

THE CENTRE FOR KOREAN RESEARCH PROUDLY PRESENTS

"CHINA'S POLICY TOWARD NORTH KOREA IN THE ERA OF DENG XIAOPING"

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Abstract: North Korea was quite concerned about China's post-1978 policy of reform and opening to the outside world. After initial hesitation, Beijing decided in the early 1980s to endorse Kim Il-Sung's succession plan—to install his son Kim Jong-Il as his successor. Toward the end of 1985, China's policy toward North Korea began to change. Beijing stopped providing the kind of economic and military aid Pyongyang asked for. In the wake of the Tiananmen Massacre and the fall of Communist regimes in Eastern Europe in 1989, China resumed economic and military aid to North Korea. The normalization of diplomatic relations between China and South Korea in 1992 cut the last cord in the "brotherly" political foundation of Sino-North Korean relations. The strategic, economic, and political foundations of the Sino-North Korean "special relationship" collapsed completely, and relations between China and North Korea cooled considerably. Although Beijing and Pyongyang attempted to project a semblance of political unity, they were strange bedfellows. Nevertheless, North Korea remained highly dependent on China economically in the 1990s and it managed to acquire from China much-needed aid to ensure survival of the regime.

Bio: Dr. Xia is professor of history at Long Island University in New York. He is the author of *Negotiating with the Enemy: U.S.-China Talks During the Cold War, 1949-1972* (2006) and coauthor of *Mao and the Sino-Soviet Partnership, 1945-1959: A New History, with Zhihua Shen* (2015); *Mao and the Sino-Soviet Split, 1959-1973: A New History, with Danhui Li* (2018); and *A Misunderstood Friendship: Mao Zedong, Kim Il-sung and Sino-North Korean Relations, 1949-1976, with Zhihua Shen* (2018). He has also published many articles on Cold War history and Chinese foreign relations.



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