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Remembering and Forgetting the War

Elite Mythmaking, Mass Reaction, and Sino-Japanese Relations, 1950–2006

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Ruling elites often make pernicious national myths for instrumental purposes, creating divergent historical memories of the same events in different countries. But they tend to exploit international history disputes only when they feel insecure domestically. Societal reactions to elite mythmaking, reflected in radicalized public opinion, can reinforce history disputes. During the 1950s–1970s, China avoided history disputes with Japan to focus on geostrategic interests. Only from the early 1980s did domestic political incentives motivate Beijing to attack Japanese historical memory and promote assertive nationalism through patriotic history propaganda, which radicalized Chinese popular views about Japan. Media highlighting of Japan's historical revisionism exacerbated societal demands to settle war accounts with Japan, while factional politics within the Chinese Communist Party made it difficult for the top leaders to compromise on the bilateral "history issue."

Introduction

On 13 August 2001 Japan's new prime minister, Koizumi Junichiro, paid homage at the Shintoist Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo, dedicated to the spirits of those who died fighting on behalf of the Emperor of Japan, and a long-time symbol of Japanese imperialist aggression in the eyes of China. While he claimed that his visit to the shrine was intended to "convey to all victims of the war my heartfelt repentance and condolences" and "pledge for peace," it was immediately denounced by the Chinese government

as an "erroneous act that has damaged the political foundation of Sino-Japanese relations as well as the feelings of the Chinese people and other Asian victims."[1] Nonetheless, Koizumi continued his annual visits to the shrine until shortly before stepping down in September 2006. With much anger, the Chinese leaders refused to hold summit meetings with Koizumi, and Chinese mass protests against Japan repeatedly erupted, first through Internet petitions and later culminating in large-scale anti-Japanese demonstrations in 2005. During the Koizumi years, bilateral relations reached their "lowest point since diplomatic normalization in 1972."[2]

The Yasukuni incidents were only a recent indication of the sharp clash between Chinese and Japanese interpretations of their war history. Beginning from the first Sino-Japanese textbook controversy in 1982, bilateral political disputes over history, or the "history issue," have severely escalated. The role of historical memory in contemporary Sino-Japanese relations has long puzzled students of East Asian politics because it defies two conventional wisdoms: first, that time can heal all wounds; and second, that growing bilateral contacts should mitigate historical grievances. China and Japan fought a traumatic war during 1937–45, but they did not start to quarrel about history until more than three decades later, the early 1980s, when the majority of the population no longer had direct experience of the war and the two countries had developed close economic and social ties. Since then, their political disputes over the memory of the war have continued unabated, becoming a major concern in bilateral relations and overshadowing the prospect of regional stability and prosperity in East Asia.[3]

Why do countries today still bicker about events decades or even centuries old? Why cannot the governments restrain such seemingly irrational quarrels that may jeopardize more tangible national interests? I argue that the fundamental cause of international political conflict over history lies in the intentional manipulation of history by ruling elites, or national mythmaking, for instrumental purposes. National myths, which are fanciful stories about the origins, identity and purposes of a nation, constitute an integral part of the ideological foundation for national identity and nationalism.[4] Though often distorting historical facts, myths present a picture of the shared past that can evoke the deepest emotional resonance from the populace. Elites use these highly symbolic myths to justify national security policy or address domestic political concerns such

as regime legitimacy, social mobilization needs, and factional and organizational interests.[5] These myths tend to lead different countries to interpret the same historical events with great discrepancy. Elites may shelve their historiographical differences with another country for fear of damaging immediate economic and political interests but tend to exploit the political benefit of these differences when they feel a strong sense of insecurity in domestic politics.

Not all national myths are elite-driven or falsifiable. Anthony Smith's ethno-culturalist theory claims that since national myths are traditional stories about the ethnic origins of a nation, they should be value-neutral and not really falsifiable.[6] However, nationalism scholars in the school of "invented traditions" emphasize the falsity in certain mythical representations of national history.[7] In order to understand international history disputes, I focus here on national myths that blatantly distort history, especially three types of pernicious myths created by ruling elites that serve to incite international conflict: (a) self-glorifying myths, which explicitly incorporate inflated or false claims of national virtue and competence; these include myths of victimization that form a "cult of national martyrdom," endowing a nation with moral superiority;[8] (b) self-whitewashing myths, which deny or rationalize a nation's past wrongdoing against others; and (c) other-maligning myths, which denigrate other nations as inferior, evil or culpable.[9] In particular, such myths foster disagreement between former enemy countries over what happened during their past conflict and generate dramatically different answers to the question of "who bears what kind of responsibility to whom for having done what."[10] Myths that glorify their own countries' beneficence and virtues, deny guilt for crimes and blame others for tragedies will harden the perpetrator side's claim of their own innocence and the victim side's demand for retribution.

