiated with contemporary witness statements, and secondary literature.

In the third section, the largest part of this chapter, I will lay out the post-1941 clandestine meetings between the German and Chinese agents of the two channels, describing the content of communication, as well as providing the most plausible

reasons and objectives that drove Chiang Kai-shek and the two German groups. While the objectives of the German groups are easy to understand, the same cannot be said of the Chinese side. I agree with Boyle (1972, 289) who, in regard to the Sino-Japanese Operation Kiri, and Operation Qian (Ch'ien), stated that it is impossible to determine whether some peace efforts pursued by Chongqing were actually a hoax or genuine. Even forty years after this comment was made, it still holds true for this research. It will be impossible to determine at this stage of research whether the Sino-German clandestine back channel mediation efforts and communication were seriously considered by Chiang. However, it is the intention of this chapter to present to the reader the different stages of diplomacy that Sino-German relations went through, ranging from clandestine channels between the two nations, to the role of the Third Reich as a mediator between Japan and China. As we will discuss in Chapter Seven, some of these back channels do follow the guidelines that have been prominent in current research on BCD, while others tend to raise new questions on diplomacy through back channels.

Moreover, we will be able to clearly see that the years 1941 and 1942 were of great importance to a Chongqing government that was close to collapse in 1940, to her choice of allies and her position in the international conflict. 1940 and 1941 have been described as the “hardest years” for Chongqing China, during which she fought Japan with increasingly less aid coming from the Soviet Union (van de Ven, 2003, 16).¹⁴⁵ Indeed, there was a window of opportunity in spring and summer 1942 for a victory of the Axis Powers (Nowotny, 2012, xiii, in Menzell Meskill, 2012). Despite Nationalist China joining the Allies and gaining support and aid, it would be wrong to dismiss the influence that internal Allied difficulties and the early losses against the Axis Powers had on the pragmatic foreign policy operated by Chiang Kai-shek and his circles.

¹⁴⁵ In hindsight, it can be seen that while 1940/1941 were indeed hard years, the Japanese Ichigo offensive could be described as much more challenging for the Nationalist government. The offensive brought Japanese forces close to the wartime capital Chongqing and China “was in the depths of despair” (Mitter, 2013, 338). Despite the severity of Ichigo in 1944, the serious situation Chongqing China faced between 1940 and 1942 is not to be underestimated.

Internal problems even led Chiang to dismiss the alliance with the Allies as “just [being] empty words” in May 1942 (Mitter, 2013, 260).¹⁴⁶

It will become evident in the subsequent paragraphs that “Berlin” hoped to form a Sino-German alliance that would put pressure on the Soviet Union, and on the other side free hundreds of thousands of Japanese soldiers from the China battlefield. In the eyes and imagination of “Berlin” these objectives would have had the potential to change the course of war. Faced with a rather “unreliable partnership”¹⁴⁷ with Japan herself, in which both sides tend to use each other rather than cooperated, the Third Reich adjusted her East Asian strategy and approached Chongqing China once again (Thorne, 1978, 51). Whether these Nazi German objectives were actually plausible and possible to put into action is not going to be further discussed at this stage of research.

The German Resistance also acted out of self-centred motivation. It planned to oust the Nazi government in order to establish a new government and to initiate peace talks with the Allies. Hopes were high that Chiang Kai-shek’s mediation would help to ease Allied war demands, such as the unconditional surrender, and allow for an “honourable” exit for Germany from the war.¹⁴⁸

Section 1: pre-1941 Sino-German diplomatic objectives and dynamics

The three years between the downgrading of the German embassy in Chongqing to that of a consulate, and the break in official diplomatic relations in July 1941 represents the beginning of a far more ambivalent Sino-German relationship than anticipated by our current level of knowledge. The available material shows the

¹⁴⁶ Mitter (2013, 260) quotes: CKDS, May 1942, cited in Wang, “Xinren de liushi”, 52.

¹⁴⁷ As it is known (Schellenberg, 1956a, 201), Hitler hoped for Japanese support during his attack on the Soviet Union. However, Japan could not afford for this to happen, as a fight with the Soviet Union would have diverted her forces away from South-East Asia. Additionally, Japan and the Soviet Union had signed the Soviet-Japanese *Neutrality Pact*. Article Two of the Soviet-Japanese *Neutrality Pact* did ask for the signatories to remain neutral if their respective partner was attacked by a third country. The full text of the Soviet-Japanese *Neutrality Pact* from 13 April 1941: available at <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/wii/s1.asp>, [accessed on 10 April 2013]. The pact did not allow Japan to join the German attack.

¹⁴⁸ An honourable exit meant, unlike the *Treaty of Versailles*, that Germany would remain intact and that a total defeat would be avoided. Foreign support could have put the Resistance in a position to stop the war earlier than May 1945.

development and evolution of diplomatic communication channels during pre-1941 years. These years were characterised by official German attempts to unify German East Asian trade, without losing the important China trade, while Chinese-friendly forces first public and then “intergovernmental and subdued” voiced their discontent (Kirby, 1984, 235). These individuals then relied on clandestine measures to rectify Sino-German East Asian foreign policy. This further complicated German foreign policy, but also represented a chance for Chinese-friendly Germans to influence the course of German foreign policy in cooperation with Chongqing China. As a consequence, several diplomatic channels ran parallel to each other; some were official diplomatic channels, while others were characterised by clandestine communication that directly targeted Adolf Hitler.

These clandestine back channels also forwarded Japanese proposals for conflict-solution back channel mediation to Chongqing, and actually tried to engage with the two East Asian sides. The Nationalist government, and foremost Chiang Kai-shek, reacted differently to the overtures by the Nazi government and the Chinese-friendly groups, the reaction being deeply influenced by domestic demands and the Chinese need for international support and recognition. The different positions, objectives of the sides in conflict, as well as the mediation environment are also looked at here.

The outbreak of the Sino-Japanese conflict in July 1937 marked the beginning of the end of Germany's neutral foreign policy in East Asia. Increasing pressure exerted by Japan and China for support, as well as inner conflicts over foreign policies, raised the question for how long neutrality could be upheld (Fox, 1982, 248).¹⁴⁹ This question was answered by the Nazi consolidation of power and its control of German foreign policy in February 1938. The appointment of Japanese-friendly von Ribbentrop as Foreign Minister likely caused little joy in Chinese-friendly German circles. The information on pre-1941 relations presented below is an addition to that already

¹⁴⁹ For more information on the struggle for and against German neutrality in East Asia see: Fox (1982, 248-252).

elaborated by previous researchers, which shed significant light on the German side and its internal struggle.¹⁵⁰ I aim to add more specific information on clandestine approaches as well as the Chinese side's measures.

Autumn 1937- Spring 1938

In correspondence with Chiang Kai-shek and German-friendly Chinese circles, attempts were made to use back channels to rectify the new Japanese-friendly route that German East Asian foreign policy was taking. Foremost, Kurt Jahnke likely saw his work to improve Germany's international standing through Sino-German cooperation ruined by German-Japanese rapprochement and the Nazi drive for war.¹⁵¹ As I showed in Chapter Five, Jahnke regarded Nationalist China as the most suitable ally outside Europe and as a tool to circumvent the perceived encirclement of Germany by other European powers and the Soviet Union after WWI. In Jahnke's thinking, China also increasingly took on the role as a pawn to stabilize and pacify German-British relations.¹⁵²

Cooperation with Chiang Kai-shek's China would have meant keeping channels open between the Germans and British (Liang, 1978, 124). Chinese attempts to "solicit German support in the Far Eastern conflict" in autumn 1937 (Liang, 1978, 124) were welcomed by Jahnke, in particular since Hitler's position on East Asian foreign policy up until late October 1937 was "to remain friendly to Japan but not be against China" (Fox, 1982, 258).¹⁵³ Chances for Chinese special envoy Jiang Baili (Chiang Pai-li) to argue for Sino-German relations with the leading Nazi Göring, who could then influence Hitler, were good. Jiang Baili, however, failed to forward a proposal for Sino-German cooperation, which had been planned by Jahnke and others, to win Göring's support,

¹⁵⁰ This struggle was further complicated as the Japanese side used Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop and his access to Hitler to circumvent to German Foreign Office's strong stance on neutrality in East Asia (Fox, 1982, 253).

¹⁵¹ It is very likely that Jahnke was more than aware of Hitler's plans for a European war, something that would have further undermined Jahnke's own project for Germany's recovery.

¹⁵² TNA (PRO) KV2/755, 23 August 1945; Copy of translation of report by Walter Schellenberg, Head of Amt VI of the RSHA, on Herrn Jahnke and his authorities; In this report Schellenberg is mentioned that Jahnke tried to "[at the outbreak of the war]...bring an English Intelligence man to Hitler".

¹⁵³ Fox (1982, 258) quotes: FRUS, 1937, III, 625-26, Gilbert/Washington, Berlin 20 October 1937.

or to gain German assurance of neutrality in the East Asian conflict (Liang, 1978, 125; Kirby, 1984, 239).

In spring 1938, another special envoy mission was being prepared, to be led by Zhu Jiahua. It was planned that Zhu would take up the post of special commissioner, but the rapidly cooling relations between China and Germany prevented this mission (Kirby, 1984, 239). While Berridge and James (2003) do not mention the term special commissioner in their diplomatic dictionary, other references in connection with US diplomacy may give a clue to the rank and powers such a special commissioner might have had.¹⁵⁴ US diplomacy has several examples in which the President appointed special commissioners or personal envoys to a mission, with powers similar to that of the regularly appointed ambassador or minister (Waters, 1956, 126). These commissioners are also termed “executive agents”, and as such they answered to one branch of the government, namely the executive, and had been in use by the US President as late as the 1940s and 1950s (Waters, 1956, 128). An example for such a US personal envoy was Sumner Welles, sent by President Roosevelt to Europe in 1940 to meet with the leaders of France, Britain, Italy and Nazi Germany (Rofe, 2007, 2). Given this frequent use of special commissioners in Western nations such as the US, and the direct control the head of state/ highest decision maker had on diplomatic developments, this approach may have been Chiang Kai-shek’s preferred choice of diplomacy as long as official Sino-German relations still existed and their fostering did not jeopardise China’s foreign policy strategy. The fact that Chiang used to bypass elements of the government and army on a regular basis during the war (see Chang, 2007; Chen Yan, 2002b) supports this theory. As we see in this case, however, the still official special representatives’ missions to Germany were going to turn increasingly clandestine the more the world became polarised.

These episodes of special envoy Chinese foreign policy in this dissertation, and the involvement of Chinese-friendly German groups, indicate a preference for direct

¹⁵⁴ Berridge and James (2003, 126-127) only mention the title “High-Commissioner”, which is a rank given to ambassadors that are appointed by Britain to another Commonwealth Country.

contacts to the main Nazi decision makers that characterised Chiang Kai-shek's foreign policy approach. More indicators for such an approach will be further detailed below.

Moreover, the back channels that would later be resumed in July 1941 are indicated by these events, as we see Jahnke being involved.¹⁵⁵ Jiang Baili's and H.H. Kung's mission to Europe occurred during autumn and summer 1937 respectively, and indicate Chiang's willingness to cooperate with the Third Reich.¹⁵⁶ Germany seemed to have still enjoyed a reputation and role in China, despite the *Anti Comintern Pact* with Japan. Chiang Kai-shek and German-friendly circles found support in Chinese-friendly German individuals, such as Jahnke, Schacht, Thomas and others,¹⁵⁷ and, given Jahnke's own involvement in presenting a Chinese proposal to Göring, it is very likely that Jahnke and Jiang Baili actually met, and that Jahnke corresponded with the Nationalist government over the purpose and content of Jiang Baili's mission.

Interestingly, in this section we can see Jahnke as a member of a Chinese-friendly group, while he would then go on and work for the party intelligence service RSHA. Officially, high-ranking Nazis such as Himmler and Heydrich would be counted as part of the Japanese-friendly clique around Hitler, but behind the scenes political factions in the Nazi German government pursued different foreign policy lines. Other Chinese-friendly individuals became active in the Resistance by 1938. In 1937 however, these individuals still worked within the framework of the Nazi administration and as representatives of the Third Reich.

Efforts by German groups to rectify the Japanese-friendly course of German foreign policy failed, the fault for this failure lay on both sides.¹⁵⁸ Sino-German relations in summer 1938 seemed to be at a low point, especially after Hitler recalled

¹⁵⁵ Other sources (Klein) reported of "old and new friends of China who are maintaining the friendship between both countries with all their power" ("*ci jian yuan you Zhongguo laoyou shenduo xin you yi zhu zhengjia junjin quanli yi weihui liang guo youyi*"), AH, "*Yiban ziliao yi chengbiao huiji* (General material collection) (72)", "*Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu*", *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-080200-00499-134, Entry Number: 002000001888A.

¹⁵⁶For more information on the Kung mission see Kirby (1984, 237-238).

¹⁵⁷ Kirby (1984, 247) named several companies that were involved in Sino-German trade and active China-friendly lobbyists, amongst others the company Otto Wolff.

¹⁵⁸ The Third Reich increasingly obeyed Japanese demands, while the Sino-Soviet *Non Aggression Pact* of August 1937, resulted in more ammunition for the Japan-friendly circles to ruin the Chinese image in Germany.

Ambassador Trautmann and the German military mission. Despite this fulfilment of Japanese demands,¹⁵⁹ the German government was reluctant to fully reject any cooperation with Chongqing China, since the Nationalists under Chiang Kai-shek still held substantial amounts of war-critical resources, such as tungsten. Japanese “rewards” for German fulfilment of the above listed demands, such as a favoured nation status and economic benefits in occupied China, did not make up for the actual economic losses the German industry suffered (Kirby, 1984, 240-241).

Summer 1938

In an attempt to unify Germany’s East Asian trade, Hitler authorised the Minister of Economic Affairs Walter Funk to appoint an official mission (that was still kept secret and with a low profile) to the Nationalist government in Wuhan to negotiate a new barter agreement in May 1938.¹⁶⁰ Chinese sources (Huang and Ma, 1997, 127) acknowledge this mission’s secrecy (calling it *mimi*), and Qi Jun¹⁶¹ further stated that the Woidt mission (named after its leader Hellmut Woidt) actually also came to Chongqing in late summer 1938 (Ratenhof, 1987, 510) to explain Germany’s trade position towards China, and to erase any doubts the Chinese leadership might have (“...*wei shuoming Dezhengfu duiyu Zhong De jingji guanxi zhili chang xiwang xiao Zhongguozhengfu dui De zhi huaiyi*”).¹⁶² “Doubts” may refer to mistrust on the Chinese side toward the German intentions. Woidt succeeded in the negotiation of a new treaty with China on 10 October 1938, and on 29 March 1939 an additional treaty was signed in Chongqing (Leutner, 1998, 257).¹⁶³

¹⁵⁹ Since the signing of the *Anti Comintern Pact* Japan had urged the Third Reich to stop any trade with Chongqing China, and to recall the German military mission, despite the private employment of these officers by Chiang Kai-shek (for more information see: Kirby, 1984, 235).

¹⁶⁰ The leader of the mission, Hellmut Woidt, did not try to revive the *HAPRO Treaty* of 1934, but had orders to direct German trade in China towards Tokyo and to secure business in Manchukuo (Leutner, 1998, 257; for more information also see: Leutner, 1998, 281 (Document 86) and 286 (Document 88)).

¹⁶¹ At this time, Qi worked either as a secretary to the National Resource Commission (NRC) or as Chiang Kai-shek’s secretary. In either case, he was responsible to report messages, on the stage of negotiations between H.H. Kung and Woidt, to Chiang Kai-shek.

¹⁶² AH, “*Yiban ziliao yi chengbiao huiji* (General information collection) (74)”, “*Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu*”, *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-080200-00501-029, Entry Number: 002000001890A.

¹⁶³ Leutner (1998, 257) quotes the data from Eckert (1981, Appendix “Hapro Daten”).

This trade mission may have transmitted to the Nationalist government the message that the Third Reich still considered China a partner, and may have given rise to hopes for a turn towards better Sino-German relations. The signing of the new barter agreement initiated the flow of German arms and machinery to Chongqing China (Kirby, 1984, 246).¹⁶⁴ Indeed, the agreement stated the monthly trade volume between China and Germany to be 7,5 million Reichsmark (Huang and Ma, 1997, 132). In addition, material ordered under the previous barter agreement (*HAPRO Treaty*) would be shipped to China (Kirby, 1984, 246). Any new purchases and outstanding bills were to be paid in raw materials only (Ratenhof, 1987, 510).

Such hopes, as well as internal Chinese demands to resist the Japanese invasion, may have been the reasons for the failure of a back-channel mediation carried out by Chinese-friendly elements of the German government at roughly the same time as the Woidt mission.

According to Taiwanese records, this back-channel mediation attempt was initiated by members of the Japanese financial and economic elite, who understood that Japan's economy was in crisis and who wished to negotiate peace with China in the summer of 1938 (Academia Historica, 2010, 158).¹⁶⁵ They approached the former German Minister of Economic Affairs Hjalmar Schacht to serve as a neutral mediator between the Japanese and Chinese side. The cover for the mediation attempt would be the invitation of Schacht by the director of Japan's Imperial Bank. Schacht agreed and received the German government's approval for the trip, and together with HAPRO merchant Hans Klein engaged in an exchange of letters and telegrams with Chiang Kai-shek (Academia Historica, 2010, 201).¹⁶⁶ The plan envisaged that Schacht would travel to Japan, meet there with the circles that advocated German mediation, and then continue his journey to China, where he would then meet with government officials to

¹⁶⁴ Kirby (1984, 246) quoted: NA, T – 120, ser. 7072, roll 3185, E526385, Wiehl to Hankow, 4 June 1938; interview, Ludwig Werner, 8 August 1977.

¹⁶⁵ The initiators in Japan were likely financial and moderate circles that in the past had repeatedly clashed with the extreme militarists (Mitter, 2013, 68-69).

¹⁶⁶ Following the failure of this mediation attempt at the end of August, Schacht visited Klein at the latter's villa in Meggen, Switzerland. (see: CH-BAR#E4320B#1984/29#652*).

discuss the mediation. Given the difficult political situation in China for any mediation attempt between her and Japan, the plan suggested that Schacht would be officially jointly appointed by the two sides simultaneously, but carry out his work in secrecy (Academia Historica, 2010, 159). Despite several attempts by Klein and Schacht to convince Chiang Kai-shek, the latter rejected the proposal on 31 August 1938, and stated on 22 August 1938 that China “would not welcome anybody who appears to be a friend of Japan”.¹⁶⁷

This mediation attempt originated on the Japanese side, which was split among political lines, with some groups advocating the end of negotiations with Chiang Kai-shek. This last move, however, would close any possibilities to accommodate Chiang Kai-shek (Boyle, 1972, 5). More liberal groups gained influence following the defeat of the Japanese army at Taierzhuang in April 1938. Amongst a number of non-military solutions, cooperation with Wang Jingwei was one, and the Japanese mediation approach of summer 1938 was another one (Boyle, 1972, 141).¹⁶⁸ In particular, a shift in policy of former hard-line Japanese Premier Konoe resulted in increasing support for a non-military solution among members of the financial elite, who were instrumental to approach Germany as a mediator in the first place in 1938 (Boyle, 1972, 139).

Schacht's second trip to China may have been linked to a second mediation attempt that first surfaced in March 1939 in discussions between Chinese Minister of Economic Affairs Weng Wenhao and his German counterpart Walter Funk. In March 1939 Weng approached Funk, and this coincided with Schacht's second attempt to travel to China in the first half of 1939. Officially, Schacht travelled to India as a tourist,

¹⁶⁷ The reference for the last letter rejecting any German mediation from 31 August 1938: Academia Historica (2010, 160). The reference for the 22 August 1938 quote: AH, “*Gezhong jiangyi* (Various kind of Proposals) (4)”, “*Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu*”, *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-080109-00026-003, Entry Number: 002000001346A. Instead Schacht was asked to postpone his trip by a year and to choose a travel route through a third and neutral country. It would be interesting to know at this point if records exist that shed light on the Japanese discussion. However, this lead would extend the frame of my dissertation and cannot be followed here, but could be subject to research in the future.

¹⁶⁸ Boyle (1972, 148-166) offers more information on the shift of Japan's China policy in summer 1938, and amongst others details Ishii Itaro's “Ikensho” report, and Sino-Japanese negotiations in summer 1938. No further information on the involvement of the Third Reich is mentioned at this time, though.

but also journeyed on to Burma (now Myanmar), and hoped to reach China.¹⁶⁹ Unofficially, Schacht, the predecessor of Funk, might have been informed about these proposals and agreed to serve as a mediator between Chiang Kai-shek's China and Japan. This time though, Schacht followed the recommendation he had received a year earlier and travelled via India and Burma (now Myanmar). In Rangoon (now Yangon) in Burma, he met with a Chinese friend "who had visited me [Schacht] before in Berlin... who had been commissioned by his government to talk to me about the situation in China".¹⁷⁰ As a result of this meeting, Schacht wrote a memorandum for Chiang Kai-shek, in which he advised to continue the resistance against Japan, and that China should rely on her vast resources and the US.¹⁷¹ The second time as well, Schacht did not reach China, but was called back by Hitler, who did not allow him to "touch Chinese soil".¹⁷² Apparently, Nazi party members in the German Foreign Office had become suspicious of Schacht, due to the good reception he received in British India.¹⁷³ These events occurred shortly before the German attack on Poland in September 1939. One month later, in October 1939, the initially un-official mediation proposal to the Germany Ministry of the Economy was officially forwarded by the Chinese side to the German Foreign Office, with the information that "Chiang Kai-shek had remained very German-friendly", (Kirby, 1984, 248).¹⁷⁴ This shift to the Japanese-friendly German Foreign Office may have been the result of Schacht's recall to Germany, meaning that the back channel had failed, and only front channels were left available.

These events, the Woidt and the two Schacht missions, indicate the dynamics behind Sino-German relations, and the perceptions that drove and influenced Sino-

¹⁶⁹ Nuremberg Process, Day 114, Morning Session. For reference see: Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal (1947, 223).

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., Day 119, Morning Session, p.544.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., p.545.

¹⁷² Ibid., Day 114, Morning Session, p.223.

¹⁷³ AH, "Gezhong jiangyi (Various kind of proposals) (4)", "Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu", *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-080109-00026-004, Entry Number: 002000001346A. This telegram was sent to Chiang Kai-shek by Hans Klein.

¹⁷⁴ Kirby (1984, 248) quotes: *DGFP*, D, 8, no. 201, memorandum by Knoll, 5 October 1939.

German foreign policy. An important factor for any mediation attempt between Japan and China was the domestic political and public opinion. I also would argue that the official Woitdt trade mission may have given hope to a Sino-German rapprochement, hence undermining the possibilities of the Schacht mission of 1938. The reason for this statement is the fact that the successful early and mid 1930s Sino-German relations had been established by a number of German officials in the Wehrmacht, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Ministry of Defence. Even HAPRO, the company Woitdt represented, was by 1936 property of the Ministry of Defence. Hence, the visit of a HAPRO official, sent by the German Minister of Economic Affairs, would directly connect to earlier forms of Sino-German negotiations.

If Chiang Kai-shek believed that he could build a new Sino-German rapprochement upon trade,¹⁷⁵ German-friendly circles may have calculated that a China-friendly Third Reich would speak up against Japanese actions in China. The mediation attempt therefore would have been useless, or even counterproductive.

The importance of a Sino-Japanese peace for the Chinese-friendly German group becomes clear. It needed at least two rejections by Chiang Kai-shek (on 22 and 31 August 1938) to stop this BCD attempt. Klein in return did all he could to convince Chiang Kai-shek, and praised Schacht as the best possible mediator, as he was known to and trusted by both sides, as well as the fact that he was a friend of China (Academia Historica, 2010, 160). Chiang Kai-shek was also told that Schacht wished to participate in the development of China, something which was welcomed by Chiang. In general we can see that Schacht himself was not rejected; only his appointment (if leaked out) could have caused immense political trouble for Chiang Kai-shek.

When Chongqing Chinese observers realised that Sino-German rapprochement could not be achieved through trade, as the new trade agreement with Woitdt failed to meet expectations, Chongqing decision makers likely approached the Ministry of the Economy in March 1939, which may have resulted in the second attempt by Schacht to

¹⁷⁵ Initial Sino-German relations had also profited from and fostered through trade, see 1920s and early 1930s trade.

travel to China. Ratenhof (1987, 514) also noted for this time a shift in Chongqing, away from the idea of a mediation attempt through Western powers, to one only conducted by the Third Reich, as this signalled a willingness to cooperate with Germany.¹⁷⁶

In terms of exploring aspects of this mediation attempt, we can see that the simplest of all back-channel requirements had been fulfilled: the bypass of official diplomatic channels. In a wider context, it is also clear that many aspects highlighted by the current focus in BCD research on conflict solution also appear in this case, such as secrecy and the use of a mediator. There are differences and possible issues, however that may have hampered mediation efforts: The approach for mediation was one-sided, and did not have the backing of the two leaders on both sides. According to Bercovitch's (1984, in Bercovitch, 2011, 30) and Hiltrop's argumentation (1989 in Bercovitch, 2011, 30) mediation efforts are far more successful when proposed by both sides. In these two mediation cases, however, Japan and Chongqing China proposed one-sided mediation respectively in 1938 and then in 1939. While it seems that the 1938 mediation attempt failed due to reluctance on Chiang Kai-shek's side, which was likely due to domestic politics, the 1939 attempt failed due to changing objectives on the side of the mediator. The influence of factions within the Chongqing government on these mediation attempts is impossible to assess at this stage. However, the 1939 Schacht mission was recalled due to infighting in the German government, suggesting that factionalism played a role in ending this mediation attempt. With the limited information available and the fact that both mediation attempts did not progress beyond the initial stage, it is difficult to say what the demands of both sides would have been, and how these would have influenced any mediation efforts. It can, however, be assumed that demands would have been similar to those during the late 1937 German mediation attempt through Ambassador Trautmann. However, the effect Taierzhuang

¹⁷⁶ Ratenhof (1987, 514) quotes: "Aufzeichnung Weiszaecker", 26 August and 18 September 1939, PA, Bureau StS [Secretary of State]/ Ohne Bezeichnung (China)/1. Liang (1978, 159).

would have had on the demands is not to be dismissed.¹⁷⁷ There was no direct contact between envoys from both sides (to build trust) in a neutral location, something that had been crucial to the Oslo negotiations in 1992/1993. Instead, Schacht was supposed to travel to Japan, speak to the moderate Japanese circles and then travel onward to China, to transmit the proposal. This approach in itself appears flawed, as Schacht seemed to have been given the role of a courier, a description that fitted the role of the German mediator Trautmann in late 1937 (Kirby, 1984, 234).¹⁷⁸

The three cases of Sino-German foreign relations and policy that I presented above (Jiang Baili 1937, Woidt August 1938 and Schacht August 1938) provide an insight into the motivations and hopes that drove all three sides. In an attempt to secure support and condemnation of Japanese attacks after July 1937, a number of countries were approached, including the Third Reich. The initial Chinese approach saw Jiang Baili travel to Germany in autumn 1937, but he failed to secure any help. Here, a China-friendly German group became involved and likely secretly cooperated with Nanjing to turn around German East Asian foreign policy in favour of China. One aim was to stabilize German-British relations, and to prevent the outbreak of war in Europe. At the same time as Jiang Baili's mission, Ambassador Trautmann in Nanjing served as a courier in an effort to mediate between Nanjing and Tokyo. Within a year, it became clear that the Nazi administration's interest in China was focused on the rich resources, and the intention to purchase those for as long as possible. The consolidation of German trade with East Asia in the direction of Tokyo speaks for the possibility that Berlin considered Japan to be the final victor in the Sino-Japanese conflict. The Woidt mission of the years 1938 and early 1939, though, may have raised

¹⁷⁷ For more information on the Trautmann mediation see: Fox (1982).

