

URBAN CHINESE PERSPECTIVES ON THE U.S. OCCUPATION OF JAPAN, 1945-1947

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Most things in China have deep historical roots, and the current phenomenon of anti-Japanese sentiment among urban elites in China is no exception. The increasing numbers of affluent middle-class Chinese populating cities today, like the intelligentsia of the late 1940s, view Japanese resurgence as both inevitable and worthy of loud denunciation. In the late 1940s, these elites expressed concerns over China's inconclusive victory and voiced anxieties about "the New Japan" emerging under American tutelage. While the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has since fed upon anti-Japanese anger to augment the Party's legitimacy, the CCP was neither the creator nor the sole exploiter of anti-Japanese nationalism. While today's CCP may apply a more malleable approach to the memories of World War II, in the late 1940s, Japan's military fate lay squarely in the hands of General Douglas MacArthur, whose depictions in the Chinese press led to a perception that Japan and the U.S. were jointly dismissive of China's sacrifices in the War of Resistance. Finally, the pall of depression that descended across China along with the civil war was inherently related to Japan's slow yet nevertheless phoenix-like postwar rise. Blaming Japan and the United States for China's ills was a logical response to an environment that harshly contradicted what was supposed to have been China's ascent into global respectability, even leadership. The attitude adopted toward Japan in the Chinese press from 1945-1947 thus reveals significant continuity with today's attitudes; that Chinese are still grappling with similar issues today speaks to Japan's immense power in the Chinese imagination.

The Sino-Japanese relationship and Chinese perceptions of Japan have enjoyed a great deal of scholarly attention of late.¹ Parks Coble and Donald Jordan have produced authoritative studies documenting the explosive growth of anti-Japanese sentiment in the 1930s.² Analyzing more recent events, scholars such as Caroline Rose and Allen Whiting

¹ Tian Heng, ed., *Zhan hou Zhong-Ri guanxi shi, 1945-1995* (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan chubanshe, 2002); Song Chengyou, *Zhan hou Riben waijiao shi, 1945-1994* (Beijing: Shijie zhishi chubanshe, 1995); Koichi Okamoto, "Imaginary Settings: Sino-Japanese-United States Relations during the Occupation Years" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 2000).

² Parks Coble, *Facing Japan: Chinese Politics and Japanese Imperialism, 1931-1937* (Cambridge, Mass: Council on East Asia Studies, distributed by Harvard University Press, 1991); Donald A. Jordan, *Chinese Boycotts Versus Japanese Bombs: The Failure of China's "Revolutionary Diplomacy," 1931-1932* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991), see also Jordan's *China's Trial By Fire: The Shanghai War of 1932* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001).

have analyzed the nationalistic flare-ups surrounding Japanese textbooks and the politics of apology.³ However, studies of Sino-Japanese relations and mutual perceptions have lagged behind in the period of the U.S. occupation of Japan, an unfortunate omission given that the American occupation was the means by which the Japanese were largely able to avoid accounting for their nation's atrocities in China. The rise of a vocal Chinese opposition to the U.S. occupation of Japan deserves greater attention as a significant development of the Cold War in Asia.⁴ What role did U.S.-occupied Japan play in the postwar press in China?

The flotsam of the Japanese empire only gradually drifted from China's shores, leaving Chinese city dwellers awash in the bitterness of "victory" and civil war. Urban elites witnessed Japan's gradual displacement on the mainland by American troops in North China and the assumption of Soviet power over Manchuria's industrialized expanses.⁵ Helping Chinese readers to interpret these developments were a number of important newspapers such as *Dagongbao*, and a proliferation of weekly newsmagazines from the presses in Shanghai.

In its early months, the U.S. occupation of Japan received comparatively little news coverage in China, particularly when compared to the veritable up swell of domestic news in late 1945 and early 1946. Just as postwar writers and filmmakers memorialized the War of Resistance by turning a critical eye towards China itself, the Chinese news media similarly sharpened its focus on domestic developments immediately after the war.⁶ Prior to 1945, Chinese newspapers in cities like Chongqing

³ Caroline Rose, *Sino-Japanese Relations: Facing the Past, Looking to the Future?* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005); Caroline Rose, *Interpreting History in Sino-Japanese Relations* (London: Routledge, 1993); Allen Whiting, *China Eyes Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

⁴ Odd Arne Westad, a scholar otherwise supremely attuned to international aspects at work in China in formation of the Cold War, avoids discussion of occupied Japan altogether in his new benchmark text. Suzanne Pepper's reprinted text deals at some length with the student movement to "oppose American revival of Japan" in 1948; and Shuguang Zhang as well as Hong Zhang (no relation) acknowledge anti-Japanese currents in the run up to the Korean War. See Odd Arne Westad, *Decisive Encounters: The Chinese Civil War, 1946-1950* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2003), Suzanne Pepper, *Civil War in China: The Political Struggle, 1945-1949*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999, see also Pepper's "The Chinese Civil War, 1945-1949," from *Cambridge History of China*, Vol. 13, Denis Twitchett and John K. Fairbank, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978); Shuguang Zhang, *Deterrence and Strategic Culture: Chinese-American Confrontations, 1949-1958* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1992); Hong Zhang, *America Perceived: The Making of Chinese Images of the United States, 1945-1953* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2002).

⁵ For treatments emphasizing the duration of Japanese influence in China beyond 1945, see Donald G. Gillin and Charles Etter, "Staying On: Japanese Soldiers and Civilians in China, 1945-1949," *Journal of Asian Studies* Vol. 42, No. 3, (May, 1983), 497-518; see also Daqing Yang, "Resurrecting the Empire? Japanese Technicians in Postwar China, 1945-49," from *The Japanese Empire in East Asia and Its Postwar Legacy*, Harald Fuess, ed. (Monographien aus dem Deutschen Institut für Japanstudien der Philipp Franz von Siebold Stiftung. Band 22. München: iudicium verlag, 1998), 185-206.

⁶ For analysis of postwar artistic commemorations, see Paul G. Pickowicz, "Victory as Defeat: Postwar Visualizations of China's War of Resistance," from *Becoming Chinese: Passages to Modernity and Beyond*, Wen-hsin Yeh, ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000) 365-398; T.D. Hutters, "Critical Ground: The Transformation of the May Fourth Era," from *Popular Chinese Literature and Performing Arts in the People's Republic of China, 1949-1979*, edited by Bonnie S. McDougall, (Berkeley: University of

and Kunming had been so heavily censored that stories concerning foreign countries outnumbered domestic news at a ratio of four to one.⁷ In the wake of the War of Resistance, Chinese journalists were finally able to turn inward due to the lifting of Chongqing's wartime censorship.⁸ Reflecting the Guomindang's caution in dealing with formerly Japanese-held territories, these strictures were lifted first for "free China" (Nationalist-occupied regions) on 1 October 1945, and subsequently in formerly Japanese-controlled regions in March 1946.⁹ The withdrawal of many U.S. Information Service (USIS) advisors further reduced the number of foreign news stories, and the void was eagerly filled by exposés on corruption, the Guomindang takeover, speculations on democracy for China, and the looming civil war.¹⁰ Nevertheless, Japan remained an important realm of debate within the flowering postwar climate for publications.¹¹

Examination of an array of journals published in Shanghai from 1945 through 1947 reveals a four-fold pattern with regard to Japan. First, articles about Japan frequently displayed fears of renewed conflict in East Asia. Having been conditioned by fourteen years of conflict with Japan and additional weeks or months of Japanese policing beyond August 1945, Chinese readers readily envisaged the resumption of Sino-Japanese hostilities. Rather than lauding Japan's demobilization and disarmament, Chinese journalists speculated that war between the superpowers could plausibly result in

California Press, 1984); Chang-Tai Hung, "The Fuming Image: Cartoons and Public Opinion in Late Republican China, 1945-1949," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*. Vol. 36, No. 1 (January 1994): 122-145.

⁷ Lee-hsia Hsu Ting *Government Control of the Press in Modern China, 1900-1949*, East Asian Research Center, Harvard University (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1974), 150. For further discussion of postwar press coverage in southwestern China, see Robert Payne, *China Awake* (New York: Dodd & Mead, 1947).

⁸ Ting, *Government Control of the Press*, 165. Many of Ting's conclusions, it should be noted, are drawn from Zhang Jinglu's large compendium of press materials. See Zhang Jinglu, *Zhongguo xiandai chubanshe ziliao*, (Beijing: 1954-1959), in particular Series D. For discussion of Chinese reportage during the War of Resistance, see Chang-tai Hung, *War and Popular Culture: Resistance in Modern China, 1937-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

⁹ For discussion of the negative distinctions drawn by the returning Guomindang officials between themselves as "resisters" and the remaining population as "collaborators," see Suzanne Pepper, *Civil War in China: The Political Struggle, 1945-1949* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999) and Adam Cathcart, "I Will Be the First to Lay Down My Pen for a Gun: Chinese Schoolchildren and the War with Japan," paper presented at Rutgers Center for Historical Analysis, Rutgers University, April 9, 2005. For discussion of the phenomenon in the retrocession of postwar Taiwan, see Steven E. Phillips, *Between Assimilation and Independence: The Taiwanese Encounter Nationalist China, 1945-1950* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 59.