Meanwhile, it is important to understand that national mythmaking is rarely implemented in a strictly top-down, coherent fashion because national memory is constructed through a complex process of contestation. Internal memory contestation can escalate and perpetuate international history disputes: intra-elite tension may compel the top leaders to maintain a hard-line position externally, and elite mythmaking may radicalize public opinion about another country. Therefore, even if the governments would rather de-escalate history disputes when their cost, such as damage to bilateral economic cooperation, exceeds the benefits, factional and societal

forces may prevent them from compromising on the "history issue." In order to illustrate these arguments, this article examines, as a case study, the fluctuations in postwar Sino-Japanese political disputes over history, from the silence in the first three decades after the war to the vociferous clashes over memory from 1982.

Avoiding the "History Issue," 1950–1981

After Japan's catastrophic defeat in World War II, the Japanese conservative elites fostered three major national myths whose main purpose was to cleanse the reputation of the conservative group tarnished by its inextricable ties to the wartime government and legitimate its ruling power. First, the "myth of the military clique" blamed a small group of military leaders for launching the war and asserted that the Japanese people were peace-loving, innocent victims of the war. This myth whitewashed the complicity of a wide range of wartime political actors, including the emperor and court officials, *zaibatsu,* or business conglomerates, civilian politicians and high-ranking bureaucrats, who regrouped in the conservative parties in postwar Japanese politics. It also ignored the enthusiastic support that numerous ordinary Japanese had given to the war policy. Second, the Western-centric myth held Japan responsible for opening hostilities against the Western Allies but evaded its aggression and atrocities in Asia. The conservatives perpetuated this myth because acknowledging and thoroughly investigating war crimes would have incriminated many people outside the military clique. Third, the "heroic sacrifice" myth gave imperial soldiers special honor for having sacrificed themselves for the nation. By extolling the military's image, conservative historiography circumvented the fundamental mistakes in the war policy and the horrendous atrocities committed by the military rank and file.[11]

Elite mythmaking was also prevalent in China, largely motivated by national security interests. After 1949, the central theme of Chinese grand strategy was to counterbalance the threat of "American imperialism" because of its containment policy against Communist China and commitment to support the Kuomintang (KMT)-led regime in Taiwan after the outbreak of the Korean War. In line with this strategy, Chinese communist ideologues sought to anchor national identity in the "defining fundamental fissure" between the Chinese Communists and the Capital-

ists, including the KMT and its American ally.[12] The official history of the Sino-Japanese War made every effort to magnify the role of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in the national resistance campaign and condemn the KMT and the US.

Related to the struggle against the US was China's policy toward its Western allies, including Japan. The CCP leaders saw a world not merely dominated by two superpowers but also ridden by contradictions between superpowers and smaller powers; if Beijing could build a revolutionary United Front with both socialist countries and smaller Western powers, it would erode international support for the US-led containment against China.[13] From the 1950s, Beijing practiced "people's diplomacy" toward Japan, a semi-official diplomatic campaign aimed at changing Tokyo's policy of non-recognition of Beijing and undercutting its security alliance with Washington.[14] In the arena of historical memory, the Chinese official narrative refrained from demonizing the entire Japanese nation but drew a clear line between "the small handful of Japanese militarists" and ordinary Japanese people, who were treated as the Chinese people's fellow victims of the militarists. Clearly overlapping with the Japanese "myth of the military clique," such a moderate tone on Japanese war responsibility was designed to promote a favorable impression of Communist China in Japanese society and facilitate "people's diplomacy." Moreover, the distinction between the many good Japanese and the few bad Japanese supported the class-based communist ideology, the primary foundation of the Beijing regime's legitimacy.