¹⁷⁸ This approach has been criticised by academics before. In summer 1937, the German ambassador to China, Oskar Trautmann, acted as a mediator in the Sino-Japanese conflict, but was reduced to only delivering the messages between Nanjing and Tokyo. In the course of the mediation attempt Trautmann "became the unwilling tool of the Japanese, who timed their approaches to correspond to battlefield victories" (Kirby, 1984, 234). Further detailed information on the Trautmann mediation can be found in Fox (1982) and Cai and Cheng (1987).

Chinese hopes for better Sino-German relations and contributed to the failure of the Schacht mediation proposal of August 1938.

I argue that this period was as crucial to the establishment of post-1941 clandestine communication channels, as were the links established by the German military mission in early 1390s. Numerous efforts on the Chinese and the German side kept the diplomacy machine running. Evidently, Sino-German diplomatic relations were maintained after September 1939, but increasingly managed and pursued through back channels.

The Aftermath

Over the course of 1939, Sino-German relations experienced a slight improvement, which saw the German Foreign Office open a consulate in Kunming, while the idea of German mediation in the Sino-Japanese conflict re-emerged in March, and was formulated in October 1939. None of these plans ever matured, as they were blocked by von Ribbentrop (Kirby, 1984, 247-248). Von Ribbentrop's rejection of changes to Germany's East Asian policy had an impact on wartime relations, as from then onwards one of the main objectives of the Chinese side and "Berlin" seemed to have been the exclusion of the German Foreign Office from foreign policy, as I will show below.

On the Chinese side, the continuation of relations with the Third Reich was strongly influenced by competing factions. A German-friendly faction (as described earlier in Chapter Five) faced a US-friendly one. Leutner (1998, 45) argues that the decisive struggle over Chinese foreign policy was fought out over the course of the summer and autumn of 1940. Academic circles regard this competition as having been decided in favour of the US/British group, and that relations between Germany and China ended in July 1941.¹⁷⁹ This narrative can partially be agreed with, however, while

¹⁷⁹ This is shown in the end of most research on Sino-German relations at the time of summer 1941.

the US indeed became the focus of Chiang Kai-shek plans, it would be wrong to assume that German-friendly staff and opinions suddenly vanished.

As I hope to show with this research, connections to Nazi Germany were not fully suspended, but continued to exist through clandestine channels, indicating that the state of war did not stop Chinese circles from communicating with Germany.

Section 2: Gui and Qi in Berlin and Chongqing's internal split

The official appointment of Gui Yongqing and Qi Jun to Berlin clearly reflected Chiang Kai-shek's involvement in Nationalist Chinese foreign relations and foreign policy. As outlined by Chen Yan (2002b), the Chinese Military Commission, headed by Chiang Kai-shek, operated its own foreign relations and policy section. While the staff of that organisation may not have been professional diplomats, Chiang Kai-shek preferred them over the Chinese Foreign Office ones. As showed in Chapter Four, Chiang appointed trusted aides or family members to diplomatic missions abroad; one of those was Yang Jie, a military man and non-professional diplomat. Similarly, Gui Yongqing's and Qi Jun's appointment cannot only be seen as part of this non-professional approach to foreign relations, but also as a reflection of both the pragmatism that existed in Chongqing as well as the internal competition over the direction of Chinese foreign policy.

There are several traits that reflect this pragmatic foreign policy approach during the late 1930s and early 1940s. The main trait is the fact that Chongqing China maintained relations with both Nazi Germany and Italy, even after these two had become increasingly close to Japan. As I will demonstrate below, this strategy was proposed by the Chinese Ressource Commission, an organisation with close links to the Military Commission headed by Chiang Kai-shek. Interestingly, connections to Italy and Germany were to be maintained through clandestine activities. Such a pragmatic approach to the Western democracies and the Axis states would allow Chongqing

China to adapt quickly to changes in international relations, without committing to one side (Leutner, 1998, 139-144).¹⁸⁰

Another aspect of pragmatism that emerges is the fact that in the two years before and after the outbreak of war in Europe, the individuals appointed by Chiang Kai-shek as special representatives or on special missions were all non-professional diplomats. However, they all were familiar with the country and government of their host countries. This is indeed the case with men such as T.V. Soong and Gui Yongqing, who had studied in the US and Germany, respectively.

Moreover, both men knew how to work with leading members of the US and the German administration respectively. Gui, for example, used his own background as a military officer to operate in a highly militarised German society and administration. T.V. Soong, on the other hand knew how to move in political circles in Washington and how to project an image of Chongqing China as a strong nation (Kuo, 2009, 220). Amongst others, Soong's lobbying efforts reflected an "aggressive, friendship-building lobbying style" (Kuo, 2009, 228). This approach diverted from the more traditional role of a diplomat, who, according to Hu Shi, should work through cultural engagement (Kuo, 2009, 228).

Interestingly, special representatives such as T.V. Soong, Gui Yongqing, Zhu Jiahua, Sun Fo and others were also closely linked with interest groups surrounding Chiang Kai-shek. These groups not only competed for Chiang Kai-shek's support but also over the direction of Chinese foreign policy. In the following section, I will highlight the existence of a German-friendly Chinese interest group, and show how external and internal developments influenced its standing, the content of its discussion as well as its cooperation with other interest groups.

After the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese war and the outbreak of fighting in Europe two years later, Chongqing China's foreign policy was increasingly

¹⁸⁰ Leutner (1998, 139-144) quotes: "Außenpolitisches Strategiedokument aus der Rohstoffbehörde der chinesischen Regierung"(Foreign Policy Strategy Document from the Resource Commission of the Chinese Government) [Chongqing, October 1940], 2 HACH, 28 Rohstoffbehörde der Nationalregierung, No. 246.

influenced by Chiang Kai-shek, who continued to centralise power in his own hands (Chen Yan, 2002b, 251-252). This trend meant that the Chinese Foreign Office had to compete with an alternative organisation over the course of foreign policy. Political factions outside of the Chinese Foreign Office used their access to Chiang Kai-shek to influence foreign policy making. These groups had a strong nationalism in common and the wish to save China. However, they differed in their political ideology as well as on *how* China would be saved. I do not intend to further look in depth at groups other than the German-friendly one, as this would divert too much attention from the topic. However, wherever necessary I will provide additional information.

There exists no exact description of a clearly defined German-friendly group within the Chongqing administration during WWII, as is the case with US-friendly or Britain-friendly groups (Tien, 1972; Tyson Li, 2006; Taylor, 2009). Instead, it appears that these groups vanished “off the radar” after summer 1940, which is the point at which a number of scholars have declared the competition over foreign policy to have ended (e.g. Leutner, 1998, 45). While the attack on Pearl Harbor and the US entry into the war resulted in Nationalist China’s affiliation with the Allies, this does not imply that a German-friendly group did not play a role prior to December 1941 or lost all significance between 1942 and 1945, however. On the contrary, as part of a pragmatic foreign policy approach this group was over and over again used to maintain communication to Germany; through both front and back channels.

Scholars agree in the fact that returned Chinese students within the Nationalist administration tend to support their former host countries relations in and with China. This is the case for students returning from the US or the Soviet Union.¹⁸¹

Similarly, Chinese students that had returned from Germany maintained positive feelings for their host country, and made up parts of a German-friendly group in Chongqing. According to British observations, Zhu Jiahua was the leader of a German-friendly group, which also included Qi Jun, who became one of the agents

¹⁸¹ Members of the Nationalist Chinese elite that had studied abroad and maintained positive relations to their host country were, amongst others, T.V. Soong, (US), Sun Fo (Soviet Union) and Guo Taiqi (US).

maintaining the clandestine wartime Sino-German communication network.¹⁸² Zhu has been identified by scholars as a core member of the powerful C.C.Clique, one of the main organisations competing over power in China, and associated with Chiang Kai-shek (Tien, 1972, 49).¹⁸³

Zhu's association with the C.C. Clique and Gui's role within the Lixingshe are of interest, as both groups were "notorious" rivals during the 1930s (Wakeman Jr., 2003, 93). The C.C. Clique was lead by Chen Guofu and Chen Lifu, two brothers whose connections to Chiang Kai-shek started in the 1920s (Wakeman Jr., 2003, 90). The Clique itself consisted of several right-wing, anti-communist groups such as the Western Hills group or the Sun Yat-sen Study Society, which merged in June 1927 (Wakeman Jr., 2003, 91). By mid-1930s, the C.C. Clique controlled large parts of the Nationalist administration from the GMD's Organisation Department (Wakeman Jr., 2003, 91), and turned out to be a powerful part of Chiang Kai-shek's political machinery (Tien, 1972, 52).

The Whampoa-Clique was a second source for German-friendly individuals. Recruited from the first five years of graduates of the Whampoa Academy, these military officers were strongly nationalist. A number of these, including Gui Yongqing, worked together with the German military advisors for around ten years from 1927 until 1938.

These two groups had competed for power within the Nationalist administration during the 1930s. It is impossible to say at this stage of research whether the German-friendly members of the Wahmpoa and the C.C. Clique cooperated with each other in the 1940s. Given the lack of evidence, this research will treat the two groups as separate, with each other competing entities and assume that Chiang Kai-shek chose German-friendly individuals for missions in Germany due to their personal skills, and not because of their affiliation to certain interest groups in Chongqing.

¹⁸² British Library, India Office Record (IOR), L/ P&S/ 12/ 2293, China, Sino-British Relations File 15, Sep 36-April 46. Telegram sent from Chongqing to the Government of India, Supply Dept. to Secretary of State for India. Calcutta 20 March 1942.

¹⁸³ Tien (1972, 49) quotes: Hatano Ken'ichi, *Chugoku Kokuminto*, p.461.

British appeasement policies towards Japan prior to September 1939 led to a slight deterioration in Sino-British relations, resulting in internal discussions on the course of foreign policy in Chongqing (Leutner, 1998, 107). While the US started to move away from its isolationist position and acted more supportively towards Nationalist China, early German war successes influenced the foreign policy discussions inside Chongqing. Members of the German-friendly group believed that German war success in Europe had put her in a far more powerful and favourable position to mediate between Chiang Kai-shek's China and Japan. Zhu Jiahua even congratulated the German army on their successes and called for German intervention on China's behalf (Kirby, 1984, 249-250). The Chinese ambassador to Berlin, Chen Jie, in fact approached the German Foreign Office with the hope for improved Sino-German relations (Kirby, 1984, 245).¹⁸⁴ Chen Jie's remarks were greeted with support from German state secretary von Weizsäcker, who agreed that the obstacle of Sino-Soviet relations and German-Soviet rivalry had been removed with the *Non Aggression Pact* (Leutner, 1998, 132).¹⁸⁵ Interestingly, the official mediation approach to the German Foreign Office of October 1939 fell in the same period.

Apart from such direct communication towards Germany, internally the events of mid-1940 led to some surprising cooperation between Soviet- and German-friendly individuals, including Sun Fo. Following the German-Soviet *Non-Aggression Pact* and German war success in Europe during 1940, Sun argued on 2 July 1940 that the European war had shown that Britain was powerless, and that a Nazi German victory was within grasp (Yang, 2010a, 37).¹⁸⁶ Sun's remarks and Zhu's congratulation of Germany reflected an increase in German-friendly rhetoric in Chongqing, which is best summarised in Chiang Kai-shek's comment that almost everybody around him was in

¹⁸⁴ Kirby (1984, 245) quotes: *DGFP*, D, 7, mo.327, 333, memorandum by Weizsäcker, 26 August 1939.

¹⁸⁵ Leutner (1998, 132) printed the following record: "Aufzeichnungen des Staatssekretärs Ernst von Weizsäcker, AA über seine Unterredung mit Botschafter Chen Jie", Berlin, 26 August 1939, ADAP, Serie D, Bd. VII, Doc. 327, p.278.

¹⁸⁶ Sun Fo's quote is found in two diaries: Wang Zizhuang "Riji", Volume 6; Wang Shijie "Riji", Volume 2, quoted in Yang (2010a, 37).

favour of an alliance with Germany in January 1941 (Yang, 2010a, 38). This internal German-friendly and especially Soviet-friendly sentiment of some Chongqing Chinese politicians was also noted by the US ambassador to China Nelson T. Johnson. Ambassador Johnson also mentioned that

“some Chinese leaders...advocate a strengthening of Sino-German ties in the belief that Hitler’s policy will be to urge Japanese expansion in the South Seas at the expense of the democratic powers while he sees to it that China is encouraged to develop along Fascist lines as an independent state” (*FRUS*, 1955, 406-407).¹⁸⁷

This possible development is surprising if we consider that Soviet aid had made up most of Chongqing China’s foreign aid since 1938, and that German support had dwindled to almost nothing. Even if this idea was entertained by a great number of individuals in the German- and Soviet-friendly camps, the same cannot be said about Chiang Kai-shek. In contrast to a great number of Chinese civil servants, such as Zhu Jiahua, Chiang, did not publicly take a very German-friendly stance. However, Zuo Shuangwen (2008, 40) cites Wang Zizhuang’s diary, in which is a statement by Chiang Kai-shek showing a positive and supportive attitude to Germany’s victories in Europe. Chiang Kai-shek is quoted as saying that just as Hitler had to fight for his success in the last few years, China will also have to fight the War of Resistance and for the rebuilding of the country.¹⁸⁸

Even though Chiang did not consider China to be at war with the Third Reich as late as spring 1940 (Tyson Li, 2006, 160), the foreign policy approach to Germany was characterised by “*dui De bu yin bu buli*” (neither be too familiar nor too distant to Germany) (Yang, 2010a, 37-38). While this statement originated from May 1938 when the Third Reich recalled the German military mission for the first time, it still holds value for Sino-German relations after September 1939. Moreover, this approach to Sino-German relations clearly fitted within the overall pragmatic foreign policy approach practised by Chiang Kai-shek and his aides.

¹⁸⁷ Ambassador Johnson sent a telegram from Chongqing to Secretary of State Cordell Hull on 24 July 1940. In this telegram Johnson expressed his opinion on the impact that the war situation in Europe had on Chongqing China.

¹⁸⁸ Wang Zizhuang Diary, Volume 6, 9 July 1940. Published in Taipei *Zongtong Jiang gong sixiang yanlun zongji, zhengli fabiao gaozhong weijian*, Book 17, pp.392-399, quoted in Zuo (2008, 40).

Even though the atmosphere in 1940 and 1941 Chongqing seemed German-friendly, Foreign Minister Guo Taiqi and Chiang Kai-shek maintained their official anti-Axis foreign policy. With the appointment of Guo Taiqi as Foreign Minister in 1941, German observers feared an alignment toward the US, and the US-friendly actions and comments by Guo further contributed to that fear (Leutner, 1998, 159).¹⁸⁹ A US-friendly faction in Chongqing was to be found surrounding Soong May-ling, Chiang Kai-shek's wife and also situated in the Chinese Foreign Office (Leutner, 1998, 159).¹⁹⁰ Repeated calls for a closer alignment with the Anglo-Saxon Powers surfaced as early as September 1939 in the Chinese Foreign Office, as did calls to withdraw the Chinese ambassador from Berlin (Garver, 1988, 91).¹⁹¹

While the Chinese Foreign Office is largely seen as having been a US-friendly organisation, internal documents circulated by the National Resource Commission in October 1940 shed more light on behind-the-scene discussions on the course of Chinese foreign relations.¹⁹² If this paper was indeed written by the National Resource Commission, it came from an organisation that was closely linked with Chiang Kai-shek. Originating from the National Defense Planning Commission, the National Resource Commission emerged in 1938 (Kirby, 1984, 91). The Commission consisted of several branches, of which the foreign one focused on "foreign economic enterprises in China" and was deeply involved in Sino-German trade (Kirby, 1984, 92, 101). Since 1935, the Commission had been under the control of the National Military Council, whose leader was Chiang Kai-shek to whom the National Resource Commission answered directly

¹⁸⁹ Leutner (1998, 158-160) printed the following record: "Lagebericht des Mitarbeiters der deutschen Transozean, Wilhelm Trendel", BArch R901, DBC, No. 1600, Bl. 92-108.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ PA AA, Bestand Peking 1, No. 165, Telegram by Mr Bidder to German Foreign Office on 19 October 1939. Bidder, the German Charge d'Affairs in Chongqing reported on a meeting with General Changchun, who informed him of attempts to recall Ambassador Chen Jie.

¹⁹² The document in question is part of a publication of archival resources by Leutner. According to Leutner, the document has been circulated by the *Chinesische Rohstoffbehoerde*, which would translate to resource commission in English. Leutner (1998, 139-144): "Außenpolitisches Strategiedokument aus der Rohstoffbehörde der chinesischen Regierung"(Foreign Policy Strategy Document from the Resource Commission of the Chinese Government) [Chongqing, October 1940], 2 HACH, 28 Rohstoffbehörde der Nationalregierung, No. 246.

(Kirby, 1984, 92-93, 98).¹⁹³ There is good reason to assume that this specific document was meant for internal circulation, as it outlined Chongqing China's objective to maintain relations with all sides in WWII, despite the obvious conflict that existed between the foreign nations in question.

Within this strategy document, steps for clandestine foreign policy activities were outlined, as well as Chongqing China's approach to the US, Britain and the Axis Powers. Overall, the paper clearly shows that Chongqing China aimed to have as many friends as possible, while having as few enemies as possible (Leutner, 1998, 142). In detail, the paper called for the forstoring of diplomatic relations with the US, based on common objectives, such as the maintenance of the status quo in the Pacific, and a shared goal to fight aggressive countries to defend democratic ones (Leutner, 1998, 142).¹⁹⁴ Chiang Kai-shek shared the hopes for a US entry to the war with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill (Iriye, 1987, 179, in Taylor, 2009, 186). However, Churchill's attempt to regain the British Empire clashed with Chiang's anti-imperialism that touched upon issues such as Hong Kong or Indian independence (Yan and Li, 2008, 267).

However, at the same time, proposals by Chinese politicians to "focus on one line [side of the conflict] were discouraged, as such a move would easily lead to fixed alliances and carried great responsibilities with it. The alternative was an approach that saw the simultaneous approach to the US and the Third Reich (Leutner, 1998, 141-142).¹⁹⁵ Main focus was put on Sino-US relations, however, neither relations with the Third Reich nor Italy were to be neglected. Instead, in the commission's own words: "we have to carry out a *gewundene* [lit. translation: flexible] foreign policy and develop

¹⁹³ The National Military Council "replaced the office of Commander-in-Chief of the Army, Navy and Air Force" (Kirby, 1984, 89). The chairman of this council, Chiang Kai-shek, also acquired wide-ranging civilian powers and gained an additional basis of support (Kirby, 1984, 89).

¹⁹⁴ The document in question was stored in a folder with documents from the *Chinesische Rohstoffbehoerde* (Chinese Resource Commission). "Außenpolitisches Strategiedokument aus der Rohstoffbehörde der chinesischen Regierung"(Foreign Policy Strategy Document from the Resource Commission of the Chinese Government) [Chongqing, October 1940], 2 HACH, 28 Rohstoffbehörde der Nationalregierung, No. 246, printed in Leutner (1998, 139-144).

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., pp.141-142.

secret activities behind the scenes” (Leutner, 1998, 143).¹⁹⁶ Behind-the-scene activities, as mentioned above would have included the appointment of Gui Yongqing and Qi Jun to Germany. The appointment of a trusted aid of Chiang Kai-shek to Berlin, at roughly the same time as T.V. Soong’s appointment to Washington, clearly reflects a “flexible”, or, in other words, a pragmatic foreign policy.

This document circulated three months after China’s National Assembly had called for efforts to improve ties with Germany and Italy (Zuo, 2008, 40). Chiang Kai-shek also surprisingly ordered research into policies on how to improve Sino-German relations in July 1940.¹⁹⁷

From the above presented information it emerges that Chiang Kai-shek in general allowed a foreign policy approach that would allow Nationalist China to foster relations with all sides of the conflict, without leaning too far to one side. However, internal competition over foreign policy intensified with the outbreak of the war in Europe, and especially during the years of the “phony war”, with German-friendly groups gaining a significant amount of influence and publicity. Rumours of German-friendly rhetoric in Chongqing even forced Chiang Kai-shek and Guo Taiqi to publicly re-confirm China’s stance on cooperation with Britain and the US in July 1940 (Zuo, 2008, 40).¹⁹⁸

The existence and influence of a German-friendly group in leading decision making circles in Chongqing was known to Britain and the US as well. Diplomatic staff and private observers informed London and Washington continuously of developments in China’s political circles, with German-friendly developments receiving particular attention. Chiang Kai-shek indeed seems to have been an important factor in British

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., p.143.

¹⁹⁷ AH, “*Shilue gaoben (Manuscript)*”, “*Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu*”, *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-060100-00142-009, Entry Number: 002000000622A; document dates from 9 July 1940.

¹⁹⁸ Guo Taiqi has been identified by academics as a supporter for better Chinese relations with the US and Britain. Subsequently, he pursued an anti-Axis foreign policy. Guo was a US-educated returned student, who joined the GMD and rose up the ranks, so that during the Far Eastern Crisis of 1931, Guo served as ambassador to Britain (Craft, 2001, 198). Guo supported an official Chinese alliance with Britain and France in September 1939 (Garver, 1988, 91).

strategy, and British Ambassador Archibald Clark Kerr stated that it should be Britain's "chiefest of our concerns...should be to hold the confidence of the Generalissimo..." (Thorne, 1978,67-68).¹⁹⁹ Amongst these foreign observers Chiang Kai-shek's and Soong May-ling's former advisor William H. Donald stood out.

According to Donald in 1940, and in accordance with British observations in early 1942, Zhu Jiahua was the centre of German-friendly forces in Chongqing, with great numbers of sympathisers hailing from military circles (Leutner, 1998, 146).²⁰⁰ Other prominent members of the German-friendly camp were Minister of War He Yingqin and General Yu Dawei.²⁰¹ Moreover, Donald argued, Chiang Kai-shek himself leaned towards the Axis powers or had been pushed in this direction by his German-friendly military advisors.²⁰² Donald also noticed that the British had failed to show any kind of commitment to China, despite several offers from the Chinese side (Leutner, 1998, 146).²⁰³ Whether Chiang had indeed been leaning towards the Axis Powers is impossible to determine at this stage. However, it should be remembered that Donald's work with Chiang had ended in mid 1940 with a fight, because the latter did not see Germany as an enemy (Tyson Li, 2006, 160). As a result, Donald's narration of events may not be objective.

¹⁹⁹ Thorne (1978, 67-68) quotes: Clark Kerr to Foreign Secretary, 3 Feb. 1942, FO 800/300. FO 371, F3572/60/10; F11662/145/10.

²⁰⁰ The document published in Leutner's (1998) work is described as having been written by a Walter H. Donald. After careful studying the India Office Records in the British Library, and reading Earl Albert Selle's *Donald of China* (1948), I am certain that "Walter H. Donald" should actually be "William H. Donald". For Leutner's reference (1998, 146) see: TNA (PRO), FO 371/24702, F5084/3281/10; Letter of the Australian finance adviser of Chiang Kai-shek Donald to the British Foreign Office, Berkeley Gage, 30 October 1940.

²⁰¹ In Wilhelm Trendels Transocean report, General Yu Dawei, Minister of War He Yingqing, Zhu Jiahua and others are named as members of a German-friendly lobby. BArch. R901, DBC, No. 1600, Bl/ 92-108, "Lagebericht des Mitarbeiters der deutschen Transocean Wilhelm Trendel (Observation by the staff of German Transocean Wilhelm Trendel)", printed in Leutner (1998,158), 14 August 1941.

Around three years later, German observers included these German-friendly individuals in a list of anti-communist individuals, which also included Minister of Education Chen Lifu (C.C. Clique) and General Dai Li (the head of the Chinese secret service). Chiang Kai-shek was said to be totally identical with the group, and said to uphold the picture of a "moderate" Chiang for political considerations (see: PA AA, R102007, Abwehr Berichte u. Meldungen des KO China (Reports by the Abwehr and the KO China). Telegram from Shanghai to Berlin, on 16 May 1944, sent by Stoller).

²⁰² TNA (PRO) FO 371/24702, Political Far Eastern/ China Files 3150-3357, File 3821, Telegram by Sir A. Clark Kerr, 13 May 1940.

²⁰³ Leutner (1998, 145-147) printed the following record: "Schreiben des australischen Finanzberaters von Chiang Kaishek, Walter H. Donald, an den Sekretär des britischen Foreign Office, Berkely Gage (Writing by Chiang Kai-shek's Australian Finance Advisor Walter H. Donald to the secretary of the British Foreign Office. Berkley Gage), Public Record Office London (PRO), FO 371/24702, F5084/3281/10.

Nonetheless, attempts to influence Chiang Kai-shek towards a German-friendly foreign policy existed, as German journalist and Wehrmacht intelligence agent Wolf Schenke noted (Kirby, 1984, 249). Apparently, German-friendly military forces tried to influence Chiang in favour of Germany when the latter was out of range of “the missionaries”. As a result of this lobbying by military forces, Schenke observed that “weird people, from whom you would not expect it, suddenly show interest in Germany... order came from above” (Leutner, 1998, 135-136).²⁰⁴ The term “missionaries” probably referred to Chinese Christian Nationalists, of which Soong May-ling was one.

At the beginning of this sub-chapter I outlined how external events helped to raise the profile and arguments of German-friendly individuals. At the same time, and perhaps because of the intense focus on Sino-US relations, the US and British reactions to the Sino-Japanese war were perceived as having been too passive. Despite her association with a strong American-friendly stand, Soong May-ling had also voiced disillusion with the Western powers in May 1938 in a letter to a Chinese friend. A copy of this letter was then conveniently published in 1940. An open warning to the foreign powers, the letter stated:

I have expressed the hope that we would tread the democratic path, but I have to mention that while the desire to adhere to the democracies is pretty widespread and substantial at the moment, there is a school of thought developing which is asking with some impatience, but also with some persistence, "What have the governments of the democracies done for us?" (Soong, 1940, 234-235)

According to scholars, such as Leutner (1998, 45), this internal debate over the course of Chinese foreign policy ended in the summer of 1940 and one might assume that German-friendly individuals would have turned into US/British-friendly ones. However, even on 13 February 1942, the contemporary observer R.M. Dougall reported an “anti-

²⁰⁴The Schenke document is printed in Leutner, (1998, 135-136), Letter of the journalists Wolf Schenke and Karl Laverentz, Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro Shanghai (letter was also sent to the German embassy in Shanghai), BArch, R9208, Nr. 3376, bl. 295-296.