¹⁰ For discussion of Chinese postwar journalism through the prism of an "old China Hand," see Neil L. O'Brien, *An American Editor in Early Revolutionary China: John William Powell and the "China Weekly/Monthly Review"* (New York and London: Routledge, 2003).

¹¹ Shanghai presses sold several series of books on postwar Japan. See, for instance, Zhonghua Xueyishe, eds., especially *Zhanhou Riben de Shehui (Postwar Japanese Society)* (Shanghai: Shanghai Dacheng Chubangongsi, December 1947).

the return of Japanese troops to China.¹² With tens of thousands of U.S. Marines in Chinese cities such as Shanghai and Qingdao, and 50,000 Soviet troops garrisoned on the Liaodong peninsula even after the communist “liberation” in 1949, fears of foreign troops dominating Chinese territory were hardly irrational.¹³ As the Cold War deepened, so too did Chinese speculation that General MacArthur would resort, if necessary, to deploying Japanese troops to China in the event of a war with the Soviet Union.¹⁴

Secondly, the Chinese press was vigilant toward Japanese industrialization. Japan’s slow economic rise after 1946 heartened many American observers, but industrial progress in Japan inspired a flood of nervous commentary from Chinese intellectuals as well as capitalists.¹⁵ The fear of being overtaken once again by Japan was grounded in the hard-won experience of prior decades. For Chinese individuals, particularly those tied to the textile and industrial sectors, the War of Resistance had offered an object lesson in the bonds between *zaibatsu* (industrial conglomerates) and the Japanese military.¹⁶ For Chinese observers, war clung to the Japanese conglomerates like a shroud. Chinese journalists, and presumably the readers who devoured their words, never fully accepted the premise that Japan’s postwar industrial base fulfilled only a peaceful function.

Third, postwar Chinese journalism persistently raised doubts about the Japanese character. Chinese reporters considered Japan’s obedience toward the U.S. to be a new and transitory tactic, intended only to lull the Americans into complacency. Thus, Chinese journalists agreed that even Japanese cooperation on issues such as disarmament masked designs of an aggressive revival. Chinese in port cities, increasingly familiar with and embittered by “the big kids” that were the American troops, feared that American naïveté would open the door for a Japanese resurgence. And, in a retrospective turn, Chinese journalists expressed shock at America’s manifest failure to clutch to the

¹² For representative examples from both Communist and Nationalist-controlled areas, see *Andong Ribao* (Liaoning), September 19, 1948 and Shanghai *Dagongbao*, May 28, 1948.

¹³ American troop levels in China peaked in late 1945 at about 54,000; the number was drawn down to 34,000 by late March, 1946, and further reduced to 22,000 by September 1946. See Memorandum by General Marshall to the Secretary of State, March 26, 1946, *FRUS 1946*, Vol. X, 859 and General Marshall to the Acting Secretary of State, 25 Sept. 1946, *FRUS 1946*, Vol. X, 875-76. For discussion of the Russian occupation of Dalian, see Paul Paddock, *China Diary: Crisis Diplomacy in Dairen* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1977); Dalian shi shi zhi ban gong shi, *Sulian hong jun zai Lu Da* (Dalian: Dongbei cai jing da xue yin shua chang, 1995).

¹³ For representative examples from both Communist and Nationalist-controlled areas, see *Andong Ribao* (Liaoning), September 19, 1948 and Shanghai *Dagongbao*, May 28, 1948.

¹⁴ Anonymous, “Di san ci shijie da zhanzheng” (“The Third World War”), *Xinqiwu Huabao*, Tianjin (Jinri Xinqiwu Chuban), August 1, 1947, n.p.

¹⁵ Zhonghua Xueyishe, eds., *Zhanhou Riben de Shiye Zhuangkuang (The Industrial Situation in Postwar Japan)* (Shanghai: Shanghai Dacheng Chubangongsi, December 1947).

¹⁶ Parks Coble, *Facing Japan: Chinese Politics and Japanese Imperialism, 1931-1937* (Cambridge, Mass: Council on East Asia Studies; Distributed by Harvard University Press, 1991).

nation's war memories, wondering how Americans could sincerely think that the Japanese were capable of such rapid and fundamental re-orientation.¹⁷

Although wounds from the War of Resistance were still raw, postwar journalism about Japan itself lacked some of the vitriol focused on past atrocities by Japanese and collaborators (*hanjian*) still residing in China.¹⁸ Only when the Nationalist government found it convenient were skeletons of massacre victims unearthed for the cameras in Nanjing.¹⁹ To the extent that Japanese atrocities were raised publicly, they functioned to remind American allies of the hardships borne by China in the War of Resistance. The long and dull International Military Tribunal for the Far East--ostensibly an ideal forum for grievances over war atrocities--generated few revelations, and outrage over the Rape of Nanking was not frequently expressed in print.²⁰

Chinese students, however, never relinquished the War of Resistance as a bloody banner demanding of commemoration, and Chinese newspapers followed suit. Student proclamations regarding Japan's violent history in China were mirrored by the anti-Japanese jeremiads churned out of CCP presses in Northeast China. Regardless of ideology, virtually all of the Chinese press attended faithfully to the anniversaries from the War of Resistance. On each July 7 (the anniversary of the 1937 Japanese invasion of China at the Marco Polo Bridge) and September 18 (the anniversary of the 1931 Manchurian incident), the press--whether independent or Party-controlled--performed a retrospective function.²¹ Figure 1 illustrates the great popularity of War of Resistance

¹⁷ In its disappointment with the depth of change rendered in Japan, Chinese journalism shared characteristics with a handful of eloquent and marginal American critics of the occupation. See Mark Gayn, *Japan Diary* (New York: W. Sloane Associates, 1948) and Robert B. Textor, *Failure in Japan, With Keystones for a Positive Policy* (New York: The John Day Company, 1951), .

¹⁸ For discussion of postwar trials, see Dongyoun Hwang, "Wang Jingwei, the Nanjing Government, and the Problem of Collaboration," Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 1997; see also Charles Musgrove, "Puppets Pulling Strings: The Post-War Trial of Chen Bijun, 1946," paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, San Diego, California, March 7, 2004. For excellent accounts of the problem of "collaboration" during the war, see Timothy Brook, *Collaboration: Japanese Agents and Local Elites in Wartime China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005) and Frederic Wakeman, Jr., "Hanjian (Traitor)! Collaboration and Retribution in Wartime Shanghai," in Wen-hsin Yeh, ed., *Becoming Chinese: Passages to Modernity and Beyond*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 298-341. Many thanks to Charles Musgrove for sharing with the author an updated version of the above conference paper.

¹⁹ *Zhongguo Shenghuo*, June 1947, n.p.

²⁰ See Takashi Yoshida, *The Making of the "Rape of Nanking": History and Memory in Japan, China, and the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 62-70.

²¹ For examples, see *Zhongyang Ribao*, Nanjing, July 7, 1946; Central Propaganda Department report to the CCP Central Committee, "Propaganda Commemorating the Nine Year Anniversary of the 'Double Seventh'," July 7, 1946, *Selected Documents of the CCP Central Committee (Zhonggang zhongyang wenxian xuanji)*, 232-240; Propaganda Department, Beijing Laborer's Committee, CCP, "Directions of Anti-American Propaganda," July 7, 1946, Hoover Institute for War and Peace, Stanford University, T.V. Soong Papers (newly opened), Box 61, File 11.

literature in the postwar years. Extensively advertised for more than a year before its release on July 7, 1948, the volume's obligatory praise of Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek) is couched within a heroic narrative of triumphant Chinese nationalism.

