

May 18, 1989

Diary of Teimuraz Stepanov-Mamaladze, 18 May 1989

Citation:

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Summary:

Teimuraz Stepanov-Mamaladze diary entry describing his time in Shanghai during negotiations to normalize Soviet-Chinese relations. Notes that Shanghai, like Beijing, "is in the power of the student strikers," and speculates that the student strike is "seemingly heated up by [the Soviet delegation's] visit."

Credits:

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Russian

Contents:

- English Translation

18 May 1989

A leap to Shanghai. We will spend 24 hours on the road. There is almost an 10 hour flight to Moscow. We will be gladdened by a dinner in Shanghai to China's prophetic strings [poetic reference]. Shark fins under a sauce of "Moscow evenings" [Russian song], performed with a Chinese accent.

Among some of my table neighbors: PRC deputy minister of public security—short and active in his handling of wine. After three shot-glasses—drunk as a skunk [p'ian v dym]. "For as long as I am with you," he yells, "you are safe." This is enough to get one worried. Shanghai, like Beijing, is in the power of student strikers. But the crowds in the street greet us in a more than friendly manner. Especially next to the monument of Aleksandr Sergeevich Pushkin—glory to the Guomindang!—erected in 1937.

Sasha Pushkin took in a good chunk of all-Chinese fate: first this monument—a bust on a high, rounded basalt foundation—was destroyed by the Japanese; then—by the Red Guards. I hope there will be no third destruction; the Chinese Jacobins of the nowadays are more or less enlightened.

In Shanghai we were shown a fragment of new China—region of economic-technical development Minhang but it did not make a big, strong and sharp impression. We do not have things like this but I have seen factories in the USA and in Japan.

The 10 flight hours dragged on wearily long, my heart was at its limit.

"We are plugged into this process and it seems normal to us. In reality, the normalization of Soviet-Chinese relations is a historic event" (E.A. Shevardnadze).

This event unfolded against the dramatic background of a student strike, seemingly heated up by our visit...