British atmosphere in Chungking”, and that Foreign Minister Guo Taiqi “was said to have been dropped from FO [Foreign Office] partly because he committed China to war with Germany...”.²⁰⁵ British ambassador to China Sir Horace Seymour even received information that the slow advance in the Pacific in summer 1942 had led to an increase in anti-British sentiment. At the same time, Seymour also referred to information that Chongqing China rejected British request for armaments, as the US had been unable to deliver enough war-related material to Britain.²⁰⁶ This telegram by Seymour likely refers to the fact that large amounts of US lend-lease material were being stockpiled in India in 1942. It was impossible to transport significant amounts over the Himalayas, as weather conditions and topography only allowed for the transport of 186 tons out of promised 5000 tons monthly, to Chongqing between May and June 1942 (Sherry, 1996, 9). Even in 1943 British observers complained about China not being a “whole-hearted” ally and the situation in China for British subjects as being unsafe.²⁰⁷

Gui and Qi in Berlin: pre-July 1941

As I outlined above, this pragmatic and at times contradictory Chinese foreign policy advocated the maintenance of relations with all sides in the conflict, even though the primary focus was on Sino-US relations and Chongqing China received far more aid from the Soviet Union than she ever had from Germany. As part of this foreign policy approach, special representatives were sent out to the major powers involved in WWII, including the Third Reich.

Due to the fact that Chongqing China officially took a more US/British-friendly position and linked the Axis-powers with Japan, fostering of Sino-German relations required less visible behind-the-scene activities. The strong Japan-friendly position of the German Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop clearly also contributed to the decision to

²⁰⁵ British Library (IOR) M/3/860, Report: “Anti-British Atmosphere in Chungking”.

²⁰⁶ TNA (PRO) WO 208/376A, British prestige in China: notes by Assistant Military Attache, Chungking reports and correspondence; War Cabinet Distribution from China from Chungking to Foreign Office, Sir H. Seymour, 1 August 1942.

²⁰⁷ TNA (PRO) HS 1/165, Far East China: OSS/SEO Co-Operation.

work outside of diplomatic front channels. Chiang Kai-shek personally decided the appointment of Gui and Qi to Berlin (Zuo, 2008, 43), thus allowing Chongqing China to gather information, keep all doors open and be up-to-date on developments in Europe.²⁰⁸

“Diplomatic blunders” by Chinese Ambassador Chen Jie in Berlin and other Chinese embassy staff between 1938 and early 1940 further encouraged the appointment of the two men (Liang, 1978, 162). These blunders may refer to information Liang (1978, 162) provides on negotiations carried out by Chinese Counsellor Tin Wen-yuan with the German Foreign Office, and Chen Jie’s attempt to secure Swedish explorer Sven Hedin for propaganda purposes in March 1940.²⁰⁹ Apparently, Hedin had written a book sympathetic to Chiang Kai-shek in 1939, which, together with the explorer’s good standing with Hitler, was seen as a potential lobbying and propaganda tool (Liang, 1978, 162).²¹⁰

Kirby (1984, 251) describes Gui to be the leader of a delegation that had the orders to foster relations and arrange a German-mediated peace. The possible reason for the choice of an alternative diplomatic channel, the above mentioned “blunders” had contributed to the deterioration of Chinese influence in the Third Reich, at a time when German-friendly Chinese called for better diplomatic relations. In contrast to 1937, when then Chinese ambassador Chen Tianfang had been recalled due to failures in fostering Sino-German relations, Chen Jie and his staff stayed in Berlin. Japanese-friendly newspaper *Shanghai Times*²¹¹ even reported on 6 June 1940, while Gui and Qi were travelling to Europe:

Faced with the difficult choice of supporting the Allies in the European war or seeking friendship with Germany, Chungking diplomatic leaders were

²⁰⁸ Tang Zong (1991, 143), quoted in Zuo Shuangwen (2008, 43).

²⁰⁹ Sven Hedin supported German National Socialism and travelled to Berlin several times, where he met with Adolf Hitler (Demko, 1989, 321). C. P. S. (1953, 253) termed Hedin a Nazi by temperament, and pointed out the latter’s support for both the last German Emperor Wilhelm II in 1914 and Adolf Hitler in 1933.

²¹⁰ Liang (1978, 162) quotes: Sven Hedin, *Ohne Auftrag in Berlin* (Tuebingen and Stuttgart, 1949), pp.83, 97. Sven Hedin, “Zu der japansichen Biographie Chiang Kai-shek’s,” in *Das Neue China*, 6 Jhg. No. 38, March 1940, pp.329-33.

²¹¹ The *Shanghai Times* was reportedly owned by a British individual, but had been supported through “subventions by the Japanese government”, which resulted in the newspaper pursuing a Japanese-friendly line (Wasserstein, 1999, 63).

reported today to be heading gradually toward a rapprochement with Berlin. Despite statesmen in the wartime capital of General Chiang Kai-shek who have urged a pro-democratic front with the Allies and the United States, the desire of Chungking has been growing for a pro-Nazi policy in the light of German successes, it was understood. Mr Chen Chieh [Chen Jie], Ambassador to Berlin, has reportedly been instructed to promote greater Sino-German friendship and is understood to have enlisted the aid of German army officers who were military advisers to Chungking in the past.²¹²

German observers in Chongqing believed that German-friendly circles were gaining influence. Mr. Altenburg, of the German consulate in Shanghai, reported to the German Foreign Office that the European war successes had led to an increasingly German-friendly public and an increase in German-friendly voices in the Chongqing government. Stating that Sino-German relations had never been better in these last two years, Mr. Altenburg further claimed that the Chongqing government and the Collaborationist government in Nanjing were both interested in fostering relations with Germany.²¹³

German observers also claimed that by August 1941, the Soviet Union was no longer seen as a possible bridge to foster Sino-German relations, but as a common enemy. Apparently, German-friendly groups spoke up in support of a German-Soviet war, which would ultimately cut the supply lines to Yan'an, as the Soviet aid would be needed at the European front (Leutner, 1998, 158).²¹⁴ Whether these claims were only wishful thinking by the German side, or actually reflected a strong anti-communist sentiment and planning in certain circles in Chongqing is impossible to determine. The fact is that the Soviet Union had been the most important armament supplier to Chongqing until December 1941. However, it is also known that the German attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941 diverted invaluable resources to the Western Front and away from China. Moreover, the Soviet Union had signed the Soviet-Japanese *Neutrality Pact* in April 1941. Of those two the Soviet-Japanese *Neutrality Pact* had the worst impact on Sino-Soviet relations. Even though Chiang Kai-shek stated on 19 April

²¹² PA AA Peking, 185, Akten der Deutschen Gesandtschaft in Peking, China-Deutschland (Files of the German legation in Peking, "China-Germany"). Shanghai Times, 6 June 1940 "Leaning to the Reich".

²¹³ PA AA Peking, 185, Shanghai, 30 July 1940, Altenburg and AA, Telegramm/ Report "Chinesisches Liebeswerben um Deutschland" (Chinese courtship for Germany).

²¹⁴ Leutner (1998, 158-160) printed to following record: "Lagebericht des Mitarbeiters der deutschen Transocean Wilhelm Trendel (Observation by the staff of German Transocean Wilhelm Trendel)", BArch. R901, DBC, No. 1600, Bl/ 92-108.

that his attitude to the Soviet Union had remained unchanged, relations worsened and by mid-1941 Soviet volunteers were recalled from China and all shipments to Chongqing stopped (Slavinsky, 2004, 58-60).

The increase in German-friendly individuals and calls in Chongqing had repercussions for individuals who had a troubled past with the Nazis, such as (the Jahnke agent) Walter Stennes. Supporters of a German-friendly foreign policy (who anticipated an early win for the Nazis) feared complications over Stennes' presence in Chongqing, while the British and the Soviet Union rejected the presence of a German close to Chiang Kai-shek (Tyson Li, 2006, 160). As a result, Stennes' position as the Generalissimo's head bodyguard became "untenable", and he relocated to Shanghai in early 1940, while still remaining in Chiang Kai-shek's services (Tyson Li, 2006, 160).

Following the arrival of Gui and Qi in Berlin in autumn 1940, it is very likely the set up of back channels to leading Nazis would have followed a similar pattern as Gui's late 1944 appointment as military attaché in London. Shortly after his appointment to London, Gui approached members of the British government and asked if he could be introduced to an influential politician. The reason for this request was to engage in "quite unofficial" conversations with that specific politician on matters of interest for both Chongqing China and Britain. Orders for Gui came directly from Chiang Kai-shek.²¹⁵

I would argue that Gui's work in Berlin until July 1941 puts him in a similar special representative position as T.V. Soong and Yang Jie. Reflecting Chiang Kai-shek's foreign policy approach in targeting directly members of the Nazi German administration, Gui's work included discussions on Sino-German relations. Meetings with leading Nazis included Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring, who had been approached by Chiang Kai-shek's special representatives in the past (i.e. Jiang Baili). From amongst the group of leading Nazis Göring had been identified by Qi Jun in

²¹⁵ TNA (PPRO), WO 208/483, Kwei Yung Chin; Major General J.A. Sinclair to recipient in the British Foreign Office.

summer 1941 as China-friendly, together with the Minister of Economic Affairs Funk.²¹⁶ In the course of two weeks (6 October 1940-15 October 1940) Gui and Göring met at least four times. On several occasions, Göring expressed his sympathy with China and Germany's hopes for a quick reconciliation between China and Japan.²¹⁷ Gui, on the other hand, sought to foster renewed Sino-German relations when he reminded Göring on 15 October 1940, that "my country [China] is a good friend of Germany, while Japan is just an ally".²¹⁸

Communication between Gui and Göring appears to have run through "an aide of Göring" (probably Jahnke), who arranged for clandestine messages to be directly delivered to Göring. Jahnke also arranged for Göring's support for the connection with Gui, against interference by Japanese-friendly Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop (Liang, 1978, 163). In October 1940, Göring had complained to von Ribbentrop about the three-year break in Sino-German relations, and in general had supported a more Chinese-friendly foreign policy. Gui even recommended that if "we had anything important to transmit, we should send it to Göring in written form".²¹⁹ The content of Gui's meetings with Göring were sent to the bureau of the chairman of the Chinese Military Commission, who was Chiang Kai-shek.²²⁰ These reports were written partially by Qi Jun, whose actual role in the pre-July 1941 channel is difficult to establish, but it appears that he functioned as a kind of secretary or report writer, apart from the connection he established with the Resistance.²²¹

²¹⁶ AH, "Dui Deguo wajiao (About German Foreign Relations) (6)", "Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu", *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-080106-00060-008, Entry Number: 002000001283A.

²¹⁷ AH, "Dui Ying Fa De Yi guanxi (Material on foreign relations with Britain, France, Germany and Italy) (6)", "Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu", *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-090103-00016-163, Entry Number: 002000002105A.

²¹⁸ AH, "Dui Ying Fa De Yi guanxi (Material on foreign relations with Britain, France, Germany and Italy) (6)", "Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu", *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-090103-00016-167, Entry Number: 002000002105A.

²¹⁹ Leutner (1998, 145) printed the following record: 2. HACH, 762, Buero des Vorsitzenden der Militärkommission (Bureau of the Chairman of the Military Commission), No. 1662. This writing from Gui (12 October 1940) was addressed to Chiang Kai-shek directly.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ AH, "Dui Ying Fa De Yi guanxi (Material on foreign relations with Britain, France, Germany and Italy) (6)", "Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu", *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-090103-00016-163, Entry Number: 002000002105A.

Even though the meeting between Gui and Göring may have been arranged in the context of military relations, the content of their discussions was clearly foreign policy related, hence it exceeded the framework of Gui's position as military attaché.²²² This episode in Sino-German diplomacy sidelined the German and Chinese Foreign Office, and enabled Chiang Kai-shek to approach the Nazi leaders directly through his envoys, to whom he likely issued personal directives.

Intelligence flows between China and Germany and the end of relations

Throughout this time until July 1941, Chiang Kai-shek's un-official clandestine information channel to the German Resistance, Lin Qiusheng, appears to have worked well, as several reports sent in the time from 1939 until 1940 show. As a result, Chiang was always fully aware of developments and plans in Europe, because Lin received his information from the military members of the German Resistance who, for example, forwarded German attack plans on Belgium and the Netherlands in early May 1940,²²³ or general German attack guidelines for France and Britain on 30 October 1939.²²⁴ This approach by the Resistance was part of a wider strategy to inform the international community of Hitler's plans, in a bid to have the Western democracies stop him (Deutsch, 1981, 328). Approches to foreign governments took place as early as 1938, and in particular Britain was seen as a powerful and influential entity in Europe with the might to derail any of Hitler's war mongering efforts (Hoffmann, 1991, 438).²²⁵ Other approaches were made to the US and the governments of the Belgium and the Netherlands. The inclusion of China may appear odd, especially since China was not a major power involved in 1938 Europe. While communication with China after December 1941 seemed to have been an attempt to contact the Western Allies through

²²² The role of a military attaché focuses more on the military development in the host country and the development of new weapon systems (Cullen, 1985, 67), as well as providing bridges between the two countries' armies.

²²³ AH, "Yiban ziliao yi chengbiao huiji (General information collection) (100)", *Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenu*, *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-080200-00527-066, Entry Number: 002000001916A.

²²⁴ AH "Yiban ziliao yi chengbiao huiji (General information collection) (93)", *Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenu*, *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-080200-00520-062, Entry Number: 002000001909A.

²²⁵ Hoffmann (1991, 438) quotes: DBFP 3,II, (1949), 683-6; Hoffmann, Peter (1977), *The history of the German resistance 1933-1945*, London and Cambridge, Massachusetts.

one of their allies, the situation in 1938/1939 was different. The fact that China did not play a major role in 1938/1939 is clear if compared to the great number of meetings between Resistance representatives and members of the British government compared to those between Lin and his informants (Hoffmann, 1991, 438-445).

The knowledge that Chiang Kai-shek had been informed about Nazi war strategies and attack plans would lead to questions such as what Chiang Kai-shek actually did with this information. Documents exist that highlight the exchange of intelligence between Chiang Kai-shek and other Allies. President Roosevelt had been informed by Chiang Kai-shek on 13 May 1941 about an imminent German attack on the Soviet Union (FRUS, 1956, 186-187). Besides informing Roosevelt, Chiang Kai-shek also forwarded the intelligence he received on Operation Barbarossa to Stalin (Taylor, 2009, 181). The latter, however, did not believe the Chinese information. The source of this information was apparently Walter Stennes, Chiang Kai-shek's chief bodyguard. While Taylor (2009, 181) argues that Stennes had received this information from the Soviet spy Richard Sorge in Shanghai, it is equally possible that the information had come from Kurt Jahnke, as Liang (1978, 164) argues. The close connections between Jahnke and Stennes would also support this theory.

Apart from intelligence discussions, Jahnke discussed Sino-German foreign policy and relations with Gui, and proposed Sino-German military alliances. It seems that Jahnke had not given up on his plan for Sino-German cooperation, and he argued that "...after Germany had first defeated Russia, she would help in China's economic development... and the two countries would next collaborate - against Japan" (Liang, 1978, 164).²²⁶ Gui seemed to have agreed with some of Jahnke's plan, as he advised Chiang Kai-shek on 25 January 1941 that in case China did not wish to engage in an alliance with the US and Britain, she should send a high-ranking official to Germany to

²²⁶ Gui, *Unpublished Memoirs*, quoted in Liang (1978, 164).

hold secret negotiations, and also to uncover Japan's newest plans (Leutner, 1998, 151).²²⁷

From the above outlined passages on Gui's links to leading Nazis and their associates (Jahnke) it is clear that Germany increasingly thought of China in terms of a military alliance. Approaches by Germans with Chinese connections further continued to include Hjalmar Schacht, who contacted the Chongqing Chinese government on 23 May 1941, with a proposal through which Germany would abandon Japan and enter into a rapprochement with China (FRUS, 1956, 975). Chiang Kai-shek declined this proposal and informed the US of it. Whether Germany was serious about this proposal is not important at this point. However, it is clear that the Nazi government was well aware of which individuals it could use to approach Chongqing: the Chinese-friendly Germans.

Qi's report from November 1941, which will be further discussed below, provides an understanding on how the German government and related institutions such as the army were perceived. Chinese caution over the involvement of the German Foreign Office and German Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop becomes clear. This perception sheds light on the choice of contacts in Berlin. Qi included a list of individuals in the German government, army and industry, divided by their affection for either Japan or China. The China-friendly group in this list includes names such as General Thomas, Hjalmar Schacht, a number of German generals and staff at the German Ministry of the Economy. In description about the individuals, Qi Jun very often uses the criteria "(good) friend of Klein".²²⁸ This can be interpreted to mean that Hans Klein's name had a good reputation or that his "friends" are trustworthy. In the foreword to this list, Qi Jun puts the blame for deteriorated Sino-German relations on one man in

²²⁷ Leutner (1998, 151-151) printed the following record: "Telegramm des Militärattachés Gui Yongqing, Berlin, an Chiang Kaishek (Telegram by military attache Gui Yongqing to Chiang Kai-shek)", 2 Hach 762 Bureau of the head of the military commission No. 1662.

²²⁸ AH, "Dui Deguo waijiao (About German Foreign Relations) (6)", "Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu", *Guoshiguanfang*, Document Number: 002-080106-00060-008, Entry Number: 002000001283A.

particular: Joachim von Ribbentrop,²²⁹ who was the German foreign minister from 1938 until May 1945 and known for his Japanese-friendly stand. Qi refers to the time before 1936 (the date of von Ribbentrop's return from a post in England and hence the perceived starting point for the deterioration of Sino-German relations) as a time during which Hitler listened to his ministers Schacht and Blomberg (both known as Chinese-friendly) and Sino-German relations prospered. Moreover, Hitler fostered positive diplomatic relations with the US and Britain as well. However, with the arrival of von Ribbentrop the situation changed, and in cooperation with Japanese Ambassador Oshima,²³⁰ von Ribbentrop allegedly "destroyed" Sino-German relations. Chiang Kai-shek reportedly never trusted von Ribbentrop and became worried over the course of Sino-German relations.²³¹

These clandestine talks in Berlin, as part of a modified special envoy back channel, and as a predecessor of the post-1941 back channels, ended in July 1941. I agree with other scholars that the recognition of the Wang Jingwei Collaborationist government in July 1941 meant the end for official Sino-German diplomacy, in turn also effecting the application of clandestine channels. Liang (1978, 164) proposed a second possible reason for the end of relations. Jahnke's secretary Marcus believed that the clandestine talks between Jahnke and Gui had been leaked to Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop, who, enraged, called for the expulsion of the entire Chinese embassy staff. Liang (1978, 164) speculated that this information was leaked by someone inside the Chinese embassy, in order to discredit Gui and eliminate him as a competitor in foreign policy. If this claim has some credibility, then it suggests that there existed competition between the regular embassy staff, and the Chiang-appointed envoys. Yang Jie's mission to France in 1938 had also generated difficulties between the special representative and China's ambassador to Paris. Embassy staff complained about the appointment of a non-professional military man for such important missions, reflecting

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ BArch, N/246(Falkenhausen Nachlass, Überarbeitete Fassung der Memoiren (Kap. I-XIV)/48, (Falkenhausen documents, revised version Ch. I-XIV) p.202.

a position that was likely shared by other professional diplomatic staff in Chinese embassies around the world (Chen Yan, 2002b, 235-237; Kuo, 2009, 228).²³² Whatever the reason was, by July 1941, the Chinese embassy in Berlin had been vacated, and much of its staff had returned to China via Switzerland, while Gui remained on a post inside the Chinese consulate in Berne.

While Hu stated that Gui was posted to Berne as Charge d'Affairs, Swiss archival material recorded that he was appointed as military attaché to the Chinese consulate. This sudden appointment of Gui as military attaché met with resistance from Swiss authorities, as they had not been informed of this move, and in general objected to the increasing number of military attachés in Berne. Complaints to the Chinese embassy in Berne failed, as the Chinese consulate staff had apparently only been informed of Gui's appointment shortly before the Swiss authorities had been notified.²³³ The diplomatic blunders continued, as the Swiss authorities had not given their approval to military attaché Gui, which is standard procedure every time a military attaché is appointed to a foreign post (Berridge and James, 2003, 243). Not surprisingly, the federal political department in Berne objected to the appointment of Gui, despite him being a close friend of Chiang Kai-shek.²³⁴

Notably, the Swiss authorities were worried by the increasing number of intelligence operations that took place on their territory. As a neutral entity in Europe, and a direct neighbour of the Third Reich, Switzerland had to uphold her neutrality, while controlling foreign secret agents, who might endanger the carefully protected neutrality. As a consequence, the Swiss Federal Council issued a statement to all provincial governments on 27 May 1943, which stated that the increasing number of intelligence operations and diplomatic espionage had reached dangerous levels that

²³² Chen Yan (2002b, 237) quotes: *Gu Weijun Huiyilu*, Volume 4, pp.125-126.

²³³ It appears that Swiss authorities felt deceived by Chongqing China, as they were initially asked to provide visa for transit for the staff of the former Chinese embassy in Berlin. Suddenly, they faced a military attaché who had entered the country without the proper visa. The military department, however, did not agree with the political department's view of events and approved Gui's appointment.

²³⁴ CH-BAR#E2001D#1000/1553#1271*, Dossier: Kwei, Yun-Chin, Legationsrat. "Eidgenössisches Politisches Department, Bern den 15 Juli 1941, an das Eidg. Militärdepartement Bern" (Political Department Berne to the Military Department Berne, 15 July 1941).

endangered Swiss neutrality. Hence, the federal council reminded the provincial governments to have a close and careful eye on any intelligence operations, be these of economic or political nature. If the careful balance was not maintained, Switzerland would be in danger of becoming involved in the conflict.²³⁵

Section 3: Post-July 1941 clandestine diplomatic back channels

The following section of this chapter will be split in two parts, reflecting the split of the clandestine Chiang-Germany communication channels. First, I will present the findings concerning the “Berlin-Chiang Channel”, followed by the “German Resistance-Chiang Channel”. Due to the fact that this chapter contributes a large part to this dissertation, the most important issues raised below will be summarised in a final section, before I continue to analyse the findings presented here in Chapter Seven.

Gui and Jahnke: prospects of a Sino-German alliance?

In the course of 1942, Jahnke and Gui met on several occasions and discussed different options for Sino-German cooperation. The objectives of both sides did not necessarily complement each other, especially since Chongqing China had just entered into an alliance with the Allies. There is not enough evidence to suggest that Chiang considered other options than the US to change the course of the war in East Asia. However, the archival material in this sub-chapter will clearly show that Sino-German communication continued after Pearl Harbor, and should be seen in the wider context of Chiang Kai-shek trying to keep all doors open and the flow of information going.

²³⁵ CH-BAR#E2001E#1972/33#4527*, Dossier Gisevius Hans Bernd, Vizekonsul, Zürich. “Kreisschreiben des Schweizerischen Bundesrates (Entwurf) an sämtliche Kantonsregierungen betreffend den informationsdienst der ausländischen diplomatischen Vertretungen und Konsulate in der Schweiz” (Writing by the Swiss Federal Council to all Canton governments in regard to the intelligence work of foreign diplomatic consulates and embassies in Switzerland), 27 May 1943.

The Third Reich's likely goals, on the other hand, would have been reached with a Sino-Japanese peace deal. Peace in China would have offered two benefits to Germany: one would be renewed access to Chinese raw resources in non-occupied China, which would inject the struggling German armaments industry with much needed ores; the second objective would have had much wider implications, as it concerned the release of several hundred thousand Japanese soldiers from the battlefield in China, which potentially could either attack the Soviet Union or support their fellow soldiers in the Pacific. As will become clear, this idea to free large numbers of Japanese soldiers from the fight in China was a returning theme in RSHA discussions with China in 1942 and in 1944 (Ratenhof, 1987, 532).²³⁶

As a result of the eagerness on the German side for Sino-German cooperation and alliance, the content of Jahnke's and Gui's meetings mainly centred on foreign relations. Academia Historica papers revealed that on 26 January 1942, Jahnke proposed, during a three day and night meeting with Gui, that China and Germany should cooperate, due to the fact that Chongqing China could not rely on either the US or Britain. Jahnke based this proposal on the assumption that the Pacific War would remain a stalemate, with "the USA and Britain unable to launch an attack on Japan for at least two to three years".²³⁷ The German proposal, in the opinion of the RSHA, would allow for the "control of Japan", but also "stop Japan being pinned down", and enable Germany to send aid to China, as well as to put the Third Reich and Chongqing in a position to keep the Soviet Union in check. Moreover, it was proposed for both sides to exchange "useful, but harmless information".²³⁸ "Control of Japan" is the literal translation and could refer to Germany, as an Axis member, being able to exert control over Japanese actions in China. In summary, the RSHA hence offered Chongqing

²³⁶ Ratenhof (1987, 532) quotes: Reichsicherheitshauptamt an OKW-Feldwirtschaftsamt, 8 June and 28 July and 20 September 1944, BA-MA, Wi II C. 5.4.

²³⁷ AH, "*Geguo gingbao* (Intelligence reports from various countries (3))", "*Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu*", *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-080107-00003-001, Entry Number: 002000001306A, p.57.

²³⁸ AH, "*Geguo gingbao* (Intelligence reports on various countries) (3)", "*Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu*", *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-080107-00003-001, Entry Number: 002000001306A. 27 January 1942.

China an option to ease the fighting in East Asia, and supply China with armaments and technology. Knowing that this would be an important decision, which could not be made hastily, Jahnke offered to Gui to return at a later point in February 1942, to allow the General enough time to confer with Chiang Kai-shek.²³⁹

This proposal by the German side came at a time when it was almost impossible that Chiang would have considered it. As Greig and Diehl (2012, 136) noted, mediators initiating a mediation attempt tend to choose the wrong time. In January/February 1942, and despite disappointment over the “Europe first” strategy, Chiang Kai-shek fully supported and welcomed the alliance with the Western Allies. Hence, the fact that Jahnke did not receive a reply from Chongqing, after his return to Berne in late February 1942, is not surprising. Instead Jahnke was forced to return to Germany, with the hope of receiving Chongqing’s approval, therefore confirming that he had the support of Hitler’s inner circle.²⁴⁰

Even though it is highly unlikely that Chiang even considered the RSHA’s proposal, mere communication between Chongqing and Nazi-Germany would have met with consternation from the Allies, on whose armament supplies Chiang Kai-shek depended for victory. Hence, the discovery of this clandestine back channel was out of the question. Gui’s information exchange and discussion with Chiang Kai-shek took place under strict secrecy, precisely because the existence of this back channel had to be hidden from the Allied powers.

Chiang Kai-shek therefore briefed Gui on communication guidelines in March 1942. In order to prevent the disclosure of Jahnke’s existence, Chiang Kai-shek ordered Gui not to use the old code book to encrypt the telegrams. Instead, he was told to cooperate with Qi Jun, who in March 1942 was on his way to Switzerland. In the

²³⁹ AH, “*Geguo jingbao* (Intelligence reports from various countries (3)”, “*Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu*”, *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-080107-00003-001, Entry Number: 002000001306A, p.57.