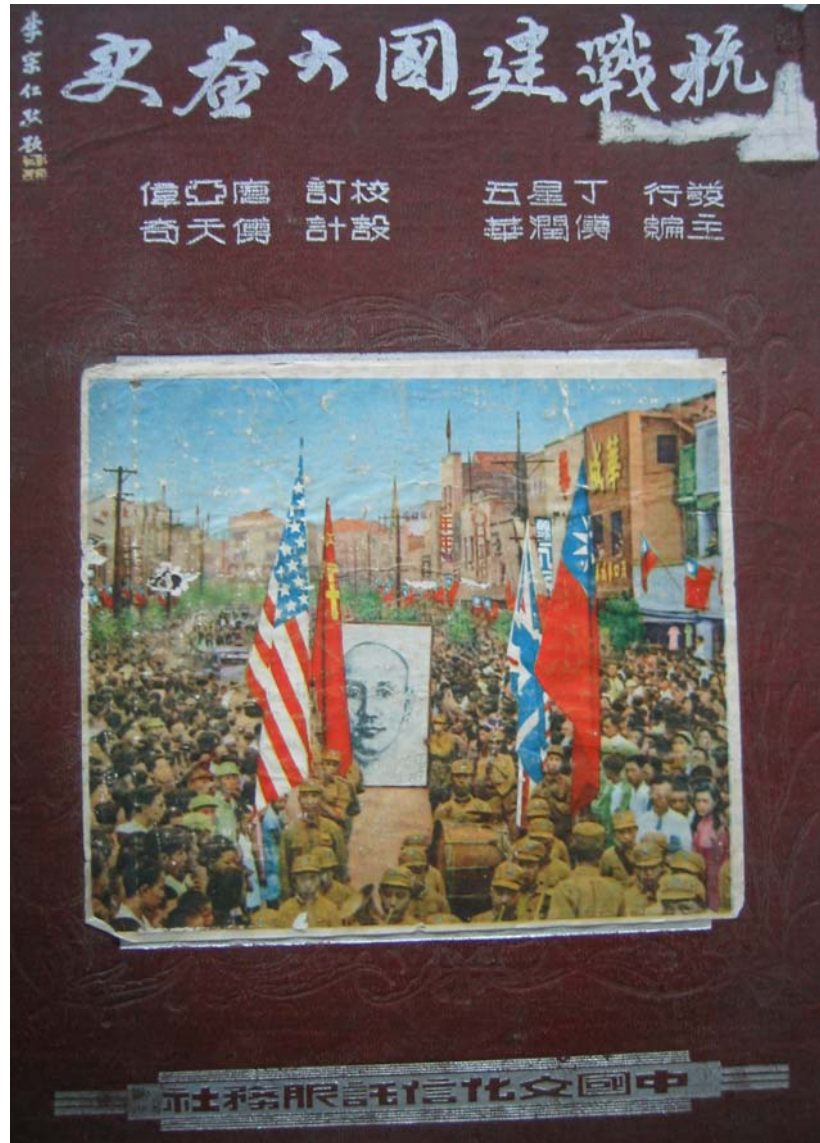


Figure 1. *Great Illustrated History of the War of Anti-Japanese Resistance* (Nanjing: Zhongguo Wenhua Xintuo Fuwushe, July 1948). Courtesy Shanghai Municipal Library.

This show of unanimity on the subject of Japan suggests that amid the vast spectrum of disagreements rending Chinese society in the late 1940s, anti-Japanese sentiment was unique in its unifying potential.

The popular press in Shanghai thus provides an abundant spectrum of insights into how Chinese elites perceived postwar Japan.²³ Beginning in 1946, Shanghai markets were flooded with pictorial magazines modeled after Henry Luce's *Life*.²⁴ Some, like *Jianwen* (Current News), engaged consistently with international stories and were stable fixtures of the press until early 1949. Though the cover image of *Jianwen*'s inaugural issue indicated a fixation with territorial unity in Manchuria, the contents of the first issue delved into extended analyses of the domestic political situation in Japan. [Figure 2.]



Figure 2. *Jianwen*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1946), cover image.
Courtesy Shanghai Municipal Library.

Other periodicals, like *Jin Ri* (Today), were short-lived but spectacular pictorials. Most magazines took a moderate political outlook, aiming to capture the broadest possible market. Magazines like *Zhongguo Shenghuo* (China Life) used English captions to entice

²³ Most of the magazines cited in this article were consulted at the Shanghai Municipal Library, where they are open to researchers. For circulation figures, see *China Weekly Review*, Dec. 22, 1945, 64.

²⁴ Postwar perspectives on Henry Luce are discussed in Robert Edwin Herzstein, "Henry Luce, George Marshall, and China: The Parting of the Ways in 1946," in *George C. Marshall's Mediation Mission to China: December 1945-January 1947*, Larry I. Bland, ed. (Virginia: George C. Marshall Foundation, 1998), 115-148.

foreign readers. As befitting a period of sporadic censorship, magazines frequently balanced their cutting criticisms of government policy with expressions of nationalistic pride. Even magazines that proudly displayed evidence of patronage from the Guomindang, such as *Da Hua* (Great China Pictorial), featured cartoons and woodcuts that savaged government ineptitude and avarice, using the graphic arts as a forum for literally unspeakable criticisms. Taken as a whole, the magazines were remarkably cosmopolitan in outlook: readers appeared to be more interested in China's place on the world stage than they were obsessed with communist gains in the outlying provinces.²⁵ Even magazines whose copy was devoted to the romantic liaisons of movie stars contained strong criticisms of Japan.²⁶ This tendency of urban elites to look toward Japan would intensify in 1948 and erupt into the streets, but the tendency was also apparent in earlier years.

The issue of reparations from Japan was a key to focusing Chinese energies on Japan in the postwar years. Chinese efforts to secure cultural reparations from Japan played an important, if insufficiently acknowledged, role in Sino-Japanese relations after the war. Questions of culture had always loomed large in China's traditional relations with neighboring states, and the postwar months saw Chinese elites asserting a renewed centrality. As the question of cultural reparations wound its way through the American occupation bureaucracy, Chinese press reports raised the expectations of elite Chinese for the return of precious artifacts.²⁷

Cultural Reparations

The War of Resistance had been fought not simply on the battlefield, but on a cultural basis. As its troops had spread over Asia, Japan had asserted supremacy and wielded culture as a weapon of choice, alternately taking on the role of teacher, destroyer, and curator of China's vast inheritance.²⁸ Japanese plundered antiquities and destroyed vast swaths of China's heritage, razing the ancient to make way for the new. In the postwar years, then, Chinese artists, actors, writers and musicians embraced and moved

²⁵ See Jin Xiu, "Zhongguo yu Shijie" ("China and the World"), *Nanbei Huabao* (Beiping: Nanbei Chubanshe, December 1946), 1.

²⁶ See "Japanese Devil," *Guoji Xinwen Huabao*, August 11, 1946, 3.

²⁷ For a more recent perspective on questions of cultural reparations from Japan to China, see Erik Eckholm and Calvin Simms, "Stolen Chinese Relic a Showpiece in Japan?" *New York Times*, April 20, 2000, page B1.

²⁸ Dai Xiong, "Kangzhan Shiqi Zhongguo Tushu Sunshi Gaikuang" ["Brief Account of the Destruction of China's Relics During the War of Resistance"], *Min Guo Dang'an*, Vol. II (March 2003): 84-90. For background on the Japanese in Manchuria, see Louise Young, *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998). For general treatment of the theme of war and culture, see Ni Lexiong, *Zhanzheng yu Wenhua Zhuantong* (Shanghai Shudian Chubanshe, 2000). For examples of these themes in the literature on Europe in World War II, see Frederic Spotts, *Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics* (Woodstock and New York: The Overlook Press, 2003) and Willem de Vries, *Sonderstab Musik: Music Confiscation by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg under the Nazi Occupation of Western Europe* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1996).

to supplant the culture nurtured by the former occupiers, all the while seeking to rebuild the material foundations of Chinese learning and art.

In the wake of the Japanese collapse, Chinese scholars and intellectuals aligned swiftly around the banner of cultural reparations from Japan. Amid the malaise and frustrated hopes of autumn 1945, Chinese art curators and literati staked out their support for a reparations regime, pressuring Guomindang foreign affairs officers and maddening the United States occupation authorities in Japan. In a December 1945 request to the American Embassy in Chongqing, one group of Chinese elites requested immediate entry to Japan, seeking access to a broad range of cultural goods for return to China. The broad goals of the mission reveal Chinese expectations in startling terms, for the scope of their claims was not limited to materials plundered from China in the eight years of Resistance War. As stated by its head, the mission proposed “to visit museums, libraries, and collections whether government, university, or private” in order to claim reparations in three areas:

(1) cultural objects which the Japanese had taken by force *since 1894* and which the Chinese wish to reclaim; (2) cultural objects purchased privately or by the government which are considered by the Chinese to be national treasures. These might be subject to claim or might be taken as part of an indemnity payment or might be paid for outright. (3) *Cultural objects, particularly books, which have never been Chinese* but which, if taken to China, could help to replace libraries destroyed by the Japanese such as those of Nankai or Tsinghua Universities or the Commercial Press.²⁹

Of these categories listed by Dr. Li, a Harvard Ph.D. and China’s leading curator, the third, pertaining to books, is of great interest. After the war, Chinese scholars were starved for books with which to replenish university libraries destroyed, dispersed, or plundered by Japan.³⁰ Li’s mention of the Shanghai Commercial Press, China’s leading publishing house before its obliteration by Japanese bombs in 1932, demonstrates the long duration of the damages for which Chinese intellectuals in particular were seeking redress.³¹ Reaching even further back in history, Li insisted that Japan compensate China

²⁹ Emphasis added. National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 59, 893.413 / 12- 2945.

³⁰ Dai Xiong, a scholar affiliated with the Second National Archive in Nanjing, has done diligent work on this question. See his “Kangzhan Shiqi Zhongguo Tushu Sunshi Gaikuang” [“Brief Account of the Destruction of China’s Libraries During the War of Resistance”], *Min Guo Dang’an* Vol. 3 (March 2004): 113-119.