The interest calculus behind national mythmaking does not suggest that the process of elite manipulation of history is linear because contestation over memory construction almost always exists between ruling elites and societal forces, and even between different elite factions. Whether myths created by certain ruling elites can become the *hegemonic national memory* and shape the core ideas of national identity has much to do with the larger political opportunity structure, including the balance of power between elite groups, and ultimately their ability to control the institutional tools of memory construction, including school textbooks, museums and commemorative rituals, and post-conflict resolution measures, including war compensation programs. Whichever political group enjoys domination of these institutional tools will succeed in instating its own version of historiography as the mainstream memory.

The above Japanese and Chinese national myths became the official memory mainly due to the dominant state control over memory production that coerced societal voices into silence or marginal influence. In Japan, the conservatives' interest in manipulating history coincided with the American strategy of supporting a stable conservative government in Tokyo both to achieve occupation objectives and to make Japan an important anti-communist bulwark in Asia.[15] Japan's progressive elites, often associated with the Japanese Socialist Party (JSP), Japanese Communist Party (JCP) and other left-wing organizations, held a more forthright perspective on war guilt, and they indeed practiced "history as opposition" to compete with the ruling conservative elites for power and influence.[16] But the influence of the progressive forces on the hegemonic national memory diminished as the JSP and JCP repeatedly lost in the power struggle against the American-supported Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). As a result, the conservatives were able to disseminate national myths through such institutional tools as the Tokyo War Crimes Trial, textbook authorization system, postwar compensation policies, and war commemoration rituals such as those at the Yasukuni Shrine and the peace museums in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.[17]

Moreover, Japanese conservative elites successfully spread these national myths because they were in accordance with the broad frame of public attitudes. Consuelo Cruz suggests that when constructing rhetoric systems for national identity, political actors must operate within the limit of "imaginable possibilities."[18] In order to appear truthful or persuasive to the public, national myths usually build on certain embedded perceptions and genuine emotions that already exist in family memories and folk culture, rather than "fabricating" something entirely new. Japanese myths of self-glorification and whitewashing won wide public resonance precisely because they captured the imagination of the general public in the aftermath of the war, when the nation was preoccupied with its own sufferings and in no mood to face up to Japan's war guilt vis-à-vis other Asian nations.

With its totalitarian control of state power and thorough penetration of societal life, the CCP easily institutionalized war myths as the hegemonic national memory. Chinese school textbooks in the 1950s and 1960s praised the CCP as the sole leader of the "Great Chinese War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression."[19] In contrast, they accused the KMT of kowtowing

to and actively collaborating with the Japanese aggressors, and blamed the US for conniving with the Japanese and helping the KMT suppress Chinese communism. They omitted those significant, sometimes valorous battles fought by the KMT troops, and neglected to mention American military aid to China and the larger picture of the Pacific War. Compared to the vivid descriptions of the wartime roles of the CCP and KMT, textbook treatment of Japanese actions was rather cut-and-dried, rarely providing details, and never condemning the entire Japanese nation, but only the *ridi* (Japanese imperialism), *rijun* (Japanese military), or *rikou* (Japanese bandits) The state-controlled media also claimed that ordinary Japanese people wanted peace, and urged them to join hands with the Chinese people to oppose the US–Japan alliance that "would drag Japan into another disastrous war."[20]

Although echoing Japan's "myth of the military clique," Chinese official history conflicted with the other two Japanese myths that glorified the imperial army and denied Japan's victimization of Asia. However, Beijing deliberately set aside these differences lest the Chinese people confuse Japan with their true archenemies, the KMT and America. Domestically, the government suppressed historical investigation of Japanese war crimes.[21] War movies avoided elaborating on this topic because otherwise they would be disseminating sentimentalism and capitalist humanitarianism that would "dilute our hatred of imperialism" and "lower our morale."[22] The government also blocked information on Japanese textbook distortion and other domestic programs that asserted the other two Japanese myths. Externally, Beijing handled bilateral historical legacies with exceptional generosity. Shortly before the 1956 war-crimes trials, the CCP Central Committee defined two principles with regard to Japanese war criminals: none should be executed or sentenced to life in jail, and verdicts of imprisonment should be limited to a very small number of people. Therefore, of approximately 1,000 Japanese war criminals detained in China at the time, only 45 were sentenced to prison, the rest pardoned and quickly repatriated.[23] Moreover, Beijing never made war reparations a precondition or bargaining chip in its diplomacy toward Japan, and in the 1960s even decided within the party that the government would forgo reparation claims in the future.[24]