²⁴⁰ AH, “*Dui Ying Fa De Yi guanxi* (Material on relations with Britain, France, Germany and Italy (5)”, “*Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu*”, *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-090103-00015-001, Entry Number: 002000002104A. Given Jahnke’s work in the RSHA, these cadres are likely Walter Schellenberg, Heinrich Himmler and Reinhard Heydrich.

future, Qi's codes were to be used to encrypt telegrams, and each code would only be valid once.²⁴¹ These safety measures were implemented for a good reason, because Switzerland had become the "centre" of various intelligence services during WWII. Different intelligence organisations (Allies and Axis) spied together, but also against each other in this neutral European state. The British National Archive revealed documents that showed that Chinese transmissions were likely intercepted by the British.²⁴² As a result, Chiang Kai-shek's fear of intelligence leaks in Switzerland (during the transmission of telegrams) as well as in the Allied-friendly quarters of Chongqing was very real. The disclosure of this clandestine back channel would have had serious repercussions for Chongqing China from the Allies.

On the Third Reich's' side, the war in East Asia was important, due to the fact that it had the potential to derail British and US war efforts, in particular if British India was under threat. The content of Gui's and Jahnke's discussions therefore also touched upon German proposals for a Sino-German alliance directed against British India (Liang, 1978, 164).²⁴³ Significantly, Chiang Kai-shek had just visited British India a few months before in February 1942, in a bid to convince Congress leaders Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru to support the British fight against the Third Reich. Chiang's pleas fell on deaf ears, and he failed to gain Gandhi's support (Tyson Li, 2006, 174).

The findings made in Taiwan already highlight the foreign policy content of the "Berlin-Chiang Channel" communication, and can be further substantiated and explored if linked with German sources. Until now, I have presented mainly the Chinese perspective of events. On the side of the RSHA, Walter Schellenberg recalled

²⁴¹ AH, "*Jiao nigao jian – minguo sanshiyi nian sanyue zhi minguo sanshiyi nian liuyue* (Relations Draft-March – July in the Year 31 of the Republic)", "*Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong*", *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-070200-00014-026, Entry Number: 002000000922A. The code Gui is asked to use is actually that of Qi Jun, but it should only be used once.

²⁴² TNA, HW 1/1620, Signals intelligence passed to the Prime Minister, messages and correspondence; on 17 April 1943 the Chinese embassy in Berne informed the Foreign Office in Chongqing that the Third Reich had requested the right to cross through Switzerland, if the Allied forces were to land in either Southern France or Italy in later years.

²⁴³ Dossier, "Gen Kwei Yun Chin," Federal Archive Berne, EPD 1943/45, quoted in Liang (1978), p.164.

the content of the clandestine Sino-German back channel. Jahnke's contacts in Switzerland included Hu Shize, Gui Yongqing's predecessor, who was sent to the US upon Gui's arrival, where he worked together with T.V. Soong (Hoo, 1998, 64-65).²⁴⁴ Gui was very likely the contact Schellenberg (1956b, 302-303) described as being a close acquaintance of Jahnke, and a member of the Chinese Secret Service. This (in the memoirs) unnamed figure apparently reported to Jahnke Chiang Kai-shek's hopes that "pro-Chinese groups" in Germany would be able to influence Hitler to press for a Chinese-Japanese "compromise peace" (Schellenberg, 1956b, 303). One of a few scholars, Ratenhof (1987, 532), pointed out that connections between Chongqing China and the Third Reich increasingly used intelligence channels.

The prospect of a Sino-Japanese peace agreement had been eagerly pursued by the German side, which meant that a Chinese approach for German mediation between China and Japan was met with interest in Nazi circles. According to Schellenberg (1956a, 233), Jahnke was approached by the Chinese Secret Service via Gui and Hu Shize. Contrary to Schellenberg's recollection, Gui was likely the only higher representative who approached Jahnke, due to the fact that Hu Shize had already left Switzerland by September 1941 (Hoo, 1998, 65).

Initially, the plan for German mediation was to announce this proposal to Japan by the Third Reich, by using the influential *Chinadeutschen* (lit. translation: China Germans).²⁴⁵ The Chinese Secret Service was keen to portray the image that this proposal originated with the Third Reich, as this would have minimised any negative backlash had these negotiations ever become public knowledge. In exchange for German mediation, the Chinese Secret Service proposed to enter into cooperation with its German equivalent. Such a move would have been beneficial for the Third Reich, as China had direct access to Whitehall and the Kremlin (Schellenberg, 1956b, 303).

²⁴⁴ For the reference for Jahnke's connection to Hu Shize see: IfZ, ED90, Band 1-7, Schellenberg, Walter. SS-Gruf. Memoiren, 1939-1944; Volume 5, p.629.

²⁴⁵ "Chinadeutschen" may refer to influential merchants that dominated German East Asian trade for a long time. Hans Klein for example was such a person.

Initially, before any negotiations started, the matter was discussed internally between Himmler and Heydrich, who then submitted the proposal to Hitler. Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop was left out due to his anticipated lack of support. Hitler was apparently very interested in this proposal and acknowledged the trustworthiness of Chiang Kai-shek (Schellenberg, 1956a, 234). Himmler was then authorised to follow up the Chinese offer, without involving the German Foreign Office and von Ribbentrop. Negotiations were to take place only between the Chinese and the German Secret Service (Schellenberg, 1956b, 304). Von Ribbentrop still became involved at a later stage, as Hitler apparently informed the Foreign Minister of the talks, despite the agreement with Himmler not to do so (Schellenberg, 1956a, 234). Von Ribbentrop thus became part of the negotiation channel, as he apparently discussed the information Jahnke received in Berne with the Japanese Ambassador Oshima in Berlin (Schellenberg, 1956a, 234).²⁴⁶

The process of diplomacy through back channels in this case involved Jahnke as the individual who travelled between Berlin (where the Japanese embassy was based) and Berne (where Gui Yongqing was based). Negotiations started a few months after the initial proposal was forwarded to Hitler and the Japanese. The Japanese side wished to know details of Chinese demands, which were, as had been the case before, too high and difficult to forward. These demands obviously touched upon territorial issues, for example, Chiang Kai-shek chose as a basis for further negotiations the withdrawal of all Japanese troops, the return of all Chinese ports, and only in some port cities would Japan receive special treatment (Schellenberg, 1956a, 235). These ports could range from a number of places, but would surely include Shanghai, China's financial hub. The demands of the initial Chinese response which were considered too difficult were "toned down,...., considerably" by Jahnke, who had

²⁴⁶ Another narration of these events by Doerries (2003, 95) reads: "The conversations were vigorously pursued for some three months on the basis of a possible mediation by Germany between the two countries which Koursi put forward would be agreeable to the Generalissimo. This information Schellenberg passed to Himmler, but the latter refused to take any action as first he believed that it was a matter for Hitler's personal consideration and secondly he acknowledged that it was a question exclusively within the jurisdiction of Ribbentrop. In the meantime Jahnke had kept in touch with Koursi who was in turn in radio contact with Chiang Kai-Shek."

been granted the right (by the Chinese government) to amend certain points (Schellenberg, 1956b, 305).²⁴⁷ Such a right of amendment is evidence of the trust that the Chinese side (including Chiang Kai-shek) must have placed in Jahnke. On the other hand, he was probably the best representative who could take part in the negotiations, since Gui was unable to travel to Germany, as both countries were nominally enemies. In the course of negotiations, Jahnke, in cooperation with Schellenberg, decided to send an envoy to Chiang Kai-shek in person, as some of the Japanese questions were too delicate to discuss via telegram (Schellenberg, 1956b, 305). The German activity, however, did not bring forth any peace agreement or ceasefire between Chongqing China and Japan, as the Japanese side lost interest in the mediation attempt in September 1942 (Schellenberg, 1956b, 305).

Scholars familiar with other wartime mediation attempts between Chongqing China and Japan may feel reminded of the events surrounding attempts such as Operation Kiri or Operation Qian (Ch'ien). As mentioned beforehand it is impossible to verify whether this mediation was indeed honestly considered or merely an attempt to stall Japanese advances. Considering that other direct mediation attempts between Chiang Kai-shek and Japan had been used to undermine the position of the Wang Jingwei Collaborationist government in Nanjing, it is likely that this specific attempt using Nazi Germany did not carry any significance for China's relationship with the Allies.²⁴⁸ Moreover, given that Chiang Kai-shek's demands on Japan in this mediation attempt would have been unacceptable to the Japanese, we might speculate that this channel never had a chance to actually succeed. The Schellenberg memoirs do not provide any indication on whether or not the Chinese proposal was genuine. However, from the activities of the German side, it appears that the proposal was at least perceived as being genuine.

²⁴⁷ IfZ, ED90, "Schellenberg, Walter SS-Gruf. Memoiren 1939-1944", Volume 4, p.630.

²⁴⁸ Indeed, Wang Jingwei's Collaborationist government suffered under the continuous involvement of Chongqing. For example, the official announcement of the government had been postponed several times, because Japan preferred to pursue peace with Chiang Kai-shek (Boyle, 1972, 301).

This new clandestine back channel matches many of the descriptions applied by Wanis-St. John (2006) and Ó Dorchtaigh (2011), such as two states in conflict, with a mediator approved by both sides. In contrast to the Oslo negotiations, however, Japanese and Chinese individuals did not meet, but had Jahnke travel between Berlin and neutral Berne to deliver information. Furthermore, the mediator (the Third Reich) can hardly be called neutral, due to the fact that she and Japan were nominally at war with Chongqing China. Considering Bercovitch's theory that the approach by the parties and the context of the mediation are, amongst other factors, important for the success of any mediation attempt, it is evident that this specific mediation attempt between China and Japan had a high chance of failure (Bercovitch, 2011, 7-8). The territorial nature of the Sino-Japanese conflict played a major role in hampering this mediation effort, as the demands of Chiang Kai-shek all touched upon territorial questions. The lack of neutrality would have been an important issue in BCD theory, but has been identified as less important as long as the mediator is able "to influence, protect or extend the interests of each party in conflict" (Bercovitch and Houston, 2011, 45).²⁴⁹ However, the lack of direct meetings between the agents and the possibility that the mediation proposal was not genuine would have undermined any mediation efforts. The effect of infighting on either side of the conflict is impossible to assess at this stage, as the archival material does not provide information on that. The nature of this special back channel and possible questions that it raises will be further discussed and analysed in Chapter Seven.

The implications of this failed mediation attempt had a far greater impact on the German side than on the Chinese one. Nazi-German plans to influence the cause of war and derail Allied war efforts in the Pacific or Siberia failed, and "Berlin" failed to gain access to strategic resources in China. If it is considered that Chiang Kai-shek was unlikely to agree to a German mediated peace and give up his alliance with US, then there were no negative implications for Chongqing China as a result of this failed

²⁴⁹ Bercovitch and Houston (2011, 45), quote: Faure (1989); Kressel and Pruitt, 1985; Smith, 1985; Touval, 1985; Touval and Zartman, 1985.

mediation attempt. Rather, Chongqing succeeded in keeping all channels open and interest in China alive. Interestingly, however, the existence of these mediation attempts as well as the communication channels with Germany were kept secret.

The back channel between “Berlin”, Chiang Kai-shek and Japan is only one example of the extensive use of clandestine mediation attempts by all three sides. The experience with Operation Kiri and other peace negotiation attempts between Chongqing and Japan may have undermined any mediation attempts by the German side. Despite being approached by “Berlin”, Japan did not appear to take these mediation attempts very seriously, but showed more enthusiasm for their own mediation attempt between the Soviet Union and the Third Reich, which took place at roughly the same time as the Sino-Japanese mediation between March and September 1942. Japan initiated these talks, since she feared that the Soviet war machine would sooner or later be able to stop the German advancement, and drive the Wehrmacht westwards (Schellenberg, 1956b, 299/300). Rumours intercepted by the British intelligence service shed more light on this topic. The negotiations brokered by Japan would have seen the Third Reich and the Soviet Union divide and respect their respective spheres of influence. In the case of the Third Reich, the Soviet Union was meant to accept the German exploitation of Ukraine, while the Soviet Union’s power in Asia and Iran was secured.²⁵⁰

A mediated peace with the Soviet Union, however, did not gain Hitler’s support, in particular after von Ribbentrop learned of this, and similar initiatives, through a Japanese approach to the Third Reich via the German Naval Attaché in Tokyo, and succeeded in convincing Hitler not to go ahead (Schellenberg, 1956b, 301). The

²⁵⁰ TNA, HW 12/277, intelligence report No. 105643 from 12 June 1942. The Turkish minister in Lisbon informed the Turkish ambassador in Rome of these events.

existence of this Japanese initiative likely resulted in the slow start of the German mediation via the “Berlin-Chiang Channel”.²⁵¹

Evidently, German Nazi groups attached importance to the clandestine Chinese communication channel, and Jahnke continued to meet with Gui in October 1942, even after the above mentioned BCD attempt failed. Gestapo chief Himmler and Reichsmarschall Göring had been ordered by Hitler to take up the discussion of post-war Sino-German cooperation, likely in the belief that Nazi Germany was still going to win the war. In order to facilitate these plans, the “German government prepared to obtain official relations with the Chinese one [Chongqing]” and asked for “both sides to secretly appoint official envoys”.²⁵²

The information flowing through the channel from Gui to Chiang Kai-shek did not only contain German proposals for cooperation, but also facts on developments inside Germany and the war. For example, Jahnke seemed to have had more private conversations with Gui, during which Jahnke asked for the latter’s opinion on Germany and her military strategy (March 1943). In the same discussion, Jahnke also complained that it was becoming increasingly difficult to settle a peace agreement. He further informed Gui, and subsequently Chiang Kai-shek, about internal frictions and the plans of single Nazis to topple Hitler and to seek a compromise with the Soviet Union.²⁵³ Jahnke’s close ties with the RSHA and Schellenberg put him close to a circle of Nazis that “had been looking to desert the severely listing Nazi ship of state for some time already” (Hassel, MacRae and Ameskamp, 2006, 196), and, in Gui’s words, that worked toward the establishment of a military government in Germany.²⁵⁴ The

²⁵¹ Despite the Japanese hesitation to use the “Berlin-Chiang Channel” for mediation, German intelligence reported that Japan attempted to form an “Asian Block” in August 1943. This block would include the Soviet Union and China; and also included the termination of Axis treaties. For reference see: TNA (PRO) GFM 33/2726, German Foreign Office Files, Serial 6524 (E487437-E487444); “Von Der Chef der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD, Berlin, 12 August 1943, An das Auswärtige Amt, z. Hd. Herrn Leg. Rat Wagner” (From the Chief of Security Police and the SD, 12 August 1943, to the Foreign Office, to the hand of Mr Legate Wagner). The Swiss entrepreneur informed the SD-agent of Japan’s intentions.

²⁵² AH, “*Geguo qingbao* (Intelligence reports on various countries) (3)”, *Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu*, *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-080107-00003-001, Entry Number: 002000001306A, p.63, Gui Yongqing to Chiang Kai-shek, Berne, 22 October 1942.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.77.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p.78. There exists speculation that Schellenberg attempted to convince Himmler to seek a peace deal with the Allies, in particular in 1944 (Wistrich, 1995, 222).

existence of these peace feelers had been known to the Western Allies, and mediation took place, for example, through the Swedish Count Bernadotte. However, research on Himmler's peace feelers has so far failed to highlight that Chongqing China was as much aware of these peace efforts as was the US and Britain.

Himmler and his associates, amongst others Schellenberg, tried to seek a separate peace arrangement with the Allies, and would secretly approach Britain after the establishment of a new German government, according to Jahnke in March 1943.²⁵⁵ In the international community rumours of such peace feelers between Britain and German groups already existed, and caused discomfort in Japan. Even though these rumours were regarded as enemy propaganda, they were not rejected outright. Hence Foreign Minister Togo ordered the Japanese ambassador to Berlin to inform him immediately of any information on this matter.²⁵⁶ The ambassador indeed investigated the rumours and reported back that "...it is beginning clearly to look at first sight as if high quarters are involved [sic.]", however, the approval of the German government in this matter was not known; rather, the ambassador speculated that a faction inside the Third Reich independently pursued this matter.²⁵⁷

With a German defeat increasingly obvious by 1944, the maintenance of the "Berlin-Chiang Channel" was not important anymore. Gui Yongqing's appointment as military attaché to Britain in late 1944 speaks of the end of this communication channel. Any information coming from "Berlin" would not have had any importance, especially since the Allies were about to win the war. Jahnke's attempts to influence the war did not stop here; he attempted to arrange for peace talks with the Allies in 1944 by sending his secretary Carl Marcus across enemy lines in France.

The diminishing "star" of his mentor naturally had an influence on Marcus, who was not able to avoid military service anymore (Schlie, 2001, 106). Marcus defected to

²⁵⁵ AH, "*Geguo qingbao* (Intelligence reports on various countries (3))", "*Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu*", *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-080107-00003-001, Entry Number: 002000001306A, p.77.

²⁵⁶ TNA HW 12/277, intelligence document no. 105506.

²⁵⁷ TNA HW 12/277, intelligence report No. 105588. 11 June 1942, Foreign Office Tokyo to Japanese ambassador in Berlin.

the Allies at the Western Front; but Schlie (2001, 107) argues that he merely used the name of Jahnke and a peace proposal to gain access to the Allies. Marcus was captured by French soldiers and kept in Paris. In Paris on 12 December 1944, Marcus received surprising support from Gui Yongqing, who informed the British Secret Service of Marcus's captivity in Paris.²⁵⁸ Gui interpreted Marcus' mission as very important, and, as archival material reveals, only delivered the news of Marcus' captivity to leading members of the British Secret Service.²⁵⁹ In a telegram to Chiang Kai-shek, Gui informed the Generalissimo of the events and confirmed that Marcus was sent by Jahnke.²⁶⁰ As a reason for his mission, Marcus stated that he wanted the Allies to know about the real situation inside the Third Reich and that Jahnke wanted to get into contact with so-called "Vansittart Bureau".²⁶¹ Jahnke's goal was to "find a way whereby the war could end more quickly so that they could build up a government in Germany which would bring Germany back into the concert of all the powers in Europe".²⁶² Contact was not established, one reason being the Allies' doubts regarding Marcus's story and credibility. At this point the communication between "Berlin" and Chiang Kai-shek appears to have ended, since neither could be of any further use to the other.

On the last few pages above, I outlined the findings on the "Berlin-Chiang Channel" from the Academia Historica archives and the German sources. Certain facts can be established that are new to our understanding of Sino-German relations. Diplomatic communication between Chongqing China and the Third Reich did not end

²⁵⁸ TNA (PRO) KV2/755, 27 January 1945; It is reported that Marcus was not allowed by the French to contact the British. Only with the help of Gui was he able to do so.

²⁵⁹ TNA (PRO) WO 208/483, Kwei Yung Chin; 11 December 1944, From Military Attache Berne to M.I. 3.

²⁶⁰ AH "Dui Ying Fa De Yi guanxi (Material on foreign relations with Britain, France, Germany and Italy) (6)", "Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu", *Guoshiguan Cang*, Document Number: 002-090103-00016-192, Entry Number: 002000002105A.

²⁶¹ TNA (PRO) KV2/755, 30 December 1944; Marcus is giving information on Jahnke while in French captivity. The "Vansittart Bureau" refers to Robert Vansittart, who shaped British foreign policy during the 1930s as Permanent Undersecretary of State (Ferris, 2005, 45). Upon his appointment as Permanent Undersecretary of State, Vansittart "oversaw all of Britain's official sources of overseas intelligence and directed all of its secret ones" (Ferris, 2005, 48).

²⁶² TNA (PRO) KV2/755, 30 December 1944; Marcus is giving information on Jahnke while in French captivity.

in July 1941, but both sides were motivated by different objectives to communicate with each other. Chinese circles, such as the Chinese Secret Service and Chiang Kai-shek maintained open a line of communication to “Berlin” through which, on the one hand, they could keep interest in Chongqing China alive and gather intelligence. Interestingly, this connection still existed at a time when Chongqing China was already allied with the Western Allies. If we consider the pragmatic nature of Chiang Kai-shek’s foreign policy, the existence of the Sino-German back channels should not surprise us. Ideology certainly did not play a large role in Chinese foreign policy approaches, as Nationalist China’s switch from one main partner and arms supplier to the next between 1938 and 1941 shows. Given the fact that even in the alliance with the Allies each party thought about their own respective objectives, it was only logical to maintain connections to all sides in the war. The Third Reich also hoped to profit from new Sino-German relations, as I would argue that a separate Sino-Japanese peace would have freed hundreds of thousands of Japanese soldiers, and opened the Free China market to Germany.

Qi and the German Resistance: honest support or a “foot in the door”?

What kind of objectives was Chiang Kai-shek pursuing by cooperating with the German Resistance? As I mentioned in the literature review, the possibility of connections between the Chinese Generalissimo and the German movement is hard to comprehend by some (e.g. critiques of Yang, 2010b). The possible Chinese objectives of these clandestine connections are clear, especially if one reflects on how such a communication channel would actually be of use to Chiang Kai-shek and China.

Based on the archival research I carried out in the course of this dissertation, I would argue that Chiang Kai-shek indeed knew about and supported the German Resistance. Both sides may even have been driven by objectives that complemented each other. In line with the pragmatic foreign policy approach that had characterised late 1930s and early 1940s foreign policy, Qi’s appointment to Berne as a middleman between Chiang and the Resistance can be seen as “keeping a foot in the door” of

Sino-German relations. Whether Chiang Kai-shek actually believed that the movement had any chance for success is unclear. However, we know that Chiang had good connections to some of the movement's members, such as Falkenhausen and Schacht. Hence, personal connections as a cause for Chinese support for the movement are possible. Moreover, as will be shown below, the "Resistance-Chiang Channel" allowed Chiang Kai-shek to raise China's profile internationally.

The Resistance Movement, on the other hand, approached Chiang Kai-shek for the foreign support the other Western Allied powers had denied it. By appealing to Chiang Kai-shek's excellent relations with several Resistance members (Schacht, Thomas, and Falkenhausen), the German Resistance movement hoped to tone down Allied demands for unconditional surrender. An end to the war in Europe was one of the Resistance's motivations, but not to similar conditions as in 1919 (Hoffmann, 1986, 6).

The information in this dissertation points towards the initiation of another BCD attempt, this time with Chongqing China in the role of the mediator between the German Resistance and the Western Allies. This was one of the first times that Nationalist China had been called upon to act in the role of mediator between major powers and a European political group.

In this section of the chapter, I will present information from around the time of July 1941, when Germany and Chongqing China ended official diplomatic relations. The records of meetings that took place at that time are stored in Academia Historica, and are further supported by German archival records and Qi's Swiss reports from 1943.

In 1941, the German Resistance had tried several times to gain support from the British and US governments through direct channels to leading individuals in both countries and through Pope Pius XII, but none of these advances succeeded

(Hoffmann, 1991, 447).²⁶³ I agree with Deutsch (1981, 327), who criticised the perception that the Resistance movement aimed its efforts solely at the London government. The Western academic focus on Resistance peace feelers to the Western Allies excludes the option of connections to other foreign governments. The good relations that men such as Schacht and Falkenhausen enjoyed in China should be taken into account as much as their connections to European or American individuals.

This dissertation shows that Resistance members who had been instrumental in 1930s Sino-German relations, such as Schacht and Thomas, approached Qi in Berlin. There are two possibilities that explain how Qi got into contact with them: either Lin Qiusheng introduced Qi to the German group, or these individuals approached Qi independently. In either case, the approach of foreign representatives very likely had the backing of the highest Resistance movement leaders, General Kurt Beck and Karl Goerdeler (Klemperer, 1981, 351-352).

The content of Qi's report, covering June/July 1941, clearly shows that the Resistance movement approached Chiang to serve as a mediator between them and the Roosevelt administration in Washington (Yang, 2010b, 7).²⁶⁴ Hopes were high that Chiang Kai-shek would help the German Resistance to inform Roosevelt and Churchill that there "exist a strong and influential number of people who prepare to change the current political situation [in Germany]".²⁶⁵ In Schacht's opinion, the only statesman suitable to represent Germany (the German Resistance) in discussion with the Allies was Chiang Kai-shek.²⁶⁶ The Resistance members' idea for this BCD attempt was to have Chiang Kai-shek send T.V. Soong to Washington. Soong would then establish contact with President Roosevelt and forward the position of the German

²⁶³ Multiple reasons existed for the failure of Resistance-Allied cooperation, amongst others, mistrust on the British side, and the fact that the Resistance could not accept a declaration of unconditional surrender. For more information see: Hoffmann (1991).

²⁶⁴ Archival material in Academia Historica also supports this argument. AH, "*Dui Deguo wajjio* (On German Foreign Relations) (6)", "*Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu*", *Guoshiguancong*, Document Number: 002-080106-00060-008, Entry number: 002000001283A, p.40.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

Resistance.²⁶⁷ In these discussions, Qi was neither negative nor supportive; rather he tried to assert the Resistance's motifs and plans. His questions focused on how China would benefit from lending support to the Resistance movement, thus reflecting the mind set of Chiang Kai-shek and his circle in this relationship. If China was to suffer from a relationship with the Resistance movement, the relations might have been cut off.

The end of Sino-German relations in July 1941 presented Qi with the chance to travel back to Chongqing and to inform Chiang Kai-shek personally. Aware of the recall of the embassy staff, Resistance members, such as Schacht, prepared personal pleas to Chiang, in which they hoped that Chiang Kai-shek would be able to propose a peace deal good enough for all sides in the conflict (Britain, the US and Germany) to accept (Hoo, 1998, 62-63). The German Resistance also asked Chiang Kai-shek to send Qi Jun back to Europe to serve as a contact between Chiang and the movement (Yang, 2010b, 8). Following the Germans' plea, Chiang Kai-shek appointed Qi as Economic attaché to the Berne legation in January 1942, where he arrived in March of the same year. Chiang Kai-shek marked these events in his diary with the words: "Support for the German anti-[Hitler] movement is under way" and "sent Qi Jun to Switzerland" (Yang, 2010b, 4).²⁶⁸ The back channel that started with Qi's meetings with Schacht and Thomas would take on wider aspects and continue after Qi's arrival in Switzerland.

That the appointment of Qi occurred under the umbrella of support for the German Resistance was missed by British observers, who described Qi as a "henchman" of Zhu Jiahua, the leader of the German-friendly clique in Chongqing.²⁶⁹ Ambassador Horace Seymour concluded that this information indicated "the Chinese have kept open the pipe-line to Berlin through Berne",²⁷⁰ a development termed as

²⁶⁷ Ibid.

²⁶⁸ "Jiang Jieshi Diary" Script, 10, 11, and 14 January 1942, Hoover Archive, quoted in Yang (2010b, 4).

²⁶⁹ British Library, India Office Record (IOR), L/ P&S/ 12/ 2293, China, Sino-British Relations File 15, Sep 36-April 46. Telegram sent from Chongqing to the Government of India, Supply Dept. to Secretary of State for India. Calcutta 20 March 1942.

²⁷⁰ British Library, (IOR), L/ P&S/ 12/ 2293, China, Sino-British Relations File 15, Sep 36-April 46. From Chungking to Foreign Office, from Sir H. Seymour. April 2 1942.

“disturbing” by the British secretary of state and the undersecretary of state.²⁷¹ Despite the anticipation of a clandestine Berlin-Chiang “pipe-line” there are no indications that Chongqing China suffered any implications such as a public denunciation or a break of relations, thus underscoring the importance of China for the Allied war strategy.