³¹ Assessing the destruction of some 300,000 volumes at the Zhejiang Provincial Library at Hangzhou, “formerly one of the finest in China,” the GMD Central News agency noted that the building had been largely destroyed and its holdings completely looted. See *China Weekly Review*, Shanghai, November 3, 1945, 37. According to Nationalist sources, 463,803 volumes and the entire Oriental Library were destroyed by Japanese incendiary bombs in 1932. See *Reconstruction in China: A Record of Progress and Achievement in Facts and Figures* (Shanghai: China United Press, 1935), 145. For an illustrated account of the Japanese destruction of China’s most prolific publishing house, see Donald A. Jordan, *China’s Trial By Fire: The Shanghai War of 1932* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001).

for artifacts destroyed and looted in the *first* Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95. Harkening back to the conflicts of the nineteenth century indicated China's desire to widen the scope of the reparations process by pointing to the emotionally resonant first Sino-Japanese, or *Jiawu*, War.³²

The Guomindang evidenced its support for the reparations endeavor by publishing a number of articles in the official press regarding Dr. Li's investigation group in late November 1945. The tone of the articles was promising enough; one headline stated plainly that "Art pieces looted by Japanese to be returned to rightful owners." The article stirred up gall by noting that Chinese art objects had been presented to the Imperial Museum in Tokyo by Japanese generals and "various puppet governments."³³ Chongqing newspapers further described the fate of *objects d'arte* which had been spared Allied bombing by their placement in imperial palaces in Kyoto and Nara.³⁴ For Chinese longing to wash away the stains of collaboration and regain a sense of cultural superiority over the Japanese, the return of looted artifacts to the mainland was of great symbolic import.

The new American administration in Japan, however, appeared taken aback by the Chinese requests. Having ruled the Japanese archipelago for a scant ten weeks, General Douglas MacArthur mandated deliberate moves on the question of reparations. SCAP officials in Tokyo, overwhelmed by Japan's destruction and fearful of the humanitarian shockwave that would accompany two million in repatriations, cabled Chongqing with instructions to place the cultural reparations mission on hold. Rather than sending a mission, instructed American officials in Tokyo, the Chinese should "prepare [specific] lists of items suspected to be in Japan."³⁵ Significantly, no material seized before 1937 would be considered eligible for reparations; China's expansive claims were rejected.³⁶ Following this policy decision, U.S. occupation authorities

³² For another example of claims dating back to 1894, see Lee Li-bai (Major General, Chinese Mission to Tokyo, Chief, First Section) to Foreign Liaison Sub-section, G-2, GHQ, SCAP, "Regarding Shipment of Two Anchors to China," July 15, 1946, National Archives and Records Administration [hereafter National Archives], Record Group 84, Office of the U.S. Political Advisor for Japan – Tokyo, Classified General Correspondence, 1945-1949, [hereafter] Box 8, folder 1, 701.17 Claims (China).

³³ The press quotes are taken from clippings enclosed with National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 59, 893.413 / 12- 2945. Interestingly, one such mission of Chinese former "puppet" officials remained at large in Korea until October 1945, and remained there under U.S. supervision until at least November 1946. See CG USAFIK to SCAP, "Requesting Clarification of Status and Disposition of Chinese Puppet Consular Officials in Korea," October 23, 1946, National Archives RG 84, Office of the U.S. Political Advisor for Japan – Tokyo, Classified General Correspondence, 1945-1949, Folder 13, 701.1 China (General).

³⁴ "Mission proposed to probe art treasures lost in wartime," Chongqing *National Herald*, December 8, 1945; "Party to Seek Cultural Objects Looted by Japan," *Chongqing Reporter*, November 29, 1945. For discussion of cultural relics from Nara spared by the occupation from reparation, see General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, Summation No. 25, *Non-Military Activities in Japan for the Month of October 1947* (Tokyo: GHQ, November 1947), 13.

³⁵ National Archives 59, 893.413/12-2945.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

repeatedly denied Chinese requests for materials in Japan whose confiscation dated back to the *Jiawu* War of 1894-95. Although Chinese diplomats in Tokyo strenuously argued that the very existence of nineteenth-century Chinese artifacts in Japan aided in Japan's ongoing "glorification of war and aggression," occupation rebuffed Chinese requests for the removal and return of such objects, noting that "instructions limit the authority of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers to restitution of property looted subsequent to 7 July 1937."³⁷ Clearly the Americans had more pressing concerns than to satisfy what they likely viewed as ancient grievances. Furthermore, the U.S. authorities deemed it undesirable to accommodate Chinese reparations missions, whose stated purpose could only open the door for the unwelcome assertion of a more vigorous Chinese role in Japan. For State Department officers and the new American administration in Tokyo, assuaging Chinese public opinion regarding cultural reparations from Japan remained a distant aim.

While the Americans refused to reward China with goods looted before 1937, the 1930s were nonetheless taken as a base for Japan's reconstruction. At a news conference on June 21, 1946, Edwin Pauley, Truman's personally appointed ambassador for reparations advocated that Japan's industrial capacity be rebuilt at an equal or higher capacity than it had been from 1930-1933. Pauley also remarked on the possibilities for an impoverished Japan to spark regional commerce through the export of textiles and ceramics.³⁸ In Tokyo, Pauley vowed to "build up the economic and industrial potential of this part of the world," indicating that he envisaged an active Japanese role in the East Asian economy.³⁹ Pauley's comments mirrored MacArthur's vision of a prosperous Japan from which all of Asia could benefit, but ran counter to the initial policies of the occupation which had asserted that Japanese living standards should not exceed those of its neighbors, China and the Philippines in particular.⁴⁰ Thus, when reparations failed to materialize and Japan began to prosper, Chinese observers were disaffected.⁴¹

Even had the reparations missions proceeded without controversy, Chinese elites were in no position to revel in the apparent successes of the American occupation of

³⁷ For relevant correspondence on this issue, see National Archives, RG84, Political Advisor for Japan Box 8, folder 1, 701.17 Claims (China).

³⁸ "Telegram from Tokyo SCAP to War Department," June 21, 1946, National Archives, RG 59, Pauley Reparations Mission, General Records 1945-48, Box 1.

³⁹ Quoted in U.S. High Commissioner to War Department, "Telegram from Manila," June 27, 1946, *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Draft Message to Commanding General, United States Forces, China Theater, Shanghai, China, February 16, 1946, *Foreign Relations of the United States* [hereafter *FRUS*] 1946, VIII: 175-176; The United States High Commissioner in the Philippines (McNutt) to Mr. Richard R. Ely, of the Office of United States High Commissioner, Washington, January 18, 1946, *FRUS* 1946, VIII: 863. For U.S. State Department reference to reparations as "a confusing factor in the Japanese economy," see The Director of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs (Butterworth) to the United States Representative on the Far Eastern Commission (McCoy) April 15, 1949, *FRUS*, VII 707-708; see also Interim Directive, dispatched to the Joint Chief of Staff to the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers, March 17, 1948, *Department of State Bulletin* 1948, 18: 482-484.

⁴¹ For discussion of the role played by reparations in swaying Chinese public opinion, see Memorandum by the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee to the Secretary of State (SWNCC 291/1), June 1, 1946, *Foreign Relations of the United States* 1946, Vol. IX (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972), 936.

Japan. The sluggish pace of repatriation of Japanese soldiers from China rendered hollow declarations of Japan's full defeat, and MacArthur's swift embrace of Emperor Hirohito as the agent of reform was similarly off-putting. Taken together with the ever-present implication of American responsibility for terrific inflation and miserable postwar economic conditions in China, it appears clear that MacArthur's prospects for popularity among Chinese urbanites were indeed slim. Elections in Japan in April 1946 might have inspired Chinese elites but for the focus granted to the labyrinthine negotiations for China's own pending constitution in the Legislative Yuan.⁴² Japanese democratization was an object of discussion in Chinese cities in 1946, but articles emphasized protests rather than progress and pointed to the presence of conservative elements in the new cabinet. The Chinese press, for instance, covered in detail the Tokyo rally of April 7, 1946 in which leftists so riled up the crowd of 50,000 that Japanese police (backed by U.S. troops armed with machine guns) had to fire their pistols to quell the chaos.⁴³ Political upheavals in Tokyo remained an important subject for news reports, while stories that alleged Japanese misbehavior or insensitivity to China's postwar strength generated fierce commentary.

In order to counter public frustrations with China's impotence with regard to Japan, Guomindang officials announced the imminent dispatch of Chinese troops to Japan. In 1946, the Nationalists thrice pledged to send troops, and on March 13, 1946, Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek) himself asserted that "a minimum" of 15,000 of his troops would soon be occupying Japanese cities.⁴⁴ However, American planners were not eager to dilute U.S. influence over the occupation, and the communists stretched Jiang's Nationalist armies far too thin in any case.⁴⁵ Large numbers of Chinese troops never went to Japan.⁴⁶

⁴² "New Japanese Basic Law Promulgated," *China Weekly Review*, March 16, 1946, 61. Other articles on the Chinese draft constitution, speculated that the new document would be as useless as had been the Kellogg-Briand pact. See Emanuel Goldberg, "New Japanese Constitution Draft Outlaws War; Will It Be Heeded?" *China Weekly Review* March 16, 1946, 54-55. See also Akira Iriye, *China and Japan in the Global Setting*, (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1992), 100.

