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## Stalin's Failure in China

Conrad Brandt

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## BOOKS

**Brandt, Conrad.** *Stalin's Failure in China.* Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1958. 178 p.

Through extensive research and study of Chinese-Soviet writings, including Trotsky's Archives, and personal interviews with former Chinese Communist leaders, Conrad Brandt has come up with a very interesting and informative account of the first Soviet attempt to engulf China in the Communist system. The roles played by the leaders of the Comintern, the Kuomintang, and various oppositions in their struggle for power in China during the 1924-27 period are described in excellent detail. Conrad Brandt covers the historic period from Sun Yat-sen in the early 1920's to Chiang Kai-shek's coup, the Nangh'ang Rebellion and finally, in the mid 1930's, the Communist's Long March to the Northwest. The author repeatedly emphasizes the failure of Stalin in China (1924-27) as due to the Red leader's rigid adherence to Marxist assumptions, unrealistic policies, poor intelligence, miscalculations and party rivalries. It is significant to note, however, that although the Communists in China had their ups and downs during this very short and violent revolutionary period, in the long run Stalin gained his objective. Michael Borodin, Stalin's chief agent in China, envisaged in the mid-1920's that the Communists would withdraw to the Northwest — as they did in the mid-1930's — to await their chance to swoop down when the enemy seemed the weakest. The Communists' return under Mao fulfilled Borodin's prophesy. In reading Conrad Brandt's book, one cannot help but reflect on this, the Chinese lesson of the past, and see all too clearly the striking similarity of the same Communist tactics at work elsewhere throughout the free world today — ruthless, methodical, but, most important, patient and unmindful of the time and effort involved in gaining an objective.

**Laqueur, Walter Z.** *The Middle East in Transition.* New York, Praeger, 1958. 513 p.

The contributions of 34 authors of various nationalities from the West, Middle East and Soviet Union provide an interesting collection of essays representing a wide range of opinions and views on recent political and social trends in the Middle