Intelligence Connections in Switzerland

The presence of a Chinese informant enabled Chiang Kai-shek to receive the same information on the German Resistance and developments in Germany as the Washington administration received from its own agent: Allen Welsh Dulles. This was possible due to the fact that Qi very likely established contact with Resistance member Hans Bernd Gisevius, who had been recommended to him by Schacht and Thomas.²⁷² I argue that this was very likely the case, because meetings between Qi and Gisevius were not recorded. Gisevius, however, was in repeated contact with Chiang Kai-shek’s agent Gui Yongqing. On several occasions in 1942 (for example in October 1942) Gisevius and Gui discussed matters of the German Resistance, its plans to oust the Nazi government and to immediately initiate peace talks. The plan included sealing an armistice with the Soviet Union as soon as possible, so that China, Russia, Britain and the US could deal with Japan.²⁷³ Gisevius was therefore aware of the Chinese agents in Switzerland, and if he knew Gui it is equally likely he was an acquaintance of Qi as well.

In post-war British, German and Swiss records on Gisevius there is no mention of any Chinese contacts in Switzerland. Only the Taiwanese archival material mentions this fact. In his post-war memoirs, Gisevius also refrains from mentioning anything on China, except for the Nuremberg Trials, where he mentioned the general Chinese-

²⁷¹ British Library, (IOR), L/ P&S/ 12/ 2293, China, Sino-British Relations File 15, Sep 36-April 46. Attached to the telegrams concerning Qi Jun is an internal note, signed and annotated by the secretary of state, as well as the undersecretary of state.

²⁷² AH “*Dui Deguo waijiao* (On German foreign relations) (6)”, “*Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu*”, *Guoshiguancong*, Document Number: 002-080106-00060-008, Entry Number: 002000001283A, p.48.

²⁷³ AH, “*Geguo qingbao* (Intelligence reports on various countries) (3)”, “*Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu*”, *Guoshiguancong*, Document Number: 002-080107-00003-001, Entry Number: 002000001306A, p.62.

friendly stand of the Resistance members.²⁷⁴ It becomes evident that China did not play a major role in the post-war perception of US and European individuals.

Throughout Qi's time as Chiang Kai-shek's contact to the German Resistance, he kept the Generalissimo up to date about the Resistance's movements. Evidence on what Chiang Kai-shek did with this information is scant. However, archival files reveal that the Washington administration had been informed about Chiang's clandestine communications. Indeed, Chiang Kai-shek noted in his diary that he planned to "tell Roosevelt about the German army resistance movement plans..." (Yang, 2010b, 4).²⁷⁵ On two documented occasions, in June 1942²⁷⁶ and December 1943,²⁷⁷ Qi informed Chiang Kai-shek on the ever-growing split between Hitler and leading military officers,²⁷⁸ while Qi pointed out in December 1943 that the German army would be essential to carrying out any kind of coup, and indeed wanted to do so. The only issue that would hinder the army to carry out such action was the Allied demand for unconditional surrender.²⁷⁹

Even before the arrival of US spy Allen Welsh Dulles in Switzerland in November 1942, Chiang Kai-shek had established a good working connection with German Resistance members and sympathisers.²⁸⁰ The German contacts that supported Qi's work in Switzerland were Hans Klein, and, as I argue, Gisevius. Klein has never been identified as a Resistance member, but I would argue that he remained sympathetic to Chongqing China, and was involved in the clandestine "German Resistance-Chiang Channel" communications from the beginning. The evidence for

²⁷⁴ Nuremberg Process, Day 114, Afternoon Session: *Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal* (1947, 223). Furthermore, papers of Resistance movement leader Goerdeler reflect the positive position of the movement toward China. Goerdeler stated that the movement has always respected China and believed the War of Resistance to be justified (BArch, NS/6(Attentat auf Hitler. August 1944-24 August 1944)/9).

²⁷⁵ "Jiang Jieshi Diary" Script, 10, 11, and 14 January 1942, Hoover Archive, quoted in Yang (2010b, 4).

²⁷⁶ AH, "Geguo qingbao (Intelligence reports on various countries) (3)", "Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu", *Guoshiguancang*, Document number: 002-080107-00003-001, Entry Number: 002000001306A, p.14. According to Qi, the split between Hitler and the Generals came over the war progress and strategies.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p.37.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p.14.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p.37.

²⁸⁰ Dulles arrived in Switzerland on 8 November 1942. For more information on Dulles' work in Switzerland see: Petersen (1996).

this assumption is found in Qi Jun's November 1941 report to Chiang Kai-shek, in which Resistance members Schacht and Thomas ask Qi Jun to work together with Klein and Gisevius in Switzerland.²⁸¹

Contemporary witness Hu Shizu mentioned in his diary a meeting with Klein in summer 1941 in Switzerland, during which the latter showed knowledge of Qi's journey to China, and the German Resistance's request for mediation (Hoo, 1998, 62-63). That Klein had contact with Chinese embassy staff is no surprise, as he had been appointed as Chinese honorary consul on 1 August 1940, long before the end of Sino-German relations (Liang, 1978, 114).²⁸² Klein was able to serve as an honorary consul of China, because he held both German and Chinese citizenship, and had received this post because of his good relationship with Chiang Kai-shek.²⁸³ However, Qi stated in February 1945 that Klein had received the post because of his economic merits for China.²⁸⁴ Apart from his work with Qi, Klein also worked together with a Chinese by the name Lo-Ta-Kang since 16 July 1942, who in 1944 had been confirmed to be a secretary of the Chinese consulate.²⁸⁵

Klein's role in this back channel and possible connections to the German Resistance are difficult to establish. The connection between Klein and prominent Resistance members such as Schacht and Thomas has been established already by the archival material presented in this dissertation. Despite the excellent connections Klein enjoyed in higher Nazi echelons in the early 1930s, this had changed by the time

²⁸¹ AH, "*Dui Deguo waijiao* (On German foreign relations) (6)", "*Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu, Guoshiguanfang*, Document Number: 002-080106-00060-008, Entry Number: 002000001283A, p.48.

²⁸² Liang (1978,114) is citing: *Interviews*, Lily Abegg, Robert Chi in this sentence. For reference on the time Klein was appointed Honorary Consul see: CH-BAR#E4320B#1984/29#652*. The position of an honorary consul does not provide the same privileges as a regular, non-honorary position. As Berridge and James (2001, 116) noted: "An honorary officer performs consular functions, and he/she is permanently resident in the receiving state. An honorary consul is not a member of the sending state's diplomatic service".

²⁸³ Swiss sources recalled that Klein gained this post because he was a personal friend of Chiang Kai-shek. For reference see: CH-BAR#E4320B#1984/29#652*, Dossier Hans Klein. Inspektor Ulrich, Berne, 14 February 1945. On Klein's Chinese citizenship please see: *Ibid.* Bundesanwaltschaft Polizeidienst an Politisches Department (Federal Prosecutors Office, Police service, to the Political Department), 7 January 1950.

²⁸⁴*Ibid.* Inspector Ulrich (probably) met Qi Jun on 21 February 1945. The Swiss authorities first learned about Klein's position as an Honorary Consul because he had put up sign at his house that informed visitors of his position amongst the Chinese embassy staff. During Ulrich's meeting with Qi Jun on 21 February 1945, it emerged that Klein already worked on post-war economic cooperation between China and Switzerland, and China and Germany. This may be one reason why Klein was still in contact with the Economic Legate Qi.

²⁸⁵ CH-BAR#E2001E#1967/113#3183*; contains the dossier on Klein, Hans, Honorary Consul, Lucerne.

WWII broke out. According to Swiss records, Klein had a fall out with Göring shortly before the war, and settled in Switzerland.²⁸⁶ According to Qi, this exile of Klein in Switzerland highlighted that Klein was not a Nazi.²⁸⁷

Further support for Qi came in the fact that Klein let him stay at his house in Switzerland.²⁸⁸ The Swiss archival material reveals that even though Qi had been appointed to the Chinese consulate in Berne, he had asked to receive an authorisation of residence for Klein's villa in Meggen in June 1942.²⁸⁹ The town of Meggen is not part of the Canton Berne, but of the Canton Lucerne that borders the Canton Berne. Travel between the two places may not have taken too much time considering the situation in 1942-1945, but may have been a reason for the fact that Qi and Gui did not meet often, as reported by Gui in August 1943.²⁹⁰ Initially, Qi asked for an authorisation of residence for a year, but records show that even after the end of WWII, Qi still spent much of his time in Meggen and had his post redirected to this location.²⁹¹

This connection between Klein and Qi was known to the German Secret Service Abwehr that interviewed Klein at the end of January 1944. The interviewing agent, listed simply as "A.F.", was a Hungarian national and a "researcher" in Turkey. It is not clear whether he worked for the German Resistance arm of the Abwehr, but he portrays substantial background knowledge of ideas to topple Hitler, which he discussed with Klein, amongst other matters, such as the possible replacement of Hitler and international relations.²⁹²

²⁸⁶ CH-BAR#E4320#1984/29#652*, Dossier Hans Klein. Inspector Ulrich wrote report on information gathered by informant M on Klein, 14 February 1945.

²⁸⁷ CH-BAR#E4320#1984/29#652*, Dossier Hans Klein. Inspector Ulrich (probably) met Qi Jun on 21 February 1945.

²⁸⁸ AH, "Geguo Qingbao (Intelligence reports on various countries) (3)", "Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu", *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-080107-00003-001, Entry Number: 002000001306A, p.82.

²⁸⁹ CH-BAR#E2001E#1967/113#2452*, Chi Robert Tsun, Handelsrat. "Fremdenpolizei des Kantons Luzern, 9 Juni 1942 an Eidg. Fremdenpolizei Bern" (Police responsible for foreigners of Canton Lucerne to Police Berne, 9 June 1942).

²⁹⁰ AH, "Geguo qingbao (Intelligence reports on various countries) (3)", "Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu", *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-080107-00003-001, Entry Number: 002000001306A, p.82, 28 August 1943, report by Gui Yongqing from Berne.

²⁹¹ CH-BAR#E4320B#1990/266#6431*, Chi Robert Tsun, 1905. "Eidg. Politische Department Berne, 25 November 1949" (Political Department Berne).

²⁹² BArch R/58(Aussenpolitische Ziele der USA und GB. Insb. Verhaeltnis zur Sowjetunion. Meldungen von V-Leuten ueber Aeusserungen von Staatsangehoerigen dieser Laender und neutraler Staaten und Pressemeldungen)/1123. (Foreign relations objectives of the US and Britain, especially relations to Soviet

The discussion between Klein and A.H. focused mainly on Chongqing China, her relations with the Allies, and Chiang Kai-shek's apparent actions in favour of Germany. It is necessary at this point to highlight that it is unclear whether the information in this paper constituted actual information coming from Chongqing, or only Klein's *Wunschdenken* (wishful thinking). Despite these issues, the information Klein provides sheds light on the image that Chiang Kai-shek enjoyed in German circles, such as the Resistance and the Abwehr. This perception does not necessarily reflect the reality of Sino-Allied relations. In general, this image portrays Chiang Kai-shek as the most approachable of the Big Four, with German-friendly attitudes and doubts about his relations with the Allies.

In detail, Klein claimed that Chiang Kai-shek's relationship with the Allies was very ambivalent and that the Generalissimo only joined the Allies because Germany rejected putting any pressure on Japan in regards to China. Furthermore, Klein argued that if Hitler had waited ten more years with his attack on the Soviet Union, then China would have served as a willing partner.²⁹³ In later years (November 1943), according to Klein, Chiang Kai-shek showed German-friendly tendencies, when he rejected a post-war split of Germany during the Cairo Conference.²⁹⁴

Klein also believed that Chiang Kai-shek would be willing to serve as a mediator between the US and Germany. The fact that Klein then talked about the option that Hitler should be removed from office and replaced by H.H. (presumably Heinrich Himmler) implies that A.H. may have been working for the RSHA, which had taken over Abwehr business by mid-1944 (Schellenberg, 1956, 412). Given Klein's position as

Union. Information collected by informants on statements of citizens of those states, neutral countries and press), 4 February 1944, Anlage zu Anlage 1 zu Abwehrstelle im Wehrkreis X „Referat Roland“ Meldung über die in Teheran getroffenen russisch-amerikanischen Vereinbarungen bezüglich der sowjetischen Haltung im Fernen Osten. (Attachment to Appendix 1 to Abwehroffice in OKW, Information of Russian-US negotiations regarding the Soviet position in the Far East).

²⁹³ Ibid.

²⁹⁴ Ibid. There are several publications on the Cairo-Conference, the most informative being Sainsbury's (1985) work on the Moscow, Cairo and Tehran Conference. One major hindrance Sainsbury encountered is that there exist no minutes from the meetings between Roosevelt, Churchill and Chiang Kai-shek. Therefore it is not possible to further substantiate Klein's claim.

Chinese honorary consul and his connections to China, he was likely visited by a number of individuals with questions on East Asia.

There may also exist a link with Dulles in this area, because the original rumours about Himmler's peace feelers originated with Dulles. The peace feelers had delivered messages to the Allies signalling willingness to cooperate.²⁹⁵ The information subsequently reached Klein via Qi Jun, implying that Qi and Dulles communicated with each other. This knowledge, in turn, indicates that a hitherto unknown communication line linked Washington and Chongqing through Switzerland. This possibility is further underscored by the fact that Qi had been working with Gisevius months before Dulles' arrival in Switzerland in late 1942. Since Gisevius was to become the most important connection between Dulles and the Resistance movement, it is highly likely that Qi Jun, as an acquaintance and representative of Chiang Kai-shek, had been introduced to Dulles as well.

According to Klein, Dulles sought him out on several occasions, during which the two men discussed issues such as the Atlantic Charter, the planned split of Germany into occupation zones, and the question of whether the US should attack Japan as soon as possible. The meetings were sometimes brokered by Qi.²⁹⁶ Interestingly, similar to the "Berlin-Chiang Channel", the Swiss archives do not reveal anything on a connection between Dulles and Klein, while the role of the latter as honorary consul to China was known.

In summary, the combination of archival documents from Germany and Taiwan highlight that the communication channel that Chiang Kai-shek maintained to the Resistance and other German individuals in Switzerland still existed in 1944, and had indeed included Dulles as well. Despite Qi's presence in Switzerland and his connections to Dulles and Gisevius, it appears that the Resistance movements' request

²⁹⁵ BArch R/58/1123, 4 February 1944, Anlage zu Anlage 1 zur Abwehrstelle im Wehrkreis X "Referat Roland", Meldung ueber die in Teheran getroffenen russisch-amerikanischen Vereinbarungen bezueglich der sowjetischen Haltung im Fernen Osten. (Attachementto Appendix 11 to Abwehroffice in OKW, Information of Russian-American negotiations regarding the Soviet position in the Far East).

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

for Chiang Kai-shek's support does not seem to have had any influence on the Allies attitude to the movement.

In general, the issues that hampered this mediation attempt with Chiang Kai-shek in the role as a mediator may have failed for similar reason as did the "Berlin-Chiang Channel" attempt. This becomes clear when looking at BCD and mediation theory. Factors that had been identified as important by theorists for the success of back channel mediation attempts were not present in the Chinese mediation channel between the Resistance and the US administration. Hence, it can be argued that the mediation attempt had a very high chance to fail right from the beginning.

A crucial factor influencing the success of mediation is timing. Mediation should happen when the time is ripe, meaning when both sides realise that a continuation of conflict was too costly (Bercovitch, 2011, 137). Hence, both sides would agree to mediation taking place, as was the case with Israel and the PLO in 1992. In the "Resistance-US" mediation attempt after July 1941, however, this was not the case. The one-sided approach came at a time when the Allies had joined forces, and had rejected cooperation with the Resistance. Moreover, a mediator was chosen, who, despite being a member of the Big Four, had the least amount of influence on Allied decision making in regard to Europe. Low-level and middle-level mediators are indeed less likely to succeed in mediation than high-level ones (Bercovitch, 2011, 31). Also, the perception of the issue of unconditional surrender likely contributed to the failure of the mediation attempt. The approach of this issue by the Resistance and Allies was incompatible. Another issue was the lack of high-ranking envoys sent by the Resistance and the Allies which could help to build trust. Constrained by then available transportation, and the limited possibility of meeting in a neutral location, efforts were hampered. Evidently, these measures may have helped to facilitate cooperation between the two sides, because at least Allen Dulles built trust with the Resistance

through personal contact and lobbied for them in Washington. His superiors, though, were unable to relate in the same way with the Resistance movement.

Moreover, from Yang's research it appears that apart from sending Qi Jun to Switzerland and asking T.V. Soong and Soong May-ling to speak to Roosevelt about the Resistance, Chiang Kai-shek does not appear to have done much to further raise the case of the movement (Yang, 2010b, 13).²⁹⁷ This would raise questions about how seriously Chiang took the mediation attempt and whether he considered it to be successful. Mediation theory argues that a mediator brings his own agenda to the mediation, which clearly influences the mediation approach (Bercovitch, 2011, 5). However, the existence or lack of willingness to mediate has so far not been mentioned, for the likely reason that any side taking up the role as a mediator does so because it wishes to find a solution to a conflict. Hence, the lack of further support indicates that the mediation outcome could have been secondary for Chiang Kai-shek. As a result, the fact that intelligence on Germany could be gathered, as well as raising China's profile, would appear to be the primary objective of Chiang Kai-shek as a mediator in this channel.

For the Resistance movement, this situation meant that their attempt to gain Allied support through an alternative channel than the ones in Europe had failed, hence contributing to the indecisiveness over action that characterised the movement's history.

In summary, it emerges that Chiang Kai-shek was more involved in international war affairs and events in Europe than earlier studies have anticipated. The connection between Chiang and the Resistance also expands our knowledge of the movement's history and foreign connections, by shifting the focus of research from Resistance-US/British relations to those with Chongqing China.

²⁹⁷ Yang's references are not very clear. However, Yang (2010b, 13) quoted the T.V. Soong Papers, 47-2. For further information see Yang (2010b, 16).

Short summary of major points of this chapter:

In summary, this chapter sheds new light on hitherto unknown aspects of wartime Sino-German relations. It began with information on the pre-war dynamics and players in Sino-German relations, who as I argue would later play a role in clandestine relations between Chiang Kai-shek and the two German groups.

I argued and explored how the initial appointment of Gui and Qi reflected an internal competition over Chinese foreign policy and the use of special representatives by Chiang Kai-shek in Chongqing in 1940 and 1941. While the findings do not question the fact that Chiang Kai-shek sought an alliance with the Allies, they highlight the pragmatic foreign policy in Chongqing, which is reflected by the appointment of Gui and Qi. Previous research has presented the extent of US-friendly factions or Japanese-friendly factions in the government, but failed to achieve the same in regard to a German-friendly faction during the war years. This dissertation sheds light on the existence and influence of the German-friendly lobby in wartime Chongqing. While Chiang Kai-shek had made his decision in favour of an alliance with the US and Britain, the chapter shows that communication with Germany did not end with July 1941, but continued through clandestine channels until late 1944.

Not only has this research extended Chiang Kai-shek's pragmatic foreign policy approach to Germany, but also countered previous research that has limited Sino-German relations to July 1941. The existence of Chiang Kai-shek's clandestine back channels to "Berlin", but more surprisingly, also to the German Resistance support this theory.

It emerges that the channel to Chongqing had greater importance for the two German groups. Nazi German individuals believed that cooperation with Chiang Kai-shek and a Sino-Japanese appeasement would aid Germany by releasing great numbers of Japanese soldiers from the battle in China. Without considering that Chiang Kai-shek would have made a much worse "deal" by accepting Japanese

demands than by staying with the Allies, "Berlin" believed that Japan would indeed use these troops to support Germany in her attack on the Soviet Union.

The members of the German Resistance that had been in contact with Chiang Kai-shek's representative Qi Jun hoped to use Chiang's position to approach the Western Allies, who until then had shown hardly any interest in cooperation with the Resistance movement. Initially wary of the movement, Chiang Kai-shek, Qi Jun and other Chinese Nationalists must have seen the benefit of raising China's profile with the Allies that arose from cooperation with an organisation in the anti-Hitler camp. The connection between Qi Jun and Hans Klein sheds further light on the "German Resistance-Chiang Channel", their sympathizers and connections to the US. Several facts arising from the Chinese archival material have been proven, such as Chiang Kai-shek's willingness to mediate between the Resistance and the US. Other issues emerged, such as the connection between the OSS and Qi. Academics knew and explored the relations between Dulles and Gisevius, but have never included the possibility of Chinese involvement on the side of German Resistance.

British observers anticipated the existence of a communication "pipe-line" between Berlin and Chongqing, but may have only heard rumours about this. I mentioned above that these rumours did not have any known implications for Chongqing, but may have furthered British mistrust. However, this episode underscores the importance of Chongqing China to WWII, as I question the severity of the Allies' reactions, had they ever found out about the actual "Berlin-Chiang Channel" in Switzerland. Chongqing China was too important an ally to lose.

Chapter Seven: The success or failure of Sino-German back channels

In Chapter Six I presented the main evidence on the clandestine back channels between Chiang Kai-shek and the two German groups: “Berlin” and the German Resistance. The archival material presented the political background that contributed to the creation of these back channels, as well as the content of secret conversations between Chiang Kai-shek’s agents and the Germans. The chapter also drew first conclusions over the objectives of the participants in the clandestine back channels. In this chapter, I will further analyse these findings and show what the archives reveal about wartime Sino-German clandestine relations, and in the wider context, about wartime Republican Chinese foreign policy.

This chapter will be roughly divided into two sections: the first dealing with the analysis of the pre-July 1941 period; the second with the post-July 1941 archival material. Throughout these sections, I will show how Sino-German relations evolved from 1938 until 1941, and how the influence of German-friendly individuals in Chongqing in combination with a pragmatic foreign policy influenced the development of Sino-German relations. By starting with an interpretation of pre-July 1941 archival material, it is possible to show the evolution of Sino-German communication channels and the motives that shaped clandestine relations in the pre-1941 period. The section on post-July 1941 archival material will then analyse the objectives that were linked to the foreign relations proposals that were discussed between “Berlin” and Chiang Kai-shek. I will also analyse the objectives and implications of the “German Resistance-Chiang Channel”. In both sections, I intend to shed light on the question of whether these back channel mediations were genuine by analysing their chances for success. In order to do that, I will compare the factors in BCD and mediation theory that have proven to influence the outcome of a mediation channel with the Sino-German mediation efforts (Bercovitch, 2011). In a last step, I intend to analyse whether these

clandestine connections between Chongqing and Nazi Germany had any impact on Sino-Allied relations.

The support for the pragmatic foreign policy approach that emerges from this dissertation challenges the accepted narrative as it was presented in official Nationalist Chinese publications of the day (see Chapter Four)—one which, ironically, continues well into the present, with the standard histories of the era supporting the belief that the Republican Chinese government broke off all relations with Nazi Germany in July 1941 and stayed largely aloof from any Allied developments that included Nazi-Germany and Europe, instead focusing on its main enemy in East Asia, Japan (see Kirby, 1984; Fox, 1982; Chen Renxia, 2003; Yu, 2006).

In contrast, my evaluation will show that Chiang Kai-shek was driven by a very pragmatic foreign policy, which kept doors open to all sides in the war, including Nazi Germany. Closely linked in Chongqing Chinese propaganda with Japan, Germany became an enemy of China. However, this research reveals the existence of communication back channels, which show certain similarities with the peace feelers that were kept between Japan and Chongqing China in the early 1940s. The existence of these clandestine channels to “Berlin” and the German Resistance movement were driven by several factors, for example, by the wish to gather intelligence on Axis-related developments, to raise Chongqing China’s international profile, but also to maintain a number of communication channels with Germany, and towards Japan via Germany.

A pragmatic and manipulative foreign policy approach towards the Allies had been earlier proposed by scholars such as Kirby (1984, 251; 2011, 33), Yang (2010a; 2010b), and Taylor (2009, 211), who identified it as a tool to acquire US aid. However, as I show in this dissertation, this pragmatic foreign policy approach went further, and allowed China to maintain clandestine channels through which to gather information and also to keep German interests in China alive. Chongqing China’s pragmatic foreign policy meant that she preserved communication with Germany while officially cooperating with the Allies.

In comparison, Chiang Kai-shek appears to have put less importance into these clandestine channels than the two German groups did. The objectives of the three sides involved in Chongqing's secret network to Germany differed fundamentally; however, it becomes clear that many of the war-related proposals actually originated on the German side, at a time when the initial Nazi attack plans had failed. The Resistance on the other hand had been in contact with Chiang Kai-shek through a number of special envoys since 1938.

Chongqing China's limited actions following German proposals, and even the degree of help given to the German Resistance, indicates that Chiang Kai-shek did not see these channels as vital, but used these to maintain contact with individuals in the Axis camp. On the contrary, the two German sides hoped to use Chongqing China's support to either win the war ("Berlin") or to end it (German Resistance). Despite the difference in objectives, Sino-German communication had to be hidden, hence the option by all sides for back channels. As the analysis of the back channels and the various mediation attempts shows, pre-July 1941 mediations failed for a different reason than post-July 1941 one, hence indicating a different approach to the mediation attempts by the sides involved.

I will also argue that the presence of a German-friendly group in Chongqing, as well as Allied suspicions over on-going links between Chongqing and Germany contributed to a deterioration of Sino-Allied relations. This suspicion would be only one of a number of factors that led to an erosion of trust between Chongqing China and the Western Allies.

Section One: Analysis of pre-July 1941 Sino-German diplomacy efforts

Jiang Baili, Woidt and Schacht

The analysis of Jiang Baili's, Woidt's, and Schacht's missions sheds light on several aspects of Sino-German relations. As the archival materials and existing

research reveals, the wartime objectives of Chiang Kai-shek's China were manifold. The period between 1938 and July 1941 was characterised by China's fight against Japan, but also by her search for official allies, with the main focus on the Western democracies, including France, Britain and the US (Yu, 2006, 9). The deterioration of Sino-German relations, following the Nazi consolidation of power and Germany's increasing affiliation with Japan damaged diplomatic relations on a large scale. However, these events did not prevent the governments on both sides for approaching one another. The major goal of China-friendly and German-friendly individuals on both sides of relations in this same period can be narrowed down to one major goal: the revision of German East Asian foreign policy in support of Republican China. Jiang Baili's mission shows that German-friendly Chinese and China-friendly Germans attempted to influence men surrounding Nazi Germany's main decision maker - Hitler.

These objectives, however, were contrary to the objectives of the Third Reich during this time, which was more interested in the economic exploitation of China than giving up on the alliance with Japan. Woidt's mission in 1938 came at a time when German-Japanese trade negotiations in Northern China had failed to pay off for Germany. At the same time, China-friendly individuals, in competition with their Japan-friendly counterparts, "worked to salvage and rebuild" relations (Kirby, 1984, 245). However internal competition over the course of German foreign policy continued to hamper and complicate plans, resulting in a diplomatic approach by German-friendly Chinese and China-friendly Germans through back channels.