⁴³ For Chinese coverage of the event, see *Jianwen* magazine, June 1946, n.p.; for a critical first-hand account of the incident highly sympathetic to Chinese perspectives, see Mark Gayn, *Japan Diary* (New York: W. Sloane Associates, 1948), 164-169. John Dower summarizes the event in *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: Norton, 1999), 261.

⁴⁴ *China Magazine*, May 1946, 80.

⁴⁵ In 1947, Guomindang Foreign Minister Wang Shih-chieh remained insistent 1947 that Chinese troops would soon be traveling to Japan to occupy that country. See Stevenson to Bevin, "Brief Account of China's Foreign Policy," 25 March 1947, Great Britain Foreign Office 5059/76/10.

⁴⁶ Samuel C., Chu, "General S.M. Chu on the Allied Council and Sino-Japanese Relations," with written commentary by Edwin B. Lee and Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, from Thomas W. Burkman, ed., *The Occupation of Japan : The International Context : The Proceedings of the Fifth Symposium Sponsored by the MacArthur Memorial, Old Dominion University, the MacArthur Memorial Foundation, 21-22 October 1982* (Norfolk, VA : The Foundation : Copies from the MacArthur Memorial, c1984), 29-50. For a good overview of pre-war plans for Chinese troops to occupy the major island of Shikoku, a portion of lower Honshu, and part of the internationalized city of Tokyo, see Liu Xiaoyuan, *Partnership for Disorder :*

Chinese leaders, however, could take solace in their participation in two advisory bodies in Tokyo, the Far Eastern Commission (FEC) and the Allied Council on Japan. Unfortunately, the FEC was paralyzed by U.S.-Soviet acrimony and lacked power. The FEC's peripheral role in the occupation is best exemplified by MacArthur's laconic approach to its deliberations: over the course of his six-year tenure in Tokyo, the general visited the committee only twice.⁴⁷ As for the Allied Council on Japan, only when a contingent of high-profile Chinese journalists visited the body in March 1947 did Nanjing's representative finally speak up.⁴⁸ Chinese participation in the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal) appeared to possess greater potential as a signifier of China's new power over Japan's fate. Judge Mei Ru'ao, a member of the Legislative Yuan, traveled to Tokyo in early 1946. Unfortunately, when a Shanghai magazine published photographs of the judge's activities at the court, the pictures effectively and accurately portrayed the Chinese presence as insignificant in the context of a massive trial dominated by Americans. [Figures 3a and 3b.] Figure 3a shows the immensity of the Tokyo Trials, surpassing in size and spectacle any trials of "traitors" (*hanjian*) or Japanese on the mainland. Figure 3b indicates Mei Ruao's proximity to the Americans in Tokyo, where, although he was invited to swim with members of the American legal delegation, the Chinese member remained marginal to the judicial process.

China, the United States, and their Policies for the Postwar Disposition of the Japanese Empire, 1941-1945 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

⁴⁷ For a frank official acknowledgement from one of MacArthur's aides regarding the weakness of the Far Eastern Commission and the Allied Council on Japan, see Brigadier General Courtney Whitney, "The Philosophy of the Occupation," Supreme Commander For the Allied Powers, Governmental Section, *Political Reorientation of Japan, September 1945 to September 1948; Report*, vol. 1 (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1949),. xx.

⁴⁸ Gascoigne to Bevin, "Events in Japan: Quarterly Report, January-March 1947," 12 April 1947, Great Britain Foreign Office 5729/5729/23. Gascoigne noted: "the Chinaman put his first question, which called for information concerning the repatriation of the Japanese prisoners of war."



Figure 3a. *Shanghai Huabao*, August 1946, n.p. Courtesy Shanghai Public Library.



Figure 3b. *Shanghai Huabao*, August 1946, n.p. Courtesy Shanghai Public Library.

The slow pace of its deliberations and the prevalence given to long recitations by defense lawyers confirmed the trial's ineffectiveness as a palliative for long-standing Chinese complaints toward Japan.⁴⁹ Defendants continually raised as justification the alleged

⁴⁹ Mark Eykholt, "Aggression, Victimization, and Chinese Historiography of the Nanking Massacre," in *The Nanking Massacre in History and Historiography*, ed. Joshua Fogel, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 70-132.

benefits of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere and the puppet government in Manchukuo, but readers in the old northeastern colony rarely took heed.⁵⁰

Douglas MacArthur in the Chinese News Media

In the United States and around the world, the U.S. occupation of Japan was closely allied with the personality of Douglas MacArthur. Emerging from the gleaming belly of a steel bomber, ensconced in *Dai Ichi*, slouching next to the emperor, or stymieing communism in Japan, MacArthur personified the U.S. occupation. MacArthur's power in Japan was matched only by his consciousness of how that power was portrayed. Within the confines of a conformist institution, MacArthur had carved himself a distinct image: his crushed cap, sunglasses, and corncob pipe were all contributing elements in the image of a man for whom symbolism was profoundly important. MacArthur was Japan's supreme authority, investing his image with even greater potency. MacArthur thus cut an impressive figure: adulated by many Japanese and praised in the United States, but increasingly a lightning rod for Chinese criticism.⁵¹

Because MacArthur *was* the occupation, for the Chinese, he came to represent everything that was wrong with that occupation. The Chinese news media focused intently on MacArthur in 1946 and thereafter, spinning out articles and pictorial exposes about his administration in Tokyo. [Figure 4.]

⁵⁰ Examination of several CCP-controlled newspapers in Northeast China in 1947-1948, reveals that these publications paid little heed to the international trial in Tokyo, but found other means of denouncing the U.S. occupation of Japan. For discussion of the particular orientation of the press in Northeast China toward war crimes trials of Japanese, see Adam Cathcart, "Fanmei Furi Xuanchuan zai Dongbei, 1948 nian" ("Anti-Japanese Propaganda in Northeast China in 1948"), conference paper presented to International Symposium on East Asia in 21st Century: Cultural Construction and Cultural Exchange, Beijing University, China, April 19, 2006.

⁵¹ For discussion of MacArthur's image in the press, his attitude toward journalists, and the General's peculiar view of himself as reflected in the press, see William J. Sebald, *With MacArthur in Japan: A Personal History of the Occupation* (London: The Cresset Press, 1965), 109-115; John LaCerde, *The Conqueror Comes to Tea: Japan Under MacArthur* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1946), Chapter 7; Robert B. Textor, *Failure in Japan: With Keystones for a Successful Policy* (New York: J. Day Co., 1951), 33-45. For an interesting example of MacArthur's attack on what he saw as press misrepresentations of the occupation in the American media, see SCAP's lengthy response to a *Newsweek* article of Jan. 27, 1946 in Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, *Non-Military Activities in Japan for the Month of January 1947*, Summation No. 16 (Tokyo: General Headquarters), 35-36.



Figure 4. *Da Hua* (Great China Pictorial), June 1946. Courtesy Shanghai Municipal Library.

Almost from the beginning of his tenure in Japan, the Chinese press diverged sharply from the laudatory treatment accorded to MacArthur in the pliant Japanese press. As early as February 1946, the Shanghai *Dagongbao* noted in an editorial that MacArthur's policies were gathering "adverse criticism" in China, stating "General McArthur controls Japan by his personal prestige and not by his understanding of Japan."⁵² The paper criticized MacArthur for his failure to oust Japanese Foreign Minister Kijuro Shidehara, and called for the elimination of Shidehara's followers from the political scene.⁵³ Most

⁵² Quoted in Smyth in Chongqing to Secretary of State, February 14, 1946, National Archives RG 59, 893, 9111 RR / 2-1446.

⁵³ See Yoshio Kodama, *Ware Yabure Tari [I Was Defeated]*, translated Taro Fukuda (Japan: Radio Press, 1959); see also Damond Fields, "The Shadow Shogunate: Cold War Japan and the American Agenda," M.A. thesis, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, 1996.

striking, the editorial concluded that “matters in Japan would be handled more successfully if greater use were made of Chinese knowledge of and experience with that country.” The Far Eastern Commission, *Dagongbao*’s writers asserted, “will now make it possible to utilize this advantage.”⁵⁴ The impotent FEC, however, proved to disappoint Chinese nationalist desires.

