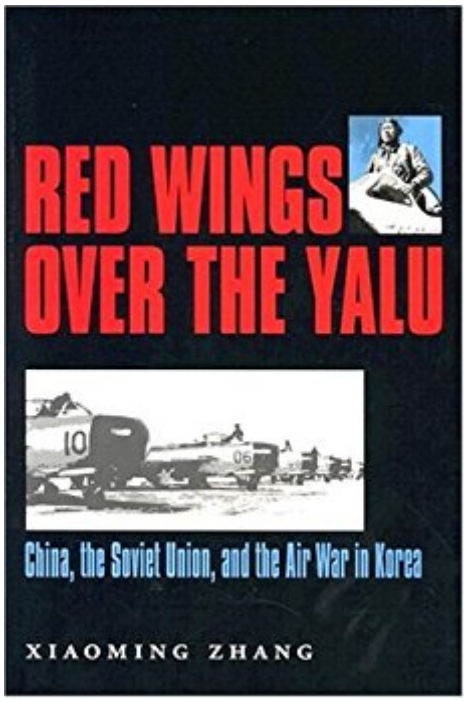
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Red Wings Over The Yalu: China, The Soviet Union, And The Air War In Korea (Williams-Ford Texas A&M University Military History Series)



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Synopsis

The Korean conflict was a pivotal event in China’s modern military history. The fighting in Korea constituted an important experience for the newly formed People’s Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF), not only as a test case for this fledgling service but also in the later development of Chinese air power.Xiaoming Zhang fills the gaps in the history of this conflict by basing his research in recently declassified Chinese and Russian archival materials. He also relies on interviews with Chinese participants in the air war over Korea. ZhangÃ¢â ¬â„¢s findings challenge conventional wisdom as he compares kill ratios and performance by all sides involved in the war.Zhang also addresses the broader issues of the Korean War, such as how air power affected Beijing’s decision to intervene. He touches on ground operations and truce negotiations during the conflict. Chinese leaders placed great emphasis on the supremacy of human will over modern weaponry, but they were far from oblivious to the advantages of the latter and to China’s technological limitations.Developments in China’s own air power were critical during this era. Zhang offers considerable materials on the training of Chinese aviators and the Soviet role in that training, on Soviet and Chinese air operations in Korea, and on diplomatic exchanges over Soviet military assistance to China. He probes the impact of the war on China’s conception of the role of air power, arguing that it was not until the Gulf War of the early 1990s that Chinese leaders engaged in a broad reassessment of the strategy they adopted during the Korean War.Military historians and scholars interested in aviation and foreign affairs will find this volume of special interest. As a unique work that presents the Chinese point of view, it stands as both a complement and a corrective to previous accounts of the conflict.

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Customer Reviews

Very well written; the writer had access to resources that were previously unavailable, and also teaches at military staff collages.Was already aware that, in the Korean war, American Military personal were absolutely forbidden to talk about the known fact that Russian pilots were flying for North Korea, and the so-called superior kill ratio of American F-86 versus Mig-15 pilots was measured only on known North Korean pilots and Chinese pilots shot down; Russians kill ratios against American aircraft were ignored, and the actual kill ratio of Americans against Russians was much lower. It was all right to talk about the fact that Peoples Republic of China Pilots were flying for North Korea; but any mention that Russian pilots were also involved was strictly forbidden. While this book is also an excellent history of Chinese involvement in the war; I have focused on the Russian subject in this review.Every known Russian kill was either ignored; or attributed to "accident", "missing", or otherwise "didn't happen".All of the Russian pilots originally employed against Americans were successful combat pilots from World War II, who had extensive World War II kill recordsThe Russian's talked on GCI (Ground Control Intercept) radio circuits in Russian, and this was well known at the time; but as above mentioned, it was strictly forbidden to report or talk about.An excellent book. Very well researched, with extensive appendixes, notes and bibliography in the back of it.For other excellent books on this subject, also available on see:"The Last War of The Superfortresses" Mig-15 VS B-29 Over Korea. Leonid Krylov & Yuriy Tepsurkaevand "Soviet Mig-15 Aces of the Korean War" by the same Authors listed for the above book

This year is the 60th anniversary of the Korean War, and I want to know that history. This book reviewed the past based on fact and research, that's why I like it. One mistake I found is the page 160 is missing. By the way, do you have a Chinese version? Where can I buy a Chinese version?Thanks

The formation of the chinese air force in detail, alongside the VVS, to figth against the best air force

in the world, is a very good book. A lot of unknown information

This is not a book about tactical air operations in Korea, so don’t expect to find classical accounts of duels between the comabttants. What it does cover is the organistion of Chinese air forces and the role played by the Soviets (plus the hosts in Korea) to expedite the creation and preservation of the Chinee air force.There is lots of material drawn from sources hitherto unavailable, and a coherent story of the development of the air force. It gives a good account of the discussions between Moscow and Beijing in how the response to UN air power in Korea was to be tackled, and the tensions between the needs of the ground forces, the limited air bases, and the need to improve the skills of the Chinese pilots before exposing them to the UN’s skilled pilots.There are some accounts of action, and some interesting discussion on how badly wrong the historically-accepted kill ratios likely are.So, good if you want a history of the development of the Chinese air force in this period; to be avoided if you want a view from the other side of the hill in regard to the detailed action in the skies.

Red Wings Over The Yalu: China, The Soviet Union, And The Air War In Korea by military historian Xiaoming Zhang (Texas A&M International University) is an informed and informative survey and analysis of the military history and international politics of the Korean War. Focusing in particular on the Chinese point of view, Red Wings Over The Yalu is extensively detailed in its presentation and enhanced with black-and-white photographs of Chinese military aircraft and the men who flew them. An invaluable contribution to Korean War military history reference shelves and reading lists, Red Wings Over The Yalu is a seminal and highly recommended addition to any personal or academic Military History reference collection.

This book is a perfect example of a well written academic work. ’Red Wings’ is thoroughly researched and makes good use of newly declassified Russian and Chinese sources. It challenges many widely held views of the air war over Korea, and provides the reader with previously unavailable information regarding the strategy, doctrine and tactics of the ’other side’ at the time. Moreover, ’Red Wings’ offers insight as to the lessons that the PLAAF took away from the Korean War, and how it affects that service today. A fine addition to any scholar, Air Force member or aviation enthusiast’s bookshelf.

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