The attempts to rectify Germany's East Asian foreign policy and to gain support against Japanese aggression in China started in autumn 1937. As Chapter Six shows, Jiang Baili's mission objectives were to secure German neutrality in the East Asian conflict. Support inside Germany for Jiang's mission came from Chinese-friendly German groups and individuals, which proposed Sino-German cooperation. It can be assumed that the proposal of Sino-German cooperation Jiang Baili suggested also found support in German-friendly Chinese circles, such as the German industry and

military (see Chapter Six). Interestingly, this discussion of Sino-German cooperation continued between Jahnke and Gui after July 1941.

These developments in Sino-German relations reflect Chiang's pragmatic foreign policy, since they took place despite the fact that China received large amounts of aid from the Soviet Union by the summer of 1938, and had also continued with efforts to gain US and British aid. The Woidt mission shows that German proposals and chances to foster Sino-German relations were not rejected. On the contrary, Woidt and Kung reached a new barter agreement in summer 1938. Even though this agreement became void as soon as Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop heard of it, it does signal China's willingness to work with a pre-war Germany.

While the details of Woidt's barter agreement surely are of interest; in the framework of this research project, more details on the state of Sino-German relations and Chinese foreign policy can be drawn by analysing the diplomatic connections through which Woidt and Schacht worked. Most importantly, a major shift in Sino-German diplomacy from front to back channels becomes visible. The practical implementation of the two Schacht mediation attempts as well as the Woidt mission saw the use of diplomatic measures outside the framework of the German and Chinese Foreign Office, similar to the mission of Jiang Baili. The missions to China took place at a time when Chinese and German observers must have realised that the internal division over German East Asian foreign policy, including the positioning of Japanese-friendly individuals in key governmental positions, hampered any effort to foster Sino-German relations.

As a result, the Woidt and the Schacht mission in summer 1938 were pursued through diplomatic back channels. Hellmuth Woidt was sent to China as a representative of the German Minister of Economic Affairs Funk, who in return had been authorised by Hitler to approach Republican China. Hitler's interest in Sino-German relations raised hopes in Chongqing for a return to the excellent Sino-German

relations of 1936 and 1937 (Ratenhof, 1987, 510). The reason for this hope lay in the history of early 20th century Sino-German relations. The similarities of how the Woitdt mission operated through non-diplomatic channels and seemed to have represented China-friendly factions in the German government, military and industry is striking if compared to how late 1920s and early 1930s Sino-German relations had evolved (see Kirby, 1984; Fox, 1982). Moreover, in both the 1920s and after February 1938, Sino-German relations suffered under a German Foreign Office that, for different reasons, rejected a China-friendly foreign policy approach.

Whether Chiang Kai-shek actually envisioned a return to Sino-German relations similar to those prior to July 1937, and whether these relations would have come at the price of the loss of Sino-Soviet relations, is difficult to assess. However, as the archival material and existing research reveal, interest in Nazi Germany continued to exist, probably fuelled by that fact that Germany had not been fully associated with Japan yet. While the *Anti Comintern Pact* and the 1938 German recognition of Manchukuo shattered Chinese trust in Germany, it was the *Tripartite Pact* that irrevocably linked Germany and Japan as the Axis Powers. This is also visible in the speeches presented in Chapter Four in which Germany had been closely associated with Japan and the “aggressive countries” after September 1940.

However, as I have shown throughout this dissertation, a break of relations with Germany would run counter the pragmatism that characterised Chiang Kai-shek’s foreign policy approach. That Chiang Kai-shek was indeed involved in these diplomatic approaches to Germany and by Germany is proven. Liang (1978, 124) points out that Jiang Baili acted as Chiang Kai-shek’s “envoy extraordinary”. In regard to the Woitdt mission, existing research has highlighted that Woitdt negotiated the barter agreement with H.H. Kung. Chiang Kai-shek was kept up to date on developments by Qi Jun.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁸ On 4 August 1938 Qi Jun informed Chiang Kai-shek about Woitdt’s mission in China (AH, “*Yiban Ziliao yi chengbiao huiji* (General Information Collection) (74)”, *Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu, Guoshiguan Cang*, Document Number: 002-080200-00501-029, Entry Number: 002000001890A). A few months later on 16 October 1938, Qi Jun then informs Chiang Kai-shek that H.H. Kung and Woitdt signed the barter agreement. (AH, “*Yiban Ziliao yi chengbiao huiji* (General Information Collection) (76)”, *Jiang*

The Schacht missions in summer 1938 and the first half of 1939 were also known to Chiang Kai-shek, who stayed in contact with Schacht via Hans Klein.

The Schacht mediation attempts of summer 1938 and 1939 share a number of characteristics with the Woidt mission, but also stand out as back channel mediation attempts. A characteristic that is similar to that of the Woidt mission is its back channel nature, as well as the involvement of Chiang Kai-shek on the periphery. Moreover, an individual with close ties to the German Ministry of Economic Affairs was chosen as a mediator. Apart from these aspects, the Schacht missions differed from Woidt's.

In the following section, I will focus on the conclusion in regard to foreign policy approaches that can be drawn from the Schacht back channel mediation attempts. As already touched upon in Chapter Six, the likelihood for both mediation attempts to actually succeed were rather limited. Numerous factors, such as the one-sided approach of these attempts, Chinese domestic political pressure on Chiang Kai-shek to fight Japan, the mediators recall in summer 1939 and a crucial lack of trust between China and Japan, all contributed to the failure of these mediation attempts. Despite the failure of these attempts certain conclusions on Sino-German relations and Chinese foreign policy can still be drawn.

Communication in both cases took place through non-diplomatic channels, mostly via Hans Klein, which would again be due to the fact that Japan-friendly factions in Germany would have tried to prevent any Sino-Japanese rapprochement with Germany's help. The ending of the Woidt mission is an excellent example for how the involvement of Japan-friendly factions could derail successful negotiations; Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop, after hearing of the new Sino-German barter agreement rejected the latter outright (Kirby, 1984, 246). Moreover, experiences drawn from the 1937 Trautmann negotiation, its bad execution and the fact that Japan tended to time

the level of demands in correspondence to victories in China (Kirby, 1984, 234),²⁹⁹ would have also likely lowered Chinese expectation of the Schacht mission.

However, more importantly, the Woidt mission took place at the same time as the Schacht mission. As was already stated by Ratenhof (1987, 510), Chongqing Chinese circles hoped for Sino-German relations to return to their pre-July 1937 level. As a result, I would argue that the Schacht mission may have seemed like a waste of time and too risky to Chinese decision makers. Potentially gaining German support, at a time when “acquiring foreign support became a vital factor in China’s strategy of winning the war” (Yu, 2006, vii), would have been less politically damaging than entering into peace negotiations with Japan.

I would argue that Schacht’s second journey to China was the result of back-channel contacts to the German Ministry of the Economy. It is very likely that Schacht had been in contact with his successor, Minister of Economic Affairs Funk, and travelled to China via neutral countries just as Chiang Kai-shek had suggested in August 1938. The fact that Schacht met with a Chinese government official in Burma (now Myanmar) suggests that his journey to China actually had a hidden agenda, such as new back-channel mediation between China and Japan. In this case, the fact that the mediator (Germany) cancelled the mediation attempt even before it started is the main reason for the failure of the second attempt.

In summary, it can be concluded that a more direct diplomatic approach was favoured by political decision makers on the German and Chinese side. The evolution from front to back channels took place between 1937 and 1938. The fact that this development occurred at roughly the same time at which von Ribbentrop succeeded Konstantin von Neurath as German Foreign Minister in February 1938 is no coincidence. BCD theorists have highlighted the role and influence political opponents

²⁹⁹ A detailed description of the German mediation attempt through ambassador to China Trautmann can be found in Fox (1982, 260-290). For changes to Japanese demands after major military victories see Fox (1982, 277).

play as potential spoilers, resulting in them being left out of the back channel mediation. Von Ribbentrop was perceived by individuals in China and Germany as such a spoiler, who might derail any efforts to foster Sino-German relations.³⁰⁰ Hence, professional German diplomats played a minor role in Jiang's, Woidt's and Schacht's cases. While Jiang Baili still arrived in Germany as an official envoy, Woidt and Schacht both operated in secrecy in 1938 and 1939. Their communication channels to China ran through either the Ministry of Economic Affairs or private individuals (Klein), hence leaving aside the German Foreign Office. Together with the assumed involvement and communication of Jahnke with Jiang Baili and the Chinese government, these clandestine communication channels are a first indicator for the development towards the use of back channels during 1940 until the end of the war. With the outbreak of war in Europe and initial German war successes, the objectives of the German-friendly groups in Chongqing shifted and focused on the idea that a powerful Germany could be used to exert influence over the other major Axis-Power Japan.

Analysis of post-September 1939 relations

The outbreak of the European War in September 1939 complicated Republican Chinese foreign policy, as there now existed two war theatres and the increasingly visible split of the world into anti-Axis and Axis-friendly camps. Yu (2006, 49) termed the period between September 1939 and December 1941 as a time when "all the major powers in Europe [were] at each other's throats...". Given the volatile and unclear situation in WWII Europe, it is not surprising that Republican China's early WWII wartime foreign policy advocated maintaining contact with all sides in the conflict, with the main focus being on fostering ties with the US.

This very pragmatic foreign policy approach saw China approach the Soviet Union by summer 1938, which then took over the delivery of aid that had previously been done by Germany. The position of the German military advisers was also taken

³⁰⁰ See Chapter Six, Qi Jun's report.

over by Soviet personnel, a situation that was to last until 1940/41 (Kirby, 1984, 239). Officially, there was never a break between Chiang Kai-shek and the Soviet Union during the late 1930s and early 1940s; however, relations deteriorated during the Soviet-Japanese rapprochement in 1940. After December 1941, much of Chongqing China's aid was coming from the US, but that only represented a fraction of the aid reserved for Britain and other parts of the war theatres (Mitter, 2013, 245).³⁰¹

Ideology, be that fascist, communist or democratic, was not a hindrance, as Chongqing showed little reluctance in working with the Third Reich or the Soviet Union when it could. At second glance, however, it becomes clear that China had, at least in the case of the Soviet Union, no other choice. Neither Germany nor Britain sided with China during the earliest years of the war against Japan, while the US maintained a strict isolationism. The Sino-Soviet cooperation during the late 1930s had nothing to do with pragmatism or strategy, but rather with desperation on the Chinese side. Stalin, on the other hand, aware of China's difficulties in her war against Japan, aimed to protect the Soviet Union by arming and supporting China, hence preventing a Japanese attack from the East.

Indeed, throughout this period, China continued to approach the US³⁰², Britain, France and the Third Reich.³⁰³ Even though neither France nor Britain offered any "meaningful aid" to China, and bowed to Japanese pressure to close important Nationalist Chinese supply lines through Burma and French Indochina in 1940, Chongqing China continued approaching these two states (Yu, 2006, 9).³⁰⁴ Approaches to Germany mainly took form through special envoys send by Chiang Kai-shek, such as Gui Yongqing in autumn 1940. However, official front channels were also used, but, as I would argue, only after back channels had failed. This can be noted in the formal

³⁰¹ Mitter (2013, 245) quotes Eastman (1991), p.145. According to Eastman (1991, 145) the Lend-Lease material allocated to China made up 1.5% of the total amount.

³⁰² For more information see Kuo (2009). The article explores T.V. Soong's role as Chiang Kai-shek's special envoy in Washington and his role vis-à-vis the Chinese foreign ministry.

³⁰³ Gui Yongqing and Qi Jun's appointment to Berlin and the order to improve Sino-German relations are an indication.

³⁰⁴ Chinese approaches to France stopped after Germany and Japan occupied France and her Asian colonies respectively (Yu, 2006, 9).

Chinese approach for German mediation in October 1939. This formal approach took place after an un-official approach through the German Ministry of the Economy had failed in March 1939 (2nd Schacht mission). A formal approach coincided with Chinese proposals by H.H. Kung to negotiate a new Sino-German trade agreement, which would see the Third Reich receive tungsten (which had already been promised to the Soviet Union) in exchange for German arms (Kirby, 1984, 248).³⁰⁵ This "bait" was tailored to Chinese perceptions of a "tungsten-hungry" Nazi German government. Simultaneously, efforts to secure US support included the appointment of T.V. Soong to the US in 1940, and the start of regular radio broadcasts by his sister Soong May-ling to the US in October 1941 (Tyson Li, 2006, 166).

We have seen the official foreign diplomacy rhetoric of Chiang Kai-shek's China in Chapter Four, and came to the assessment that much of the rhetoric was anti-Axis. I also outline how Chiang Kai-shek publicly confirmed China's stand with the British/French course in July 1940. This public display of support ensured that Chongqing China was seen as an ally in the fight against fascism, something which paid off when Chiang Kai-shek was included in the Big Four. The idea that Chiang Kai-shek's hopes for victory lay with the US is widely accepted in academia (e.g. Zanasi, 2006, 208). I agree with this theory, but I would also argue that this did not hinder Chiang Kai-shek to maintain clandestine channels to Japan, Nazi Germany and the German Resistance. As a result of the information presented in this dissertation, it becomes evident that researchers should divert from a too narrow US-centric view, and consider exploring other aspects of Chongqing China's foreign relations.

The inclusion of the Third Reich in Chiang Kai-shek's clandestine communication network may seem unusual. Clandestine Sino-Japanese connections

³⁰⁵ Kirby (1984, 248) quotes: *DGFP*, D, 8, no. 345, p.397, Bidder (Chungking) to AA, 11 November 1939. In the same document, also read for this thesis, Charge Bidder also mentions that these potential shipments should take place overland and in absolute secrecy, likely due to the fact that any shipments to the Third Reich of war-crucial tungsten would be seen as evidence for Chongqing China's support for the Axis Powers, and might result in seriously damaged Sino-British relations (*Documents on German Foreign Policy*, 1951, 397).

during post-September 1939 have been proven and explored by Boyle (1972), and appear as a logical choice. Japan was Chongqing China's main enemy, and the clandestine Sino-Japanese negotiations, such as Operation Kiri and Qian (Ch'ien), served at least the purpose of derailing Japanese policies and plans for occupied China, as well as possible avenues to conduct peace talks. Nazi Germany, and the German Resistance for that instance, are far less crucial for the China theatre in both geographical as well as war strategic terms. The nations playing a role in East Asia were Britain, the US, Japan and the Soviet Union. Nazi Germany's role in WWII was limited to Europe, Northern Africa and the Middle East. I would argue, however, that the archival material reveals that Germany was not omitted from China's wartime foreign relations, and was, just as Japan, connected with Chiang Kai-shek through clandestine channels.

While the relations to the US and other Western Powers were used to rally for support and to work towards gaining an official ally,³⁰⁶ lines to Germany after September 1939 seem to have been maintained to gain intelligence, but also to keep German interest in China alive, and to turn, against all odds, German East Asian foreign policy in support of China. An analysis of Gui's work in Berlin shows that Chinese-friendly Germans welcomed the General's appointment, and arranged for him to speak directly to leading Nazis, leaving aside the German Foreign Office. Gui's cooperation with Jahnke provided China with insight into German intelligence, which was used by Chiang Kai-shek to keep up to date with other powers, such as the Soviet Union. While Gui was seen by men, such as Jahnke, as an appropriate choice, the time for the mission to Germany was the wrong choice. Chongqing China did not play a crucial role for Germany's war strategy until after Pearl Harbor.

The existence of the German Resistance had been known to Chiang Kai-shek since Lin Qiusheng first established contact. I argue that during the early years of WWII,

³⁰⁶ In the crucial years of 1940 and 1941, China had no official, important "friend ... before the outbreak of the Pacific War" (Kirby, 2011, 7-8). The US remained committed to a non-interventionist policy, while Britain fought the Third Reich in Europe, and the Soviet Union entered into a rapprochement with Japan.

mainly 1939 and 1940, the movement did not play a major role in Chinese war strategies. As long as the European and Chinese conflict were not connected, association with the movement and its course would have had no use, except for also providing intelligence information to China. The involvement of China-friendly individuals, such as Alexander von Falkenhausen, Hjalmar Schacht and Georg Thomas would also indicate a more personal involvement on the side of Chiang Kai-shek, rather than a political one. However, only with the outbreak of the Pacific War, did Chiang Kai-shek arrange for Qi Jun to travel to Switzerland and serve as a contact and special representative.

Analysis of special envoy approach in diplomacy in the early war years

The important role of special representatives to Chiang Kai-shek's foreign policy has been highlighted in this research, contributing to recent research carried out by scholars such as Chen Yan (2002b). As the archival material in Chapter Six reveals, efforts to foster Sino-German relations after the recall of the military mission, the Nazi consolidation of power, and the recall of the German ambassador, depended heavily on special envoys appointed by Chiang Kai-shek and their cooperation with China-friendly Germans.

These efforts were pushed by a vocal German-friendly group in Chongqing, which perceived an association with Nazi Germany to be the better option in the war against Japan. As has been mentioned in earlier chapters, politicians in Chongqing, no matter which foreign nation they lobbied for, observed developments in international relations, and reacted to new alliances being forged between, for example, Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. Moreover, the initial German war successes led numbers of high-level politicians to believe that the European war would be decided in favour of Nazi Germany.

Pressure on Chiang Kai-shek to side with Nazi Germany increased in the year 1940, and it may have seemed that the foreign policy approach, which saw China

maintain contact to all sides in the conflict, came close to an end in 1940/1941. However, as has already been mentioned beforehand, the strong Chinese focus on the US, and the general pragmatic foreign policy approach forbade any change to foreign relations, which would have bound China to one side. As long as the US abstained from the conflict, official rhetoric continued to court the US government and public, while, behind the scenes, a door was kept open to the Axis Powers.

Even though the US seemed reluctant to join the war, several facts spoke in favour of a US war entry against Japan. Chiang Kai-shek could rely on a strong China lobby in the US that constantly rallied for US support for China, hence limiting the chances for US-Japanese rapprochement. More importantly, however, as the October 1940 document by the Chinese Resource Commission stated, Chongqing China counted on the fact that Japan would clash with the US over influence in the Pacific (also see Sun, 1993, 12).

In a situation in which a clear foreign policy towards one of the major sides in the conflict would have closed many doors on the other side of the political divide, it was possible to fall back on the special envoy back channel strategy. Through non-diplomatic back channels, relations could be fostered with all sides in the conflict, often ensuring direct access to the highest political decision makers (e.g. T.V. Soong and Roosevelt), while political opponents could be kept in the dark.

In Chapter Four, I presented information on special envoys, highlighting that Chiang Kai-shek was able to influence Sino-foreign relations directly, in particular Sino-Soviet- and Sino-US relations. In addition, Jiang Baili's 1937 visit was mentioned in Chapter Six. These came in a row of special envoys appointed by Chiang in the period from 1937 until 1943, and have already been fairly well researched by scholars (Kuo, 2009; Foo, 2011). In all these examples, it emerges that Chiang Kai-shek involved himself directly in Chinese foreign policy. While Sun Fo's missions to the Soviet Union were only short-term, Soong and Fu both stayed in their respective host countries for several years. On the orders of Chiang, T.V. Soong successfully avoided the

involvement of the Chinese Foreign Office and the Chinese embassy in Washington (Kuo, 2009, 219-220). This included the order by Chiang to Soong not to consult with then Ambassador Hu Shi, who did not agree with Soong's diplomatic approach of lobbying for good relations with US officials, the media and influential individuals (Kuo, 2009, 228-229).³⁰⁷ Such behaviour is similar to Chiang Kai-shek's influence on Chinese representatives in the Soviet Union.

Fu Bingchang, the last Nationalist Chinese ambassador to the Soviet Union, appointed to Moscow in January 1943, had been imbedded in the structure of the Chinese Embassy in Moscow, which in theory made him answerable to the Chinese Foreign Office. However, he maintained a separate communication line to Chiang Kai-shek, who was convinced that his subordinates would only take orders directly issued by him (Chang, 2007, in Foo, 2011, 3).

The approach used for the appointment of Fu to Moscow shows similarities to the appointment of Gui and Qi to Berlin in 1940. First of all, each of these special envoys had been chosen due to their good connections to the host country, as well as their experience and expertise in dealing with that country's specific ruling elite. T.V. Soong was American-educated, and mixed well in elite circles in Washington, where he rallied for Chongqing China's cause. Similarly, Gui Yongqing had studied in a German military academy, and knew how to deal with individuals such as Göring and other military men. Politically, the position of these envoys and their affiliation to the numerous factions in Chongqing may well have differed, yet functionally they behaved in a very similar fashion. It is fair to assume that Gui and T.V. Soong did not share the same political ideas, given their very different backgrounds, but in connection with the evidence that Chiang Kai-shek worked together with countries that differed strongly in terms of ideology, it can be argued that results and not ideology were the important factors for Chiang Kai-shek's foreign policy.

³⁰⁷ Chiang to Soong, 12 July 1940, T.V. Soong Archive, Box 59, quoted in Kuo (2009, 229).

There are, however, several differences between, for example, the mission of Sun Fo in 1937, T.V. Soong in 1940 and Gui Yongqing. These differences were due to the fact that the fostering of Sino-US relations and Sino-Soviet relations could occur in the open, whereas any efforts to maintain Sino-German relations during 1940 and 1941 had to be masked, as any perceived Sino-German rapprochement may have caused deterioration of Sino-US/British relations.

As a consequence, while the appointment of T.V. Soong to the US was publicly announced, and Soong engaged in many public engagements, Gui's and Qi's special envoy appointment was slightly modified. The two men were officially placed among the Chinese embassy staff in Berlin, but on positions that allowed a certain amount of freedom. As I laid out in Chapters Five and Six, the post as military attaché, or as any attaché, is outside the control of the ambassador, hence it allowed Gui to approach leading Nazis with matters of foreign policy. British anxiety over Gui's appointment and the speculation that he may have been part of a Chinese military mission shows that the presence of a German-friendly lobby in Chongqing did not go unnoticed in London and Washington. It can be speculated that questions arising over the role of these German-friendly individuals and their influence over Chiang Kai-shek would have deepened already existing mistrust.

Consequences of pragmatism: poisoned Sino-Allied relations

Above I have highlighted the changes in Sino-German relations, which were the result of changes in both international and bilateral relations. Moreover, it was clearly shown that Sino-German relations did not become as insignificant as US-centric research tends to argue. Instead, German-friendly pressure exerted on Chiang Kai-shek and the perception of Germany as the country most likely to win the war in 1940 emerged in certain Chongqing circles. I would also argue that Chiang Kai-shek's pragmatic foreign policy approach until July 1941 and the existence of clandestine back

channels in Berne, anticipated by the British, contributed, amongst other issues, to mistrust levelled at Chongqing in general.

I partially agree with Goldstein's statement that Chiang Kai-shek's foreign policy approach meant China's short-term survival, but failed to produce allies in the long run (Goldstein, 1990, 1058). Foo (2011, 2-3), in contrast, credits Garver (1988) with his re-evaluation of Chiang Kai-shek's record of foreign diplomacy. However, in my view, while Chiang Kai-shek's foreign policy approach did alienate long-term allies, it was very much influenced by Chongqing China's previous experiences throughout the 1930s and internal competition over foreign policy. The ease with which alliances and cooperations between major powers shifted must have fostered a foreign policy approach that would allow Nationalist China to adapt quickly to changes in international relations. Hence, Nanjing was able to secure Soviet aid after being abandoned by Germany for Japan in 1938. Similarly, when the Soviet Union and Japan signed the *Neutrality Pact* in April 1941, Chinese attention fully focused on bringing the US into the war, a move that brought Chiang Kai-shek in an alliance with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill (Iriye, 1987, 179, in Taylor, 2009, 186).

Scholars have pointed out that German-friendly individuals, such as Zhu Jiahua, openly called on Chiang Kai-shek to enter into an alliance with Britain after Germany signed the *Tripartite Pact* in September 1940 (Sun, 1993, 144). However, even this break with Germany did not remove all mistrust the Allies had towards the German-friendly group. Contemporary British observers such as British Ambassador Archibald Clark Kerr, stated on 5 August 1941, in a letter from Chongqing to the British Foreign Office in London, that influential Chinese circles regretted the end of Sino-German relations.³⁰⁸ Thorne (1978, 66) also notes that the British Foreign Office internally admitted in 1941 that "China's resentment against Britain was not without justification".³⁰⁹ Kerr's report is just one of a number of documents read for this

³⁰⁸ TNA, (PRO) WO 208/232, China, Chapter 1: Political; Chungking Government's Relations with Germany, 5 August 1942, letter by Kerr from Chongqing to Foreign Office in London.

³⁰⁹ Thorne (1978, 66) quotes: FO 371. F 3572/60/10.

dissertation, and reflected one of the fears dominant in London over Britain's future in East Asia. To be more precise, London feared that Chongqing China would step in as a regional power wherever Britain lost her colonies, for example in Hong Kong or Singapore (Shai, 1984, 53). British observers complained in regular reports to London in May 1943 that the "Situation in China is most unhealthy for British because Chinese are not whole-hearted Allies with us or even with the American who often side with the Chinese against us".³¹⁰

The majority of contemporary Allied observer reports in this dissertation came from a British source, due to the fact that I did not have the time or financial means to investigate US archives for more supporting information. Despite this limitation, it is possible to see that British observers routinely informed the British Foreign Office, throughout the war years, of any changes to Chongqing China's foreign policy or of events indicating a lack of commitment to the Allied cause, including anti-British sentiments that resulted from external developments such as British pre-WWII appeasement measures towards Japan, the Burma Road closure of 1940, or Britain's reluctance to accept the help of Chinese troops on the ground during 1942 to reclaim former British colonies, such as Hong Kong or Singapore (Yu, 2006, 62).

The British foreign policy observations were likely shared with Washington and Moscow,³¹¹ as the request for US observation of Gui Yongqing in Berlin shows. India Office Records show that these observers indeed came very close to the truth about continued Sino-German communications after Pearl Harbor. Ambassador Seymour and his colleagues in the British Foreign Office made one mistake, however. By focusing on Qi's 1942 appointment to Switzerland and his connections to Schacht, Qi rose in the British eyes to become the middleman between Chiang Kai-shek and "Berlin". Gui, however, appears to have vanished from the British radar. In this regard,

³¹⁰ TNA, (PRO) HS 1/165, Far East China: OSS/SOE Co-Operation. Telegram received from Chongqing on 31 May 1943.

³¹¹ There is no evidence for this assumption, but further research in Russian archives might shed light on this issue. The USA and British continued to worry about the presence of Germans in Chongqing in 1943, who were allowed to roam the streets freely, while "friendless refugees" were interned by the Chinese. TNA, (PRO) FO 371/3825, File 1034/G. Telegram by Sir H. Seymour, Chongqing, 20 February 1943.

Qi's appointment can also be seen as a diversion strategy, diverting Allied attention away from the actual contact to Berlin, which was Gui.

Section Two: Analysis of post-1941 relations

The break in official Sino-German relations in July 1941 had severe consequences for the work Gui and Qi were carrying out in Berlin. As result of a policy that shared much similarity with the post-WWII Hallstein-Doctrine that West Germany applied to all countries that acknowledged the DDR, Chongqing China broke off relations with all countries that acknowledged the Wang Jingwei Collaborationist government. In consequence of the German recognition of the Collaborationist government, almost all of the Chinese embassy staff in Berlin were recalled, with the exception of Gui, who stayed in Switzerland, and maintained the only direct communication back channel for Chongqing to leading Nazis.