If indeed MacArthur had ever been lionized as a Chinese war hero, by 1946 and 1947 these images had given way to criticism that he was now shielding the Japanese from justice. Consequently, apprehensive U.S. observers in China noted that “comment on Japan almost invariably now takes an anti-American slant.”⁵⁵ The Shanghai *Dagongbao*, so staunchly pro-American during World War II, appeared to confirm the trend. As a *Dagongbao* editorial stated on November 1, 1946:

The United States has been kind and generous to the Japanese with the fundamental purpose of nurturing a force which will be a menace to the Chinese. On the question of reparations MacArthur has also tried to protect the interests of the Japanese. Japan remains the strongest nation in the Far East and, if anything happens, her peacetime industries can be converted into war factories and her merchant marine into warships. She will be able to wage aggressive war again both land and sea. In peacetime her light and cheap commodities can be sold on the Far Eastern market with perfect freedom... if we continue to follow the lead of others there, our eight years of war will have been fought in vain, our national security threatened, and enemy undefeated.⁵⁶

MacArthur’s unwillingness to speed up the reparations process--either in terms of cultural or industrial goods--further convinced the Chinese of his ill intent. With such analysis from China’s leading journalistic institution, it was little wonder that, in the words of one trenchant observer, “disgruntlement at, and dissatisfaction with, American-Japanese policy [is] the only major topic on which all sides of Chinese press opinion appear to agree.”⁵⁷

Further stimulating Chinese distress over the direction of the American occupation was the treatment of Chinese nationals in Japan. In July 1946, escalating tensions erupted between Japanese and Taiwanese gangs over supremacy of the lucrative black market in Tokyo’s Shibuya district. Three truckloads of Taiwanese had attacked a Japanese police station in Shibuya armed with iron bars, clubs, and a few guns, killing

⁵⁴ Smyth in Chongqing to Secretary of State, February 14, 1946, National Archives RG 59, 893, 9111 RR / 2-1446.

⁵⁵ Stuart in Nanking to Secretary of State, November 11, 1946, National Archives, RG 59, 893, 9111 RR/ 11-146.

⁵⁶ Quoted in Stuart in Nanking to Secretary of State Acheson, November 11, 1946, National Archives, RG 59, 893, 9111 RR/ 11-146. Translation slightly modified.

⁵⁷ Stuart in Nanking to Secretary of State Acheson, October 13, 1947, National Archives RG 59, 893, 9111 /RR/ 10 – 1347.

one policeman. The resultant police response killed seven Taiwanese and brought the arrest and trial of another forty. Negative press comment in China regarding the “Shibuya incident” [*Shegu shijian*] was abundant, but when an American judge acquitted the three Japanese policemen and convicted or deported the thirty-five Taiwanese in January 1947, the verdict set off a firestorm of invective in the Chinese press.

In January 1947 MacArthur’s office issued a long statement justifying the verdict to the Chinese press.⁵⁸ The statement noted MacArthur’s traditional concern with law and order, but it appeared to be ineffective in changing Chinese views of the occupation of Japan. MacArthur’s belated and indignant response pointed to a larger problem for the United States: the Americans were wholly unprepared to explain the occupation to Japan’s neighbors.⁵⁹ This failing reflected larger problems with U.S. propaganda efforts in postwar Asia. With missionary zeal, American authorities had needed only a week in Tokyo to disband the Japanese Domei news agency and its many Chinese-language media outlets on the mainland.⁶⁰ Although substantial continuities existed between the old and new regimes in Japan, beaming international news into China was not one. Within China itself, the American propaganda infrastructure had been badly degraded by the rush home in the startling wake of Japan’s surrender. It was, as U.S. President Harry Truman later bitterly wrote, a case where “mamma and papa and every Congressman wanted every boy discharged at once after Japan folded up.”⁶¹ This homeward impulse extended to information operations, and, after Japan’s surrender, U.S. Information Service officers in Chongqing simply cleaned off their desks and left.⁶² Thereafter, America’s policies of retribution and benevolence in Japan would have to be self-evident.⁶³ This precipitous reduction in propaganda activities on the mainland was a

⁵⁸ “SCAP Issues Statement on Shibuya Incident,” United States Information Service, Shanghai Branch, Daily News Bulletin, January 29, 1947, National Archives RG 84, Political Advisor for Japan – Box 17, Folder 12, File 701.1 – China (Courts, Trials, Arrests) – (January – June 1947).

⁵⁹ For the self-critiques of occupation officials on this specific issue, see William J. Sebald, *With MacArthur in Japan: A Personal History of the Occupation* (London: The Cresset Press, 1965), 109-110; Robert B. Textor, *Failure in Japan: With Keystones for a Successful Policy* (New York: J. Day Co., 1951), 61.

⁶⁰ “MAGIC” Diplomatic Summary, Sept. 15, 1945. For greater detail on Domei operations, see “The Japanese Domestic Radio Audience – Report No. 16 from Bureau of Overseas Intelligence, Foreign Morale Analysis Division (OWI), 15 March 1945, Box 110, Records of the Office of War Information,” cited in Allen M. Winkler, *The Politics of Propaganda: The Office of War Information, 1942-1945* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), 145. Mao Zedong had called Domei programming “lies,” but even he respected the power of Japanese broadcasting.

⁶¹ Harry Truman, “Draft Speech (Undelivered),” April 17, 1948, *Off the Record: The Private Papers of Harry S. Truman*, Robert H. Ferrell, ed. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1980), 132.

⁶² Tillman Durdin, “Chungking Losing its Wartime Aura,” *New York Times*, October 26, 1945.

⁶³ Wilma Fairbank, *America’s Cultural Experiment in China, 1942-1949*, Department of State Publication 8839, International Information and Cultural Series 108, (Washington, D.C.: June 1976). See also William Benton [Assistant Secretary of State], “The Role of International Information Service in Conduct of Foreign Relations,” *The Department of State Bulletin*, October 21, 1945 (Washington, D.C.) Vol. XIII, No.

major oversight which brought lasting negative consequences for the United States in Asia. Chinese audiences, bystanders to the occupation, had little sense of how zealously MacArthur's military regime pushed pacifism or the destruction of Japan's armaments.⁶⁴ Neither MacArthur nor the U.S. State Department had anticipated the need to justify their occupation policies or convey their transformative effects to anyone other than the American people.⁶⁵ Intermittent attempts at persuasion by the United States and lingering bitterness toward Japan in Chinese cities mingled together, creating a combustible atmosphere in which future incidents would unfold.

Wang Yunsheng in Japan

In early 1947, anti-Japanese nationalism remained at a slow simmer in China. MacArthur, stung by the Shibuya reaction and displeased with the vehement Chinese response to his policies, determined to invite a contingent of leading Chinese journalists to Tokyo for a ten-day visit intended to showcase the achievements of the occupation.⁶⁶

Preparations for the visit were extensive and thorough in Japan. Occupation authorities circulated biographies of the Chinese editors, noting in particular Wang Yunsheng and his counterpart from the *Zhongyang Ribao* (Central Daily). Wang, the Americans noted, had a long record of opposing Japanese aggression in China and, they acknowledged, the journalist was also regarded as a foremost Japan expert in China, lending his views particular weight. The Americans had accurately assessed Wang's singular stature in China as an authority and commentator on Japan. Wang's publication *Sixty Years of Japan* had been widely read and reprinted in the 1930s, and would serve as a resource for Chinese audiences interested in Japan in subsequent decades.⁶⁷ Who was Wang Yunsheng, how were his views formed of Japan, and what role did he play in shaping Chinese public opinion toward Japan?

330, 589-595; Anonymous, "Our International Information Policy" *The Department of State Bulletin* Dec. 16, 1945, (Washington, D.C.) Vol. XIII, No. 338, 947-953.

⁶⁴ John Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1999).

⁶⁵ For a good general bibliography of USIS activities, see Walter L. Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945-1961* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997).

⁶⁶ SCAP Allied Council for Japan, Public Information Section, "Chinese Editors and Publishers Tour, February 1947," National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 331, UD 1102, Box 22, [290/9/31/1]. See also SCAP, Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2 (Intelligence), Security Division, Civil Intelligence Section, "Chinese Mission," National Archives, RG 331, UD 1134, Box 252.

⁶⁷ The "sixty years" referred to in the book's title were 1871-1931, but could also accurately denote the book's own long lifespan. The wide influence of *Sixty Years of China and Japan* can be divined from its repeated issuance, cycling through nearly ten editions from Tianjin to Chongqing publishing houses in the 1930s alone. After 1949, the book remained an important source for the CCP (Wang also published a popular book on Taiwan's history in 1955) but fell out of favor when Wang was denounced during the Cultural Revolution. In the years surrounding Wang's death in 1980, the book went through another four printings in Beijing (Sanlian Chubanshe), and was most recently re-issued in Shanghai in 1991 (Shanghai Shudian Chubanshe). For the original version, see Wang Yunsheng, *Liu Shi Nian Lai Zhongguo yu Riben* (Shanghai: Dagongbao Chubanshe, 1932).

A brief examination of Wang Yunsheng's career may yield insights into the anti-Japanese outlook of Chinese journalism as a whole. As a participant in Shanghai's booming commercial publishing industry, Wang Yunsheng enjoyed one of the more illustrious careers in Chinese journalism in the mid-twentieth century.⁶⁸ As one of the last journalists able to move easily between interviews with leaders of both of China's warring political parties, Wang Yunsheng was no simple instrument of the government, and was in fact highly critical of Guomindang policy.⁶⁹ Yet every element of Wang's biography suggests his immersion in the nationalistic currents that had inundated his generation. No sooner had he taken up the journalist's brush in the early 1930s than Japan annexed Manchuria and invaded Shanghai, actions which Wang protested via eloquent editorials in the Shanghai *Dagongbao*.⁷⁰ After the eruption of full-scale war in 1937, Wang followed the central government to Chongqing, where the elation prompted by his promotion to Chief Editor was smothered by the repeated destruction of his newspaper's offices by Japanese bombs.

