Great Rehearsal: the Chinese Nation Building and Images of the U.S. in the Resist America and Aid Korea Movement

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Abstract

The “Resist America and Aid Korea” was the first nationwide movement staged by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to mobilize the Chinese people shortly after the establishment of the People’s Republic. It played a critical role in the nation building of China, and had great affects in the following political movements. The essay attempts to examine the propaganda institution founded and led by the CCP during that period of time, including the influential texts and forms of propaganda within it. It also interprets images of America which were deliberately fostered as a warmonger, “paper tiger,” and “American devil” toward the mass. Accordingly the hatred-revenge discourse appeared naturally adopted to construct the national identity of the peoples of China. In the name of “Resist America and Aid Korea,” a set of political campaigns were simultaneously performed to build up the state. The techniques of parades, sloganeering, mass rallies, caricatures, and big-character posters were widely employed for the purpose of propaganda and mobilization. Moreover, the function of “family” became so weak in the “nation” that almost everyone was ruled directly by the Party. At large the empire of China became a nation and the control of the CCP was strengthened.