Switzerland was a plausible choice for Gui, as it was the only neutral direct neighbour of the Third Reich, and the alpine republic had turned into the centre for espionage in Europe (Read and Fisher, 1980, 113).³¹² It therefore became the most suitable location to gather and exchange intelligence information and to enable direct contact with Germans who still had the right to travel to Switzerland. The small number of documents and lack of intensity with which Chinese intelligence actions were observed by the Swiss authorities sheds light on the perception of East Asian affairs in Switzerland, and in the West in general. That the war developments in Europe were of greater importance to the government in Berne is without a doubt, thus more importance was placed on British/US and German activities. However, this lack of archival material also contributed to the perception in post-war research that the

³¹² Other neutral European countries were Sweden, Spain, Portugal, Turkey and the Irish Free State (Stevens, 1999, 540). Read and Fisher (1980, 113) describes these foreign intelligence services as being "all heavily intertwined and interdependent".

European and East Asian war theatres were separate from each other, and that Chongqing China played no role in developments in WWII Europe.

The pragmatic and *gewundene* (flexible) foreign policy approach, as outlined in the October 1940 Resource Commission paper and reflected by 1938-1941 Sino-foreign relations, officially came to an end in December 1941. The official break of relations in July 1941 had already dealt a blow to German-friendly individuals in Chongqing, as any efforts to foster Sino-German relations or to rectify German East Asian foreign policy were no longer possible. Calls to declare war on Germany surfaced in July 1941 already, however, only when the entry of the US was secured in December 1941 did Chiang Kai-shek declare war on Nazi-Germany.

The events of Pearl Harbor and Chongqing China's alliance with the Western Allies did not close the two Chinese back channels to "Berlin" and the German Resistance. On the contrary, both channels continued to exist and allowed Chiang Kai-shek to gather additional intelligence directly from within Germany, where, in contrast to the Western Powers, he had no intelligence staff. Moreover, the "Berlin" channel represented an alternative communication channel through which to reach Japan, as became evident in Chapter Six. This 1942 communication between Chongqing and Japan via Germany would have taken place at a time when, as Sun (1993, 145) argues, all secret contacts to Japan had been terminated since October 1940, following the signing of the *Tripartite Pact*.³¹³ The channel to the German Resistance, on the other hand, would have raised Chongqing China's profile amongst the Allies, especially since Republican China entered the negotiations as a mediator for the very first time.

Analysis of Swiss channels and Chiang Kai-shek's WWII alliance with the Allies

The events of Pearl Harbor in December 1941 finally gave Chongqing China and Chiang Kai-shek the ally they had been waiting for: the US. While Sino-Allied relations would become strained for numerous reasons, amongst those the Chiang-

³¹³ Sun (1993, 145) quotes: Chiang Kai-shek's diary, September 29, *ibid.*, 52, 61; Diary, September 22, *DSCB*, 4, part 2: 576.

Stilwell conflict, the failed Burma-Campaign or the issues with Allied military aid,³¹⁴ throughout the time that Jahnke and Gui Yongqing met in 1942, Chiang Kai-shek had no reason to mistrust his allies.

However, as the archival material shows, two clandestine back channels were established in Switzerland. Directly after the break of relations, the first channel to emerge was the “Berlin-Chiang Channel”, as Qi Jun returned to China first to deliver the request for mediation by the German Resistance. From the beginning, the two channels were kept apart: Gui managed the communication with “Berlin”, while Qi was responsible for the German Resistance and contacts to the American OSS. The recorded communication between all parties is not the only evidence for such an assumption, but the evidence is strengthened by the fact that Gui and Qi seem to have kept a distance from each other, a fact that Gui himself reported in August 1943.³¹⁵ This safety measure limited the risk of discovery for both channels.

By keeping these two communication lines in Switzerland apart, Chiang thus not only prevented discovery of his German channels in Switzerland, but also at home. Foreign observers kept a close eye on developments in Chongqing prior to and after Pearl Harbor as the British reports on Qi Jun’s appointment to Switzerland indicate. Complaints about the treatment of Germans in Chongqing and a perceived German-friendly attitude persisted after December 1941.³¹⁶

“German Resistance-Chiang Channel”

This particular communication channel features very little in recent academic research, except for work by Yang Tianshi (2010b), and its existence has even been dismissed on the mistaken assumption that the German Resistance would not possibly

³¹⁴ For more information on the issues of the Allied military aid to Chongqing China see Yu (2006). In this 2006 publication, Yu highlights well the different issues that hampered US aid efforts to China, such as the influence Soviet spies within the US administration had on the Lend-Lease programme, which in return contributed to the very difficult political and economic situation the Republican government found itself in.

³¹⁵ AH, “*Geguo qingbao* (Intelligence reports on various countries) (3)”, “*Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu*”, *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-080107-00003-001, Entry Number: 002000001306A, p.82, 28 August 1943, report by Gui Yongqing from Berne.

³¹⁶ TNA FO 371/35825, Sir H. Seymour from Chongqing to London, 20 February 1943.

have consulted with Chiang Kai-shek in the first place. Such criticism, however, does not take the cordial relations between Resistance members and Chiang Kai-shek into account, or consider the pragmatic reality of Chiang Kai-shek's foreign policy at this time. Yang's argument has hitherto not been supported by a large amount of documentary material beyond Chiang Kai-shek's own diary, either. However, if we consider the documents in Taiwan, Germany, and England that have been consulted in this dissertation, it is clear that Yang's theory is correct. This dissertation, however, further expands on this topic and shows that Chiang's direct communication with the Resistance went well beyond July 1941. Indeed, the existence of this channel and the aid given by China should make us re-think statements by scholars, such as Hoffmann (1988, 102-103), who stated that the German Resistance "remained without any Allied support or encouragement whatsoever". Even though Chinese aid was limited and Chiang Kai-shek's mediation attempt failed in the end, Chongqing China's support far exceeded that of the British or the US government.

Nonetheless, the question of why Chiang Kai-shek would even bother to support the German Resistance, when the Western Allies rejected any cooperation, is a legitimate one. As a consequence, it must be assumed that Chiang Kai-shek had his own motivations and objectives that set him apart from Allied leaders such as Churchill and Roosevelt.³¹⁷ These objectives may have been strong enough to lead Chiang to accept the proposal for mediation between the Resistance movement and the Roosevelt administration.

By accepting the request for mediation from the Resistance, Chiang Kai-shek went further than both Churchill and Roosevelt. Of Churchill it is known that he did not approve of any cooperation with the German Resistance, and pressed President Roosevelt not to support the movement either (Hoffmann, 1988, 97-98).³¹⁸ Despite the pressure exerted by Churchill, Roosevelt appointed Allen Welsh Dulles to Switzerland,

³¹⁷ Soviet leader Joseph Stalin is excluded from this list as it is known in research that the Resistance movement of 20 July 1944 did not approach the Soviet Union, but hoped to cooperate with the Western Allies against the Soviet Union, after a new German government had come in.

³¹⁸ Hoffmann (1988, 97-98) quotes: PRO FO 371/26542/[C610]; FO 371/26543/C10855, Premier 4/100/8; cf. Hoffmann, "Peace", pp.11-12

in order to establish contact with the German Resistance and its representatives such as Gisevius (Hoffmann, 1988, 102). However, even though Dulles proposed cooperation with the movement, the President refrained from taking action.

As the archival material in this dissertation reveals, Chiang Kai-shek did not give the same kind of refusal to the German Resistance as the other Allies did. The reason for this kind of treatment may be down to three factors. The first such factor would be the good relationship Chiang Kai-shek had with some of the Resistance members, such as Falkenhausen or to a lesser degree Schacht and Thomas.³¹⁹ However, the second factor is more likely. China's position and experience as a non-European nation may well have influenced her reaction toward the Resistance, and Germany as a whole. In contrast to China, Britain and other European nations directly felt the impact of the European war, while still having fresh memories of WWI. In their minds, the German war machine had to be stopped once and for all, hence the demand for unconditional surrender.³²⁰ Additionally, there was the so-called "Venlo Incident", during which British intelligence agents, who believed they were to meet with Resistance members, had been kidnapped by the RSHA.³²¹ The Allied WWI perception of Germany along with mistrust of the Resistance's motivations, led the Western Allies to reject the movement.

The third reason that may have led Chiang Kai-shek to support the German Resistance was the possibility that China's standing amongst the Allies would have increased, especially since China emerged as a mediator between Western groups for the first time. Of a more speculative nature would be the possibility that the German Resistance played a minor role in Chinese war plans. As mentioned above in the

³¹⁹ In his report from November 1941, Qi Jun listed Chinese-friendly and Japanese-friendly individuals. China-friendly individuals include: Schacht, Thomas, and Göring. Japanese-friendly individuals are led at first place by Foreign Minister Ribbentrop. See, AH, "*Dui Deguo Waijiao* (About German foreign relations) (6)", "*Jiang Zhongzheng Zongtong Wenwu*", *Guoshiguancang*, Document Number: 002-080106-00060-008, Entry Number: 002000001283A, p.23, 25, 27.

³²⁰ The German Resistance used several channels to reach the British government, amongst others, Pope Pius XII. In a conversation between the Pope and the British Minister it becomes evident that Britain felt that "how we could make peace so long as the German military machine remained intact" (Hoffmann, 1988, 93) Hoffmann (1988, 93) quotes: Ludlow (1974, 337).

³²¹ For more information see: Schellenberg (1956a & 1956b) and MacDonald (1978).

dissertation, the “Europe first”-strategy met with resistance in Chongqing, which perceived Japan as the far more dangerous enemy. If the German Resistance had been successful in overthrowing the Hitler government, the likelihood that fighting in Europe would have ended, or at least decreased, was high. In return, a larger portion of the Allied war strategy would have turned to East Asia and the fight against Japan.

Chiang Kai-shek seems to have been willing to support the movement to a certain degree through the appointment of Qi Jun to Switzerland. Qi Jun neither occupied a high level position during his time in Berlin nor in Berne, which may indicate that the Resistance movement was given little chance for success and that Chongqing merely wanted “to keep the door open”. The theory of Qi’s rather insignificant position is derived from the fact that he was not even included in most bibliographical dictionaries on Republican Chinese government officials (e.g. Xu, 1991). This argument is supported by the statement of contemporary witness Marcus, Jahnke’s secretary, who called the Chinese decision not to “become involved” (Liang 1978, 145) a mistake. According to Marcus’s description (Liang, 1978, 145) the Chinese failed to make use of a high degree of admiration for China inside the German Resistance, which was not limited to Schacht, Thomas and Falkenhausen, but also included prominent individuals such as Adam von Trott zu Solz, who spent months in Beijing in 1937 (Liang, 1978, 149).

The request for mediation by the German side, and the willingness of Chiang Kai-shek to support the movement’s fight against Hitler, make this a back channel as defined by Wanis St. John and others. The request for back-channel mediation stemmed from the Resistance, with Chiang Kai-shek serving as the mediator. In general, the process of this back channel meets secrecy requirements, as well as meetings at neutral locations. The objectives that emerge from the “Resistance-Chiang Channel” are on both sides clearly linked to European war developments. Moreover, if

Chiang Kai-shek had successfully brokered an agreement and the war in Europe ended, China's reputation would have increased significantly.

The potential benefits for Chiang Kai-shek by supporting the German Resistance may have only emerged over the course of time. Qi Jun's initial meetings with Schacht and Thomas were characterised by questions on how a possible cooperation would benefit China. The amount of effort and support that Chiang invested in this channel is not clear in this dissertation, as the Chinese sources do not provide enough information. Future research in US archives may answer this question; since far more documents exist there that survived the war and that possibly contain discussions on Chiang Kai-shek's mediation attempts.

At second glance, issues in the execution of this BCD attempt emerge, which have plagued almost all of the back-channel negotiations mentioned in this dissertation. As was the case with the Schacht 1938 mediation case, the "Washington-Chiang-Resistance" mediation attempt was one-sided, a factor that has been identified as significantly lowering the success of mediation attempts. The fact that only members of the German Resistance proposed the mediation indicates that the time had not been ripe and that the Western Allies did not see the need to enter into mediation with the Resistance. Moreover, the crucial element of trust did not exist, and due to the restrictions of wartime, meetings between envoys from the US, Chongqing China and the German Resistance were impossible. The only exception was OSS officer Dulles, who met with Qi and Gisevius in Switzerland to discuss issues, but any trust which may have been established between these men did not include the Washington administration. Ó Dorchtaraigh's research (2011, 767) pointed out the importance of a shared secret to establish trust, but the physical distance between the Resistance and Washington countered any feelings of trust that may have emerged between the individuals in Switzerland. Furthermore, the existence of the Resistance and the attempts to gain foreign support were widely known amongst the Allied leadership, and powerful individuals, such as Churchill, countered any rapprochement (Hoffmann, 1988,

97-98). Different perception of the issues that hindered cooperation between the Resistance and the Allies contributed to the failure of any of the approaches the Resistance made to the Allies.

The increasingly negative image of Chiang Kai-shek as an anti-democratic ruler might have further undermined any support the Resistance received from the Generalissimo in Washington. Since the full extent of Chinese support for the movement is not clear at this stage, it can be argued that if the mediator's effort is only half-hearted, as the rather small scale support suggests, then the likelihood for success is further reduced.

Furthermore, it is important to note the absence of a neutral mediator, something which also featured prominently in the "Japan-Berlin-Chiang" back channel. The question whether a mediator has to be neutral is unclear, with BCD theorists placing great emphasis on it. Bercovitch and Houston (2011, 45), however, argue that "mediators can succeed if they can 'move things about' and not because they are important or neutral". Nominally, Chiang Kai-shek was not a neutral mediator, because China was at war with the Third Reich, and the German army. Even though the Resistance members did not represent the official German government, as German citizens they were nominally enemies. If a mediator's neutrality is not as important as described by BCD theorists, then the quality of work carried out by the mediator has far greater influence on the outcome of mediation. I would argue that my research of the Sino-Resistance channel supports Bercovitch's and Houston's (2011) and Astor's (2007) theories on mediator neutrality.

"Berlin-Chiang Channel"

The sudden decision to appoint Gui Yongqing as the new military attaché to Switzerland was probably linked to the fact that he already offered a communication line to the higher levels of the Third Reich. Moreover Gui was already in Europe, and could take up the communication with Jahnke right where it had stopped in Berlin.

The Sino-German back channels from 1942 until the end of the war raise questions as to why Chiang Kai-shek would have maintained these channels. While the objectives of Chiang Kai-shek, his aides in Germany, and the two German sides are clear in pre-1941 channels, the same cannot be said about back channel communication to Nazi Germany after December 1941. The obvious reason is that Chiang Kai-shek had joined the Allies in December 1941, thus realising Chongqing China's main foreign policy objective. Any clandestine connections to Nazi Germany and Japan would have been obsolete.

Moreover, as will be discussed below, the possibility of reaching a peace agreement with Japan through German mediation back channels in 1942 was very slim, as indicated by Chiang Kai-shek's and Gui's approach to the back channel. Apart from the way Chiang Kai-shek and Japan both reacted to the German mediation effort, other factors further speak for very little chance of success for any German mediation. For example, Chongqing China would have surely made a much worse peace deal in terms of regaining occupied territory through the "Berlin-Chiang Channel" mediation efforts than she actually gained through her alliance with the Allies. An agreement with Japan would have contained at least a number of demands, such as Chinese recognition of Manchukuo. Through the alliance with the US, on the other hand, Chiang Kai-shek could be sure to re-gain all the territory occupied by Japan since 1931.

It could be argued that the differences that emerged between the Allies right from the beginning in December 1941, and the general perception of the Allies as "unreliable" (Mitter, 2013, 14) could have had an influence on the decision to maintain Sino-German back channels. However, any differences over the Allied war strategy and the treatment of Chongqing China by the Allies would not come into effect until later in 1942, hence other reasons must be the source for the decision to maintain Sino-German back channels.

Considering the pragmatic foreign policy approach that has so far been identified in this dissertation, but also in recent research, clandestine channels to Japan after

December 1941 are not surprising, especially given the role Japan assumed in East Asia as the Allies' main adversary. Nazi Germany, on the other hand, would seem as an odd choice to maintain relations with, since Germany did not fight alongside Japan in East Asia and had no major economic or territorial interests at stake in the region. However, in a truly global war developments in one region may have had repercussions for the rest of the world. Hence, as the archival material reveals, Germany's interest in Japan lay in the man power the latter could throw at the Western Allies. In the opinion of the RSHA, such a large number of soldiers would have resulted in a diversion of Allied war efforts from the European war theatre.

Similarly, I would argue that the existence of the back channels between Chiang Kai-shek and "Berlin" indicates that the Generalissimo's actions were not limited to East Asia. On the contrary, Chinese agents were at least involved in espionage in Europe. Intelligence played a major role in WWII, as the strong presence of Axis and Allied intelligence agents in Europe and East Asia proves.³²² The great difference between "Berlin"'s approach to the back channel and Chiang Kai-shek's and Gui's apparent stalling tactic when it came to provide "Berlin" with an answer to the numerous Sino-German cooperation proposals, indicates that the "Berlin-Chiang Channel" was used to keep all doors open in the conflict but also to keep German interest in China alive.

In contrast, "Berlin", concerned by the US entry into the war and a long-drawn out war in East Asia, saw China's resistance as the key to solving a number of issues, such as war with the Soviet Union. The RSHA's repeated attempts to resolve the Sino-Japanese conflict first in 1942 via the "Berlin-Chiang Channel" and then by using German agents in Shanghai in 1944, supports this point. Ironically – given that the Nationalist government of Chiang Kai-shek had approached Nazi Germany throughout

³²² Maochun Yu (2006) provides an excellent account of British, US and French intelligence operation and cooperation in and with Chongqing China respectively. Moreover, Wakeman Jr. (2003) offers a great monograph on the Chinese secret service. For intelligence operations in Europe see for example: Mauch (2003).

the late 1930s for support - by the time the RSHA proposals had been put forward, Chongqing China had already irrevocably linked herself with the Western Allies.

The second reason to maintain clandestine Sino-German back channels identified in this dissertation was the fact that they represented an alternative means to approaching Japan. The inclusion of Japan in the back channel between Chongqing and "Berlin" is of interest. As the analysis below highlights, neither Japan nor Chiang Kai-shek seem to have given this mediation effort any chance of success. Without wanting to foreclose all of the back channel analysis findings in the next section of this chapter, I would like to focus on factors which indicate the lack of Chinese and Japanese willingness to mediate.

Chapter Six presented information on a mediation attempt proposed by the Chinese Secret Service in early 1942. In summary the mediation attempt saw "Berlin" mediate between Tokyo and Chiang Kai-shek. Demands by both sides were transmitted to the respective other side by Jahnke and the RSHA. It was noted that the initial Chinese demands were far too high for Japan to ever accept. Efforts ended in September 1942 when Japan continued to advance further in South-East Asia.

I would argue that the Chinese Secret Service, Chiang Kai-shek and Gui did not take this mediation effort as a chance to reach a deal with Japan, but as a tool to distract Japan, as had happened through other clandestine channels in the past (Boyle, 1972). The unrealistic demands that Chongqing forwarded to Japan via "Berlin", and the fact that Chiang Kai-shek had succeeded only three months earlier to finally enter into an alliance with the US, are indicators of this.

Indeed, the interest in such a channel would have been rather low, given China's fresh alliance with the Western Allies. The conflict conditions shifted with the attack on Pearl Harbor in favour of the Allies, thus it is highly unlikely that Chiang Kai-shek would have risked his alliance with the Western Allies and the prospect to re-gain

all of China's occupied territories for a mediated peace with Japan.³²³ The importance of the alliance with the US for Chiang Kai-shek and Chongqing is visible in the words used by Sun (1993, 141): "Chiang made it very clear that he had decided to throw China's lot with America". These words described the foreign policy situation in Chongqing in September 1939, however, they are equally valid to describe Chongqing China's focus and dependence on the US after December 1941.

"Berlin"'s mediation attempt ended in September 1942 when Japan apparently voiced the end of her cooperation. I would argue that the Japanese side, similar to the Chinese side, did not trust this mediation attempt. One indicator for this argument is the fact that while the RSHA tried to mediate between Tokyo and Chiang Kai-shek, an alternative mediation attempt took place. Several Japanese feelers contacted the German side between March and June 1942 in an attempt to mediate between Stalin and Hitler (Schellenberg, 1956, 298-301). The existence of this mediation attempt may as well indicate that Japan looked for alternative means than a peace with China to solve the issues she faced in East Asia, and Germany faced in the Soviet Union. It can be speculated that this mistrust for any mediation with Chongqing may very well be rooted in the experience Tokyo made with previous peace negotiations, which in the end had turned out to be a hoax.

"Berlin-Chiang Channel" back channels analysis

The time in which Gui was active as military attaché in Berlin was characterised by two lines of communication. There was the back channel through which Gui contacted leading Nazis, which can be classified as a simple back channel, thus avoiding the official diplomatic front channels through the Chinese and German Foreign Office apparatus. This channel is rather intriguing and unusual, since Gui acted as military attaché and as such was not meant to carry out the duties of Ambassador

³²³ See Greig and Diehl (2012, 130), who argue that conflict conditions, meaning the conflicting parties assessing the "success and failure of violence as a means to achieve their goals and weigh the benefits of shifting their strategies toward diplomatic solutions". In the case of Chiang Kai-shek, the alliance with the US was the Generalissimo's primary goal, hence any German peace mediation was unnecessary.

Chen Jie. That attachés may become involved in activities outside their restrictions has been mentioned, but their inclusion in BCD has been limited. Theorists such as Wanis St. John (2006) and Ó Dorchtaraigh (2011) have limited the number of players to both governmental, private sector individuals, and terrorist organisations. The role of official armies in BCD has not, as yet, been fully explored.

I would argue that the role of attachés, and the governmental department they worked for, should be included as a possible influence on BCD, in particular in nations with a weak administration that is unable to keep a powerful army in check. This was the case in Nationalist Chongqing China and has been observed in more recent times too. In 2007 back-channel negotiations over the Kashmir conflict between Pakistan and India, the Pakistani Army took centre stage. This was partially due to the fact that the military dictator General Pervez Musharraf controlled the military and the executive, and got much involved in these negotiations that took place at neutral locations in Bangkok, Dubai and London (Coll, 2009, 1). In a strong Pakistani administration the military would have been unable to wield as much influence as it did. Similarly, Chongqing China's administration was weak (see Strauss, 1998) and the military could exercise significant influence, not least because Chiang Kai-shek was a military man himself.

The case of China supports the idea that if military and civilian organs are too interwoven with each other (Chiang Kai-shek was head of the Chinese army and in control of the government) the military makes use of its influence. Coll's research into the India-Pakistan relations further sheds light on this development. In this dissertation, the available evidence provided from the observations of contemporary foreign observers confirms that the Chinese military and officer corps was predominantly German-friendly, and the influence of the Chinese military advisers on Chiang Kai-shek was considerable, as William Donald pointed out in October 1940.

Up until July 1941 there existed two channels that involved Gui Yongqing, the second one being a clandestine intelligence channel. The latter cannot be classified as

a back channel, unless evidence can be found in the future that shows that the discussion between Gui and Jahnke had any effect on Sino-German foreign policy. Over time, however, this initial intelligence channel developed into a diplomatic back channel when all other important communication channels between the Third Reich and Chiang Kai-shek ceased to exist.

The back channel in Berne transmitted foreign policy and foreign relations proposals between “Berlin” and Chiang Kai-shek. Even though “Berlin” constituted a certain number of leading Nazis, their direct contact to the main decision maker Hitler, and the attempt to influence German East Asian foreign policy, made this channel a back channel. Archival research and secondary literature clearly show that the German participants in this channel intended to circumvent the German Foreign Office. At that stage, however, the back channel had not fully evolved into a conflict solution tool similar to the Oslo back channel in 1992.

However, the Chinese 1942 mediation request transformed this simple back channel between “Berlin” and Chiang Kai-shek in Berne. Factors essential for the success of back channel negotiations such as secrecy and the use of a mediator and neutral locations can all be found here. However, as we will see, the 1942 Chinese mediation request suffered from similar obstacles as the mediation attempts in 1938 and 1939. Especially the lack of direct contact to build up essential trust has to be named here.

Elements that hampered back-channel negotiations, this time between China and Japan, were, amongst others, again a lack of trust. Above I concluded that the evidence in Chapter Six and an analysis of the mediation back channel would indicate that both the Japanese and the Chinese side did not put full faith in this mediation attempt. On the Chinese side this came down to the fact that a peace deal with Japan was not necessary anymore in 1942. On the Japanese side, earlier experiences with clandestine peace negotiations with Chongqing, as well as the attempt to find a solution to issues faced in the Soviet Union and China by Japan, point to a lack of trust

in negotiations with Chiang Kai-shek. However, if trust *had* existed, it could have allowed for the two sides to generate an affiliation, hence raising the possibility of reaching a compromise (Spector, 1998, 54). This trust was unable to be established since both sides did not meet personally, but had Jahnke travel between Berlin and Berne. Furthermore, the involvement of Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop (who until then had sabotaged many attempts to foster relations and to mediate between China and Japan) may also be seen as an obstacle, as much as the lack of direct contact prevented the exchange and explanation of foreign relations positions.

Aspects new to BCD were the fact that “Berlin” was not a neutral mediator, and the inclusion of intelligence channels as a means for communication. The question in regard to mediator neutrality has already been raised in the analysis of the “Chiang-Resistance Channel”. Similarly, to China’s position as a non-neutral mediator, “Berlin” also was all but a neutral mediator between Chiang Kai-shek and Tokyo in 1942. With the outbreak of the Pacific War, the Third Reich ceased to be a neutral entity in the Sino-Japanese conflict, officially siding with Japan. Hence, it was impossible for “Berlin” to take a neutral position in the 1942 back-channel mediation.

However, as long as a mediator has the “ability to influence, protect or extend the interests of each party in conflict” (Bercovitch and Houston, 2011, 45),³²⁴ neutrality is only secondary. While in this particular case negotiations took place in a neutral country, hence meeting some of the BCD standards, the lack of neutrality was not an issue. Even though Chiang Kai-shek and “Berlin” were nominally at war, behind-the-scenes, a more ambivalent, non-conflictual relationship must have existed. As a result, BCD theory needs to be reformed to accommodate for a situation, in which: two or more participants of BCD nominally are in conflict with each other, however in reality share a more positive relationship. The reason to choose BCD in such a case would then be the fact that the existence of such a back channel has to be hidden from another third party, even from an ally. This necessity has only just recently been

³²⁴ Bercovitch and Houston (2011, 45) quote: Faure, 1989; Kressel and Pruitt, 1985; Smith, 1985; Touval, 1985; Touval and Zartman, 1985

highlighted in the 2013 negotiations over the Iranian nuclear programme, during which high-ranking US and Iranian diplomats conducted clandestine talks that they kept hidden even from US allies such as Israel, as it was probably feared that Israel would negatively influence any negotiations (BBC, 2013). In this specific case of the "Berlin-Chiang Channel", however, the outside parties to hide from were the Western Allies, the US and Britain.

The Israeli Palestinian Peace Talks, which I mentioned in Chapter One, have highlighted an aspect which is little mentioned in recent research: the absence of any chance to use a front channel. While back-channel negotiations in Oslo took place, an official front channel also engaged in the peace process, but with little chance of reaching any result (Wanis-St. John, 2006, 122). In this dissertation, the Resistance never had the option of operating through a front channel. Similarly, the post-July 1941 "Berlin-Chiang Channel" also had no possibility to operate a front channel that might have served as a distraction.