Wang's experience was therefore indicative of the transformations in China stimulated by the Japanese aggression. During the War of Resistance, journalists had rejected even the pretense of objectivity, acting instead as prolix advocates for national unity.⁷¹ In an era in which national annihilation appeared distinctly possible, journalists roused resistance while failing to observe any distinction between journalism and propaganda.⁷² Wang, too, had taken upon himself the patriotic onus of the War of Resistance with great seriousness. In his works written after Japan's surrender, Wang showed that the weight of national salvation was still heavy upon him, and would not easily be laid aside.

Not long after the Japanese surrender, Wang published a retrospective on the War of Resistance, showing how strongly his journalistic identity had become bonded to his wartime experience. In reaching a grand peroration at the article's end, Wang included a telling description both of himself and the young journalists under his tutelage: "We are China's army of journalists, tempered by eight years in the War of Resistance. We are loyal to the War of Resistance; we denounce the enemy and put the traitors to death. Although we experienced much hardship, we never lost our spirit. The focus never

⁶⁸ Wang Zhitan and Liu Zili, eds., *1949 Yi qian de Dagongbao* (Jinan: Shandong Huabao Chubanshe, 2002).

⁶⁹ See *Wang Yunsheng* (Beijing: Renmin Ribao chubanshe, 1996). For Wang's interaction with Mao Zedong in 1946 Chongqing, see *Mao Zedong Nianpu*, vol. 3, (Beijing: Zhongyang Wenxian Chubanshe, 1993), 33-34.

⁷⁰ Wang Yunsheng, "For All Good Things to Resist!" *Shanghai Dagongbao*, January 30, 1932. Reprinted in Wang Zhitan and Liu Zili, eds., *1949 Yi qian de Dagongbao* (Jinan: Shandong Huabao Chubanshe, 2002).

⁷¹ Charles A. Laughlin, *War Reportage and the Aesthetics of Historical Experience* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002).

⁷² Rana Mitter, *The Manchurian Myth: Nationalism, Resistance, and Collaboration in Modern China* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2000).

changed.”⁷³ Buried in the bravado of the above passage is a melancholy acknowledgement that Wang could not revert into the man he had been before the war. This was exemplified by Wang’s use of the verb *shi* (是) to imply his *ongoing* loyalty to the patriotic precepts of the War of Resistance. The changes wrought by war were permanent.

Each carrying with them the onus of the past, the small contingent of Chinese journalists visited Japan in early March, 1947. Among the journalists were Chen Bosheng, chief of the Central News Agency, Chen Zangbo of the Shanghai *Xinwen bao*, Lu Geng of *Zhongyang Ribao* (Nanjing), Chen Xunyu of Shanghai *Shen Bao*, Niu Zhewang of *Yishi bao*, Cui Wanjiu of *Zhonghua Shibao* (Shanghai), Wang Yunhuai of the *Peking Chronicle*, and Miss Yu Dayou of *Min Guo Ribao*, Tianjin. Along with this illustrious cohort traveled photographer Fan Houqin and a reporter, Shen Chengyi.⁷⁴ [Figure 5.] Wang Yunsheng stands fourth from right.



Figure 5. “Chinese Pressmen Inspecting Japan,”
Zhongguo Shenghuo magazine, April 1947, p. 8. Courtesy Shanghai Public Library.

The schedule of the editors was the object of much concern and preparation by the U.S. occupation officials. Ultimately it was decided that the Chinese delegation would meet with General MacArthur before embarking out on seven full days of excursions and tours.⁷⁵ Under the guidance of the U.S. Eighth Army, the delegation was escorted to Yokohama for lunch, this time at General Eichelberger’s home, and a tour of docks intended to show the promise of Japanese overseas trade. Americans shared their desire for Japan to mature quickly economically but the Chinese did not necessarily share this outlook. The importance of industry to the occupation and to East Asia was driven home again on the third day of tours, which dwelled on Japanese industries in the Tokyo area

⁷³ Wang Yunsheng, quoted in Wang Zhitan and Liu Zili, eds., *1949 Yi qian de Dagongbao* (Jinan: Shandong Huabao Chubanshe, 2002).

⁷⁴ “The Chinese Newspaper Editors Visiting Japan,” undated, National Archives, RG 84, Political Advisor for Japan, Box 17 Folder 701.1 – China (General) – (January – June).

⁷⁵ “Visit of China Editors – Revised Schedule,” Feb. 27, 1947, National Archives RG 84, U.S. Political Advisor for Japan, Folder 701.1 – China (General) – (January – June).

before bringing the editors to the Chinese mission in Tokyo. On the fourth day of tours, the group turned toward education and publications, touring the reformed Kyodo news agency and meeting with Japanese journalists. [Figure 6.]



Figure 6. “Kyodo News Agency’s Tea Party.” *Zhongguo Shenghuo* magazine, April 1947, p. 8. Courtesy Shanghai Public Library.

While one might assume a certain degree of awkwardness in the discussions with Japanese journalists, both groups shared a distain for censorship and had showed a tendency toward cooperation during the trials of the Shibuya convicts.⁷⁶ The next day, the delegation had dinner with Japanese Diet officials as well as Dr. Chu Shih-ming and his staff from the Chinese mission. A naval base, sightseeing in Kyoto, a tour to Hiroshima and a lunch with the British ambassador rounded out the trip before returning to Osaka and then back to Tokyo to finish the trip.⁷⁷ They toured schools, factories, and were briefed on the status of Japan’s economy, reparations proceedings, and the workings of the occupation itself. Accompanied by two officials from the Chinese Mission in Tokyo and the New York *Herald Tribune* reporter A.T. Steele, the group traveled around Japan on a special train, giving them the flavor of being the masters of the land. In addition to touring around Japan on a specially chartered train, the journalists met as a group with General MacArthur.⁷⁸

Unfortunately, MacArthur had completely misread the mood in China--few Chinese were fantasizing about opening up, much less enlarging, the Japanese market to

⁷⁶ See Charles Willoughby [G-2] Memorandum, 27 January 1947 (includes *Nippon Times* article with censored text), National Archives RG 84, U.S. Political Advisor for Japan, Box 17, Folder 12, China: Courts, Trials, Arrests (January-June 1947).

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸“Memorandum of Conversation with General MacArthur, E.A. Bayne, and Max W. Bishop re “Discussion of the Position of General Wang Chih, Chinese Mission in Japan, etc.,” March 5, 1947, National Archives RG 84, U.S. Political Advisor for Japan; Box no. 17: Folder 701.1 – China (General) – (January – June).

build wealth via China's trickle of exports during the civil war. Nervousness and nationalism would win over any tendency towards cool appraisals of the East Asian economy. MacArthur had envisioned glowing reviews for the pacification of Japan, the new education in particular, but instead, Wang Yunsheng and his fellow journalists returned to China fixated on Japan's growing economy. MacArthur truly miscalculated on this matter of bringing Chinese journalists to Japan, for their desired conversion into apostles for the occupation never occurred.

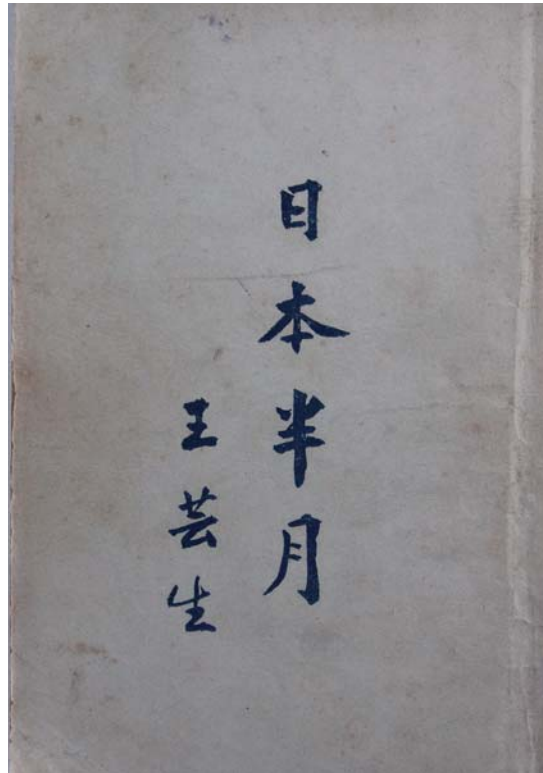


Fig. 7. Wang Yunsheng. *Banyue Riben* (Shanghai: Dagongbao Chubanshe, 1948)
Courtesy of Beijing National Library

Thereafter, the journalists produced a number of alarming reports on the U.S. occupation. Wang Yunsheng used his position as the editor of the widely circulated Shanghai *Dagongbao* to publish a twelve-article series alarming the Chinese public of Japan's rearmament. He asserted that at the root of U.S. policy lay a desire "to utilize Japan as an instrument against Soviet Russia."⁷⁹ Wang's editorials and printed accounts of his experiences proved so popular that they were soon issued as a monograph entitled *Banyue Riben* (*Half-Month in Japan*), as seen in Figure 7, above.