The last element relatively new to back-channel theory is the inclusion and use of intelligence channels to uphold back-channel communication. On the basis of evidence presented in this dissertation, I would argue that BCD theory should allow for the inclusion of intelligence channels as elements. The "Berlin-Chiang Channel" intermediaries Jahnke and Gui were both intelligence agents, and carried out their meetings in secrecy, with only a handful of people being aware of them.³²⁵ On both sides, secrecy was highly valued, in particular on the Chinese one, as Chiang Kai-shek's regulations on the encryption of Gui's reports show. Chapters Five and Six established that both Gui and Jahnke were associated with intelligence services and activities. While Gui may have served officially as a member of the embassy staff in Switzerland, the connections of Jahnke clearly went through the Nazi party intelligence service RSHA before they reached Hitler. The use of intelligence channels has hardly

³²⁵ Gui Yongqing has already been established to be a loyal follower of Chiang Kai-shek and member of the inner circle of the Lixingshe. Kurt Jahnke did not fully enjoy Hitler's trust and survived a murder attempt in 1934 only because he was not at home (Liang, 1978, 118). However, Walter Schellenberg speaks favourably of Jahnke in his memoirs and seemed to have vouched for the latter. Schellenberg himself was protected and led by Himmler.

been noticed by academia, with the exception of Coll (2009, 17), who has pointed out the involvement of Pakistan's Inter Intelligence Service (ISI) in the 2007 India-Pakistan back-channel negotiations. Apart from this case, prominent cases usually highlight the involvement of private individuals in BCD.

In conclusion, the "Berlin-Chiang Channel" underscores BCD limitations and issues that have already been pointed out in regard to the "German Resistance-Chiang Channel", but also opened up discussion over new aspects that constitute BCD.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

Throughout this dissertation, I have presented and analysed information that challenges our understanding of the historiography of Republican China's WWII relationship with Nazi Germany, contributed to research on Chiang Kai-shek's pragmatic foreign policy and Chongqing Chinese presence in wartime Europe.

However, scholars so far have followed the established narratives that all connections to Nazi Germany ended in July 1941, and that Chongqing China stayed largely focused on events in East Asia and aloof from the European theatre of war. This narrative is visible in publications by Taylor (2009), Mitter (2013), and even research on intelligence connections, such as Wakeman Jr. (2003) or Yu (2006) hardly explore the Sino-Allied intelligence cooperation outside of East Asia. Even though Chiang Kai-shek's foreign policy was pragmatic, the argument goes that from a certain point onwards, China only sought to cooperate with the US, and that all of her efforts were focused on bringing about the entry of the US into the war, and after December 1941 to gain as much support as possible. In this established narrative, Sino-German wartime relations hardly existed.

As this dissertation reveals, Chinese foreign policy and her relationship to the Third Reich has been far more multi-faceted and pragmatic than assumed. It is highlighted that the inter-connection between the two theatres of war and their dependence on each other was much stronger than realised. Much of Chiang Kai-shek's foreign policy pragmatism had its roots in the foreign relations developments of the 1930s, during which Republican China had serious problems in finding a trustworthy and reliable ally, as well as the fact that several Western nations rejected confronting Japan for a significant amount of time after July 1937. Alliances were only perceived to be temporarily. Hence keeping all doors open became a necessity whereby one could prepare for possible changes in international relations.

As this research reveals, decision-making individuals in Chongqing, such as Chiang Kai-shek, did not sit idle, but actively engaged in diplomacy through back-channels to keep all doors open, and to avoid being overrun by events. This back-channel strategy was rooted in the experiences of Nationalist China during the 1930s and in particular after the outbreak of the second Sino-Japanese conflict. In the two years between July 1937 and the outbreak of WWII in Europe in September 1939, Chongqing China had already fought the Japanese for two years. Throughout these two years, Chiang Kai-shek failed to forge any lasting alliances. Even the Soviet Union, then China's most important supplier of arms, refrained from officially siding with Chiang Kai-shek. The other major powers, Britain and the US, did not intervene on China's behalf in the Sino-Japanese conflict either. The outbreak of the European War further complicated the situation, as the world's focus was on Britain and Germany. Chinese attempts to gain support in Europe, and to link the two war theatres with each other failed.

Throughout this time, political lobby groups, split along German-friendly and anti-Axis lines, competed over the course of Chinese foreign policy and relations. External developments and the behaviour of foreign powers influenced the political standing of these lobby groups. When Chinese observers witnessed a strong Third Reich in 1940 and 1941, calls became increasingly loud to choose the German side of the conflict. German-friendly forces in Chongqing declared Germany to be in the perfect position of power to influence Japan on behalf of China. Obviously any alliance with Germany would come about only at the expense of Sino-British and Sino-US relations. For this reason, the German-friendly lobby met with resistance, as a number of US-friendly individuals, such as Soong May-ling, T.V. Soong and other US educated Chinese also tried to influence the course of Chinese foreign policy. Moreover, Chinese foreign policy would maintain its pragmatic stance as long as the US refrained from entering into the war.

The German-friendly lobbying, however, did not change the pragmatic foreign policy approach prevalent in Chongqing. As long as all outcomes seemed possible and the US had not entered the war, the competition over China's foreign policy was allowed to continue. It can be assumed that Chiang Kai-shek, as the individual these lobby groups followed, allowed and probably supported these efforts to maintain all diplomatic connections as long as possible. As is often the case in authoritarian regimes in which a single leader takes large amount of power, the Generalissimo involved himself in foreign diplomacy, and intentionally used the internal competition in Chongqing to create the impression of a China sympathetic to the ideals of all sides in the conflict, including the US and Germany. In order to maintain such communication lines, front and back channels were used simultaneously.

The Back Channel elements in Sino-German relations

While much recent research focuses on the conflict-solving aspects of BCD, the much simpler communication aspects of back channels have been overshadowed. This dissertation has succeeded in bringing back the focus on simple back-channel communication between two nations, and highlights the shift from front channels to back channels, and the potential for transformation of these into a conflict-solving tool.

Chapter Six displayed the development in Sino-German relations from official front channels to clandestine back channels. These back channels to leading Nazis were staffed with Chiang Kai-shek's special envoys, Gui Yongqing and Qi Jun. This change took place even though diplomatic front channels still existed, but had proven to be ineffective.

The break of official diplomacy in July 1941, however, transformed the clandestine back channels into the only viable means to uphold communication. The influence of intelligence agents and services at this time increased drastically, as they represented the only safe communication channel in a world torn apart by war. Recent

research carried out on BCD by other scholars (Ó Dorchtaraigh (2011), Wanis-St. John (2006), Waage (2005) and others) hardly mentions the use of intelligence channels, even though as this example shows, they are a natural choice for governments that have no other means of communicating without revealing that exact channel.

In this specific case, it is clear that the back channels underwent changes that were reactions to developments in Sino-German relations and the international situation. Back channels in Berlin in 1940/1941 were largely managed by Chiang Kai-shek's special envoy Gui Yongqing. Indeed, the use of special envoys can be identified as characteristic of this and other Republican Chinese back channels. As academics already argued, and as this dissertation further reveals, Chiang Kai-shek's foreign diplomacy relied on "high-ranking representatives" (Foo, 2011, 6). Even though some of these back channels were not secret (T.V. Soong), all these channels had in common that they circumvented official diplomatic front channels in the sending and the host countries. In Soong's case, evidence shows that Chiang had in fact ordered him to side-line the Chinese embassy in Washington, D.C.

The years of 1940 and 1941, with ever shifting alliances, called for an approach in BCD through special envoys. The reason for this strategy lay in the international situation Chongqing China faced and in Chiang Kai-shek's pragmatic foreign policy approach. Chongqing China's urgent need for an official ally and support had led to the appointment of T.V. Soong to the US. The objectives of Gui's appointment fell into a similar category to those of T.V. Soong, as demonstrated in Chapters Six and Seven. Gui's appointment to Berlin served the purpose of stopping German support for Japan, although in contrast to Soong's mission, there were no requests for loans put forward by Gui. Moreover, in contrast to the widely known Soong back channel, the envoys in Berlin, were planted amongst the Chinese embassy staff, in positions that allowed a certain, but crucial, amount of freedom to engage with German politicians.

The hiding of envoys amongst the embassy staff reduced the risk of the back channel gaining too much attention from Western democracy observers in Berlin and

the Japan-friendly German factions. Hence, Chiang Kai-shek was able to maintain relations with the Third Reich, while at the same time, she could openly declare his sympathy for Britain and France, at a time when the world split along two lines, with each country (and its allies) firmly entrenched on their respective side.

The direct approach of special representatives to foreign governments might have been the reason for Chiang Kai-shek to choose this particular strategy of diplomacy, as it complied with the pragmatism present in Chinese foreign relations throughout the 1930s. Direct contact limited on the one hand the processing time, but also the influence of outsiders that might disagree with the pursued strategy. Moreover, this direct approach is a reflection of the rather low opinion Chiang Kai-shek had of professional diplomats, as it circumvented the Chinese Foreign Office (Chen Yan, 2002b, 261-262). As the evidence in this dissertation reveals, the special envoys were carefully chosen for their positions. Instead of relying on career diplomats, Chiang Kai-shek chose individuals he perceived as trustworthy and suitable to deal with the situation in the host country. The envoys usually belonged to several lobby groups in Chongqing, such as the C.C. Clique, or the Whampoa Clique. However, the fierce infighting between these groups during the 1930s did not matter for the appointment of their members as special envoys. Rather, the suitability of the special envoy to deal with politicians in the respective host country was of the most importance.

Fu Bingchang, for example, had close ties with Soviet-friendly forces of the Prince-Clique in the Nanjing administration, had been to the Soviet Union before as part of Sun Fo's 1937 mission, and was chosen to go to the Soviet Union on these reasons (Foo, 2011, 2). US-educated T.V. Soong was the perfect intermediary between the US and China, and displayed strong affinity for Sino-US cooperation. Gui and Qi both were loyal followers of Chiang, but they were associated with the Whampoa Clique and the C.C. Clique, respectively. Their appointment was based on their loyalty to Chiang Kai-shek, but also on their great knowledge of Germany. Moreover, their connections to individuals in the German military and administration,

established during the 1930s, provided easy access to high-level individuals within Germany's highly militarised and authoritarian government.

In summary, the pre-July 1941 back channel in Berlin constituted a simple back channel that avoided the Chinese and German Foreign Office, and was facilitated through Chiang Kai-shek's special envoys. The decision for a back channel and a special envoy on the Chinese side were driven by the situation in German foreign policy. An official special envoy to Germany (just as T.V. Soong had been to the US) and negotiations between the envoy and leading Nazis may have been rejected and blocked by Japanese-friendly German Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop. Instead the envoys were masked as simple embassy staff and communicated via back channels with German officials.

The break of Sino-German relations in July 1941 saw the end of official relations between Chongqing China and the Third Reich. However, it also had a striking influence on the back channels, as both Chiang Kai-shek's special envoys and the embassy staff left Germany. However, the archival material reveals that the two back channels of Gui and Qi were "outsourced" to Switzerland. The surprising appointment of Gui as military attaché to Berne in summer 1941, and Qi's posting as Legate of Economy at the Chinese legation in March 1942 indicates that the continuation of BCD with special envoys was the most suitable choice of communication. Furthermore, Chiang Kai-shek could rely on two individuals who already had existing communication lines at their disposal, and at least in Qi's case a request for the latter's appointment to Berne had come from the German Resistance. Introducing new individuals to the process would have damaged the back channels.

The simple back channel between "Berlin" and Chiang Kai-shek evolved further when approached by Japan as a tool for mediation. While I will not repeat the characteristics that this channel shares with more recent examples, the differences are

noteworthy. This BCD with Germany as a mediator between China and Japan had several elements that should be considered part of the BCD theory.

This specific back-channel case encourages us to revisit some of the basic factors that characterise back channels. I would argue that communication channels that are clandestine, but where both sides are officially in a state of war with each other and share a far more positive behind-the-scene relationship, should be classified as back channels. As this case reveals, a state of war is no hindrance for clandestine and officially sanctioned diplomacy to take place, as communication can be diverted and channelled through alternative routes such as intelligence channels. Such a possibility may exist primarily in authoritarian governments, as both Chongqing China and the Third Reich were.

Moreover, the chance for this kind of communication to take place is higher when groups of countries are in conflict, as happened during WWII. While Britain and the US had a hostile relationship with Germany that would exclude such back channels, the latter had a much more positive relationship with Chiang Kai-shek's China. These two were officially enemies, but their armies never exchanged fire with one another, and from the available evidence it is clear that the relationship was far more ambivalent than we might expect from two states nominally at war with one another. As a result, in situations where two officially conflicting parties are unable to carry out diplomacy through official channels because the public/ third parties does not allow this to happen, back channels can be used to avoid detection. Clandestine back channels are therefore not only hidden from political opponents, but also from official allies in a conflict.

Closely connected with the directly above-mentioned element is the fact that the Third Reich was no neutral mediator, similarly to Chiang Kai-shek's position between the German Resistance and the Washington administration. In both cases, the mediator was allied to one of the "end-participants" of the back channel, Japan and the US respectively. However, this lack of neutrality does not pose a necessary issue for

the success of mediation, as Bercovitch and Houston (2011) suggest. A mediator has to be able to influence the mediation process, but does not necessarily have to be neutral. It is suggested that further research into the question of neutrality as part of BCD is necessary.

The presence of the German Resistance as one of the players in BCD does not open up new possibilities for the application of back-channel theory. As a non-publicly operating resistance movement the German Resistance does not qualify as an official entity, but would have been described as a “terrorist organisation” by the Nazis, similar to the PLO during the 1980s and 1990s. In hindsight though, this term is rejected here for the Resistance movement.

In comparison, the post-1941 back channels in Switzerland share some similarities but also differences with their predecessors in Berlin. In both cases the special envoys were placed amongst the diplomatic staff in the countries of questions. In the case of Gui Yongqing, communication with “Berlin” had been reduced to the intelligence agent Jahnke, who represented the only contact to leading Nazis. Gui’s apparent role as a leading intelligence agent in Europe could be easily combined with the back channel to Jahnke. Qi’s channel, on the other hand, expanded and included OSS agent Dulles from 1943 onwards.

These back channels question some established aspects of BCD. I would argue that future research on back channels should consider looking closer at the use of intelligence channels as back channels and the question of a neutral mediator. Additionally to intelligence agents, the influence of the military on back channels, as already pointed out by scholars, such as Coll, should receive further attention by academics. This goes in particular for authoritarian regimes, in which internal competition in favour of the “leader” results in non-transparent decision making, and a potential weak administration that is unable to keep the military in check.

Wartime Sino-German relations

One of the intentions of this dissertation was to challenge the current research narrative and the historiography of wartime Republican China's relationship with Nazi Germany and to contribute to the research of her foreign policy approach during the early war years. I succeeded in bringing Germany back into the study of WWII China, and moved beyond the foci on the military mission, trade or German wartime relations with the Wang Jingwei Collaborationist government. Indeed, this dissertation challenged the limits research has set itself, and investigated Sino-German clandestine back channels beyond the important break of official diplomatic relations.

This dissertation clearly reveals that Sino-German relations did not end with July 1941, but continued well beyond the outbreak of the Pacific War. These back channels had evolved over time, largely influenced by both China's pragmatic foreign policy and the Japanese-friendly German Foreign Office that rejected fostering relations with China. The clear shift from official front channels to back channels emerged especially after von Ribbentrop had taken over the German Foreign Office, and further became the preferred route for Chiang Kai-shek to influence and maintain Sino-German relations after September 1939.

Given the evidence presented in this dissertation, I would argue that German-friendly individuals around Chiang Kai-shek perceived Nazi Germany as a tool to exert pressure on Japan from 1940 until July 1941. The reason for this assumption is based on the many references made by Chongqing Chinese, such as Zhu Jiahua or Sun Fo in 1940, that the possibility of Germany winning the war in Europe put her in a stronger position vis-à-vis Japan. The behaviour of other foreign powers hardly changed this perception until Germany signed the *Tripartite Pact* in September 1940. The US remained neutral and continued to maintain diplomatic and trade relations with Japan, but increasingly showed signs of irritation with the East Asian nation. Britain's position in China had been undermined by London's East Asian foreign policy, which was perceived by Nationalist Chinese politicians as appeasing Japan.

It can be argued that Gui's and Qi's appointment to Berlin was a reflection of the influence German-friendly forces had in Chongqing. However, it can also be clearly identified as part of Chiang Kai-shek's pragmatic foreign policy, which, as mentioned above, used these individuals to maintain relations with all sides and to influence German East Asian foreign policy. This is highlighted in the pre-July back channel conversations Gui had with leading Nazis, which centred on German mediation in the Sino-Japanese conflict, and attempts to improve Sino-German relations. These Chongqing Chinese efforts in 1940 and 1941 seem to have received support from China-friendly Germans in the German administration, military and intelligence sector.

These combined Chinese and German efforts, however, did not result in any changes to Germany's East Asian foreign policy, and the *Tripartite Pact* of September 1940 further underscored the importance of a Sino-US alliance in the eyes of many individuals in Chongqing. The Nazi leadership evidently had not considered Sino-German relations a priority. A long drawn out war was not anticipated in Berlin and Chinese resistance against Japan did not play as much a role in the mind of German strategists as it did only two years later. With an ever-closer relationship between Japan and Nazi Germany, Chiang Kai-shek's war objectives focused increasingly on the US, and the objective of the Sino-German back channels changed into one of simply keeping the communication channel open and of gathering information.

I would argue that the German Resistance did not play a major role in pre-July 1941 times, as the Nazi government was not an enemy of Chongqing yet. Also, in regard to influencing Japan through third parties, Nazi Germany was the logical choice. Even though Chiang Kai-shek knew of the Resistance movement as soon as 1938, support for the movement only manifested itself in early 1942, after Pearl Harbor. Suddenly, a connection to an anti-Hitler movement, which had the potential to topple the Nazi government, seemed more interesting. The Resistance's mediation request would have raised China's profile amongst the Allies, as Chongqing was treated as an equal. Apart from raising China's profile, it can be speculated that the possibility of an

end to the European war, brought about by an internal uprising against Hitler, was seen as an opportunity to divert Allied attention away from Europe to East Asia. Future research on this channel could, however, shed more light and challenge this assumption.

The break of official relations in July 1941 represented a great change in Sino-German relations and increased the importance of back-channel communication between Chiang Kai-shek and the two German sides. Official communication networks between Chongqing China and Berlin collapsed. Suddenly taking on major importance, the back-channel connection between the RSHA-agent Jahnke and alleged Chinese agent Gui became a main line of clandestine exchange between “Berlin” and Chiang Kai-shek. Officially enemies, both sides were interested in maintaining a clandestine line of communication, but for different reasons.

The pragmatic foreign policy of the 1930s and early 1940s continued after December 1941. Given that the Allies and the Axis powers appeared equally strong in terms of fire power, such an approach was only logical. Indeed, as Thomas Nowotny (2012, xiii, in Menzell Meskill, 2012) states, a window of opportunity for an Axis win existed in the first half of 1942. Faced with such an international situation and, as a result of previous foreign relations experiences, not entirely reliable allies (Mitter, 2013, 14), clandestine back channels to “Berlin” allowed for a continued flow of intelligence and a line to Japan. The missing replies to the German cooperation proposal in 1942 and 1943, as well as the approach to the “Japan-Berlin-Chiang” mediation process (as outlined in Chapter Seven) speak to the possibility that this clandestine back channel was used by the Chinese side to keep all doors open.

In contrast, German objectives had taken a turn towards Sino-German cooperation after December 1941. I would argue that with the beginning of the Pacific War, and the difficulties at the Eastern Front, a Sino-Japanese peace or Sino-German cooperation increasingly appealed to the Nazi government. Hence, the approaches to

Chiang Kai-shek through Gui Yongqing in Berne. Clearly driven by strategic desires to ease pressure on the military and economy, “Berlin” imagined that an end to the Sino-Japanese war would be the solution to major problems. In contrast to the situation between 1937 and 1941, when Chongqing had sought German support, China - ironically - became an important element in “Berlin”’s calculation from 1942 onwards.

The German Resistance was desperate for Allied support and recognition. After being rejected by the British and the American governments, Resistance members continued to rally through channels in both nations. Some of them, however, approached Chongqing China and more importantly Chiang Kai-shek. Influential Resistance members enjoyed good personal relations with Chiang. The elevation of Chiang Kai-shek into the highest ranks of the Allies opened new possibilities to reach the highest levels in Washington. With Chiang Kai-shek as an intermediary, the Resistance hoped to influence the Americans in their favour. Hopes for this channel were based on Chiang’s positive connections to Germany, probably the good relations he had with a number of Germans, as well as his good links to Roosevelt. Interestingly, Chiang was not asked to mediate between the Resistance and Prime Minister Churchill, who had rejected any cooperation with the Resistance earlier on. A European peace deal brokered through Chiang Kai-shek would have, on the one hand, elevated the Generalissimo to an equal footing with the Western Allies, but also direct the latter’s attention to the China theatre and speed up the fight against Japan.

Influence on Sino-Allied wartime relations

The dissertation has so far highlighted many new aspects of Sino-German relations and contributed to research on Republican Chinese foreign policy approaches. It has become obvious from the previous paragraphs that Chiang Kai-shek’s foreign policy approach was highly pragmatic and did not bother with ideologies; it also relied significantly on back channels and special envoys. This strategy has been clearly

identified as the leading approach in Sino-German relations, and has been witnessed in Sino-US and Sino-Soviet relations too. Such an approach, paired with Allied perceptions of German-friendly individuals in Chongqing, would have not been without influence on Chongqing's relationship with the other Allies.³²⁶

On several occasions within this dissertation, it has been pointed out that the struggle China faced to gain an official ally, and the treatment she received at the hands of the Western Democracies when facing Japan throughout the 1930s, has contributed to the pragmatic foreign policy approach of keeping all doors open. However, I would argue that this pragmatic approach and the existence of a German-friendly clique in Chongqing, amongst other reasons, influenced Sino-Allied relations negatively and contributed to the lack of long-term allies at the end of the war. In this regard, the dissertation tends to agree with Goldstein's (1990) critique of Chiang Kai-shek's diplomatic skills.

In an authoritarian regime, as both the Third Reich and Chongqing China were, interest groups or even individuals distort the natural way in which a government functions. In the case of Germany and her foreign policy, information meant political survival, and Chongqing was likely not much different. Frequently, information meant for Hitler was either withheld or twisted (Shore, 2005, 6). As we know, Hitler actually encouraged this kind of behaviour and competition, probably without realising that it negatively influenced his own decision making.

I would argue that Chiang Kai-shek similarly tolerated internal competition over China's foreign policy, and used individuals belonging to different interest groups in Chongqing to maintain diplomatic channels to all sides, including the Third Reich. While the US-friendly group had a powerful supporter in Soong May-ling, the German-friendly side could always rely on the Generalissimo's own admiration of the German military system, and the significant number of German-educated military officers and civil servants.

³²⁶ See the numerous British reports cited throughout this thesis, which highlight British fears over the existence and influence of German-friendly individuals.

Chiang Kai-shek's and Chongqing China's tendency to open and maintain channels to different sides of the conflict was known to the Western Powers, as the archival material reveals. I would argue that a combination of Chiang's foreign policy approach, the Allied knowledge of Chinese disapproval over the general war strategy, and the Allied perception of a German-friendly lobby, led to an erosion of trust in Chongqing China. British observers in particular, to whom the maintenance of the China theatre was crucial, watched the foreign policy development in Chongqing carefully. German-friendly influences early on in the war alarmed the Allies, who feared that these would drive Chiang Kai-shek toward the Axis Powers.

Despite British suspicions concerning the "pipe-line" in Switzerland in 1942, they did not discuss with Swiss authorities the actions of Chinese embassy staff, as the lack of any material on Chinese espionage in Swiss archives suggests. This may have been for several reasons. On the one hand Britain did not have the need to ask the Swiss for help, as they had sufficient intelligence staff stationed there. On the other hand, it is also likely that as soon as it became evident that Qi worked as a middleman for Chiang and the Resistance any surveillance was stopped, and the actual back channel between Chiang and the Third Reich—Gui—remained un-identified. Possibly, Allied observers did not rate Chinese activities in Switzerland as importantly as the activities in the China theatre.

This trend to overlook Chinese actions and importance in the overall developments of WWII continued until recently, and has been questioned in this dissertation and in research carried out by other academics. The more it is accepted that politically motivated and established narratives are up for debate, the more old and new archival material will be re-evaluated. For the last few years the entire 20th century has come under scrutiny, especially WWII and Cold War legacies and narratives.

As this dissertation has shown there remain many unknown aspects of WWII that can shed further light on this crucial period in time. I would argue that the

application of intelligence history in combination with diplomatic history has the potential to complicate our understanding of wartime clandestine diplomacy, and that is not only the case for research on Nationalist Chinese foreign policy practices, but also for that of other nations that had been caught up in wars.

This dissertation represents a first initiative to explore the wartime relations between Nationalist China and Germany, and Republican Chinese foreign policy. A number of leads were mentioned in this dissertation, which could not be further explored this time, such as the effect of the relationship between Allen Dulles, Hans Klein and Qi Jun on Sino-Resistance-US relations. In this direction, it would be of further interest to explore whether Chiang Kai-shek did indeed speak up for the Resistance movement in communication with the Allies, or gave orders to his close subordinates to rally for support. These leads already give an indication of the large potential this field still offers, and how it can further redefine our understanding of WWII international history.

Glossary

The names and locations in this Glossary will be written in Hanyu Pinyin, with a few exceptions. These exceptions include Chiang Kai-shek and Sun Yat-sen, both men who are better known under their Wade-Giles names. Wherever a name in a Wade-Giles Romanisation comes first, it is followed by the Pinyin version of that name in brackets. In some cases, Hanyu Pinyin will be followed by Wade Giles in brackets. This is due to different Romanisation systems that were used over the decades; hence names referring to the same individual may look quite different in Hanyu Pinyin and Wade-Giles.

Chinese Individuals:

Chen Jie		陳介
Chen Tianfang		陳天放
Cheng Chen		陳誠
Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi)		蔣介石
Fu Bingchang (Foo Ping-chan)		傅秉常
Gui Yongqing (Kwei Yun-Chin)		桂永清
Guo Taiqi	(Quo Tai-chi)	郭泰祺
He Yingqin	(Ho Yin-chin)	何應欽
Jiang Baili	(Chiang Pai-li)	蔣百里
H.H. Kung	(Kong Xiangxi)	孔祥熙
Lin Qiusheng	(Lin Tsui-sen)	林秋生
Nanjing	(Nanking)	南京
Qi Jun	(C'hi Tsun, Robert)	齊峻

T.V. Soong	(Song Ziwen)	宋子文
Soong May-ling	(Song Meiling)	宋美齡
Sun Yat-sen	(Sun Zhongshan)	孫中山
Sun Fo	(Sun Ke)	孫科
Yang Jie		杨杰
Yu Dawei	(Yu Tawei)	俞大維
Zhu Jiahua	(Chu Chia-hua)	朱家驊

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