Banyue Riben not only offers a clear entry point into the state of Sino-Japanese relations in 1947, but it is by turns eloquent, lyrical, and slashing. Wang's preface,

⁷⁹Quoted in Hong Zhang, *America Perceived: The Making of Chinese Images of the United States, 1945-1953* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2002), 124.

written for the book's publication in spring 1948, frankly warns the reader of the inescapable Chinese perspective that colors the work. Yet the preface betrays not a hint of the growing strain of anti-Americanism in his parent company, the *Dagongbao*. Rather, Wang affably extends his personal thanks to General MacArthur, "without whose invitation and hospitality this book would never have been written" Rather than laying out grand geo-political themes, Wang begins the book by simply recounting his journey from Shanghai, relaying his private thoughts during the journey in almost rhapsodic fashion. Eagerness for the coming experience in Japan is mixed with apprehension. Before boarding the American aircraft in Shanghai, Wang sits through the litany of safety instructions now familiar to any airline traveler—a filmed discussion of emergency exits, parachutes, and worse-case scenarios. These seemingly mundane minutiae, to Wang, lend a feeling of dread. He is reminded of "preparations for war," a likely reference to the air-raid drills and evacuations he, along with thousands of others, had undertaken regularly in wartime Chongqing.⁸⁰ Then, soaring in mid-flight, Wang enters a reverie, realizing that he is poised quite literally between China and Japan, conscious of his role as a representative not simply of his news agency, but his country. He praises Japan, recalling that the Chinese people traditionally regarded the islands as a "gift from the gods." Continuing reflectively, Wang offered the following: "If our own country had no civil war, had our economy developed, had we a democracy, then the Chinese reporters going to Japan would feel more proud."⁸¹ This sense of shame at China's shortcomings was heightened by the trip to Japan and shows that the Chinese journalists were conscious not simply of observing, but were themselves being observed and their nation evaluated. The alarm Wang would express over Japan's rapid development was inherently tied to China's staggering progress on the road to modernity, unity, and strength in all of its forms—military, political, and cultural.

In his editorial "Japan's Dangerous Road," published upon his return to China in spring 1947 and again in *Banyue Riben*, Wang Yunsheng lays out explicitly his qualms with the direction being taken in Tokyo. He begins with a discussion of the occupation's apparent successes:

Indeed, the open-hearted, ingenuous American G.I.'s have been charmed by the Japanese. Every where they go they meet with ninety-degree bows and smiling, painted faces, and the mere utterance of English carries a ring of authority. How can the fresh, eager American big "kid" help feeling well-satisfied in this land where his every wish is command?

As for the upper classes of bureaucrats, capitalists and militarists, they are using an even greater effort to please General MacArthur. So skillful is their art of ingratiating themselves that one would not think of questioning their sincerity. It is not my intention here to say that, in so doing, they have any malicious intent toward the general himself.

However, I do suspect that in the innermost recess of their minds there lies

⁸⁰ Wang Yunsheng, *Banyue Riben*, 7.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

an ulterior motive. Under the wings of General MacArthur they hope for an opportunity to regain their power.⁸²

American optimism is seen here a liability. For Wang's Chinese audience in Shanghai, itself home to thousands of U.S. troops, discussion of American dominance in the streets of Japan implied a Sino-Japanese parity in spite of China's victory in the War of Resistance. Wang shows the militarists standing behind MacArthur, who, in spite of implementing new pacifist education and promising eternal renunciation of war in Japan's new constitution, has still failed to root out the war makers. Through flattery and obsequious requests, Wang implies, Japan's old guard has regained its stature under the protection of General MacArthur.

After asserting the dangers lingering in Japan, Wang goes on with more specific allegations:

Japan still possesses at present her traditional police system which is internationally notorious, a huge fishing-fleet moving freely upon the sea, and several millions of veteran soldiers who remain more or less organized though they are scattered all over the countryside. In case of emergency all these elements represent military power. To us Chinese, who have suffered at Japan's hands for decades, all these are fearful seeds of trouble.⁸³

While his allegations regarding the fishing fleets were only partially accurate, Wang's wariness of Japan's demobilized army and its possible reconstitution was one of the more interesting products of his tour in Japan.⁸⁴ The severe poverty awaiting demobilized soldiers meant that many, if not most, of the demobilized troops continued to wear their uniforms in public. John Dower has noted the persistence of wartime fashions in postwar Japan, stating that "the demobilized soldier in uniform was a ubiquitous personification of Japan in defeat."⁸⁵ Although Wang could speak Japanese and had been briefed by the American General Eichelberger on Japan's rapid demilitarization [Figure 8], the recurrent

⁸² Wang Yunsheng, "Japan's Dangerous Road," *Dagongbao*, April 1947, reprinted in *China Magazine*, June 1947 (New York: Chinese News Service, 1945-1949 [Microfilm; Woodbridge, Conn.: Research Publications, Inc., n.d.]).

⁸³ Wang Yunsheng, "Japan's Dangerous Road," *Dagongbao*, April 1947, reprinted in *China Magazine*, June 1947.

⁸⁴ Michael Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan: The Foundations of the Cold War in Asia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 27. In 1945, only ships – in some cases wooden trawlers – had been able to perform the work of repatriation to Japan.

⁸⁵ John Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York & London: W.W. Norton and Co., 1997), 170.

sight of ex-soldiers in uniform may have prompted his statement that Japan's former troops were "more or less organized."⁸⁶



Figure 8. "Commanding Personnel of the 8th Army explaining the control of Japan," *Zhongguo Shenghuo* magazine, April 1947, p. 8. Courtesy Shanghai Public Library.

As he returned to China, it appeared clear that Wang's ideas of Japanese revanchism would not be dissuaded by his half-month in Japan. The publication of *Banyue Riben* added fuel to the fires of Chinese opposition to the American occupation of Japan. Following the success of Wang's book in spring 1948, other publishing houses took up the cause, reprinting critical articles from Wang's colleagues on the March 1947 trip and publishing them, with flashy graphics and galvanizing cartoons, under virtually the same title. [Figures 9a and 9b.]

⁸⁶ Wang Yunsheng, "Japan's Dangerous Road," *Dagongbao*, April 1947, reprinted in *China Magazine*, June 1947.



Figure 9a. Yu Tianbai, ed. *Observations: Half-Month in Japan* (Shanghai: Chenzhong Chubanshe, 1948). Courtesy Beijing National Library.



Figure 9b. Ibid, 5.

Wang’s writing, along with the intensification of American policy in Japan, thus inflamed passions that led directly to the *fanmei furi* (oppose American revival of Japan) student movement in May and June 1948, the final dissenting “mass movement” in the years of Nationalist rule on the mainland.

As Wang and his contingent of journalists returned to war-torn China, MacArthur expressed his view that their visit to Japan had gone particularly well. Voicing a bit of displeasure at the Chinese Mission in Tokyo for forcing the visit in the first place, the General commented:

...the only criticism which General MacArthur had had of the Chinese Mission was the Mission's failure fully and accurately to inform the Chinese press of conditions of Japan and thus at least had contributed to the malicious and unfounded criticism which had appeared in the Chinese press; *that with the invitation to and the arrival of the Chinese editors in Japan this situation had largely resolved itself*; and that if necessary other and additional Chinese editors would be invited to Japan and given every facility to see for themselves the true situation.⁸⁷

Then, soon after the declaration of the "Truman Doctrine" in March 1947, MacArthur strode into the Foreign Press Club in Tokyo for a rare interview. MacArthur, to the surprise of the press corps, stated that he had succeeded in Japan's demilitarization and democratization. The next stage of the occupation, he asserted, would focus on economic development.⁸⁸ Following his declaration, MacArthur tightened the reins of Japanese liberalization in a series of edicts that later became known cumulatively in Japan as the "reverse course." This announcement, coming directly on the heels of MacArthur's solicitous promises to the Chinese editors, could not but influence negatively the Chinese press coverage of Japan.

It appears clear, then, that the "reverse course" in Japan was not solely responsible for the negative turn in Chinese public opinion regarding the American occupation of Japan. China's dissatisfaction over cultural reparations, Chinese views of General MacArthur, and above all the trip to Japan taken by Wang Yunsheng and the Chinese editors indicate that Chinese public opinion was clearly skeptical of the occupation well before the onset of the "reverse course." Lacking a determinative role in the occupation of Japan, Chinese journalists asserted their voices in 1945-1947. The need remains, however, for their mainland successors to shout into the Eastern winds.

⁸⁷ Emphasis added. "Memorandum of Conversation with General MacArthur, E.A. Bayne, and Max W. Bishop re "Discussion of the Position of General Wang Chih, Chinese Mission in Japan, etc.," March 5, 1947, National Archives RG 84, U.S. Political Advisor for Japan -; Box no. 17: Folder 701.1 - China (General) - (January - June).

⁸⁸ *Political Reorientation of Japan*, Vol. 2, Appendix F, 765-767. See also Michael Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan: The Foundations of the Cold War in Asia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 96.