Toward the end of the 1960s, profound international structural changes, including the Sino-Soviet confrontation and Sino-American rap-

prochement, compelled Beijing to collaborate with more Western powers, a category that included Japan, to confront Soviet hegemonism. Shortly before Sino-Japanese normalization, the CCP Central Committee issued to its members Mao's policy instruction that cooperation with Japan would "contribute to the struggle against American and Soviet hegemonism, especially Soviet revisionism" and was useful for opposing a Japanese militarist revival, liberating Taiwan and mitigating tensions in Asia.[25]

Given the strategic significance of bilateral solidarity in the face of the common Soviet threat, Beijing reached a compromise with Tokyo on issues considered secondary, such as war memory. When signing the joint communiqué of diplomatic normalization in Beijing in September 1972, Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei spoke of the "unfortunate period" in bilateral history, for which he expressed "deep reflection," but not apology.[26] Beijing quickly accepted this ambiguous gesture of contrition in exchange for speedy diplomatic recognition. At the beginning of the preparatory meetings negotiating the joint communiqué, Premier Zhou Enlai offered to renounce claims for war reparations.[27] Zhou also told Tanaka that the few militarists must be strictly separated from the vast majority of the Japanese people, and that both the Chinese and Japanese nations had been traumatized in the war.[28] By reiterating its concurrence with Japan's mainstream war history, Beijing avoided political disputes over history and made way for the two countries' immediate strategic cooperation.

Thus, propaganda of national myths prevented rigorous investigation of historical facts, and political gestures were substituted for sincere, concrete restitution. In China, the state retained tight control of memory institutions in the 1970s, so private memories of the war, though still alive, could not enter the public space of discourse. Most young Chinese had minimal knowledge about Japanese war atrocities. Meanwhile, Mao's charismatic leadership and dictatorial grip on central power largely precluded intra-party challenges to the propagation of myths that downplayed Japanese war crimes.[29] Therefore, through the 1970s neither official interest nor popular pressure existed in China to incite history disputes with Japan.

The Eruption of the "History Issue": The Japanese Textbook Controversy of 1982

When are elites willing to expose and highlight memory conflict with other countries, even to the extent of risking damage to diplomatic relations? One circumstance is when they feel a strong sense of insecurity because of concerns about their power status or national cohesion. Liah Greenfeld and Daniel Chirot describe in their study of the early nation-building stage in Russia, Germany and certain Arab countries how "proud, patriotic, deeply shamed and insecure" elites were constantly dissatisfied with their domestic power status and felt humiliated for their countries' lagging behind advanced Western countries. These feelings propelled their nationalistic propaganda and belligerent foreign policy.[30] Another possible motivation is the attempt to use international disputes over history in order to restore domestic consensus and harmony. Omer Bartov points out that German myths about Jewish enemies and German victimhood were institutionalized after World War I when German nationalists perceived a series of threats to national unity and purity from within and without.[31]

In the case of Sino-Japanese relations, starting from the 1982 Japanese textbook controversy, Beijing engaged in acrimonious strife with Tokyo over the narration and commemoration of war history. Such a dramatic departure from earlier policy can be understood in light of the post–Cultural Revolution socioeconomic difficulties and burgeoning democracy movement, as well as the political cleavages within the CCP. Beijing's move in the textbook incident was evidently based on a rational calculation that the tasks of enhancing internal cohesion and boosting regime legitimacy were more pressing than maintaining harmonious relations with the West.

After the death of Mao and the end of the Cultural Revolution, the CCP's policy focus shifted from class struggle to economic modernization. The immediate political goals of the new leader, Deng Xiaoping, were to restore the people's trust in the party after the disastrous Cultural Revolution, and to weed out Mao's legacy and consolidate his own power base within the party, both crucial to implementing his overall strategy of economic reform and "open-door" policy. But these goals met challenges from elements within both Chinese society and the CCP. From late 1978 a "Democracy Wall" campaign was launched in Beijing, in which, through

street posters and sometimes underground journals, the public shared their experiences of suffering during the Cultural Revolution and criticized the communist leaders. The campaign soon escalated to bold demands for democracy and political freedom. The movement had the potential for gaining enormous public resonance, given the widespread social discontent exemplified in the complaints about unemployment on the part of "sent down" youths (those who had been sent to the countryside in the 1960s but were now returning to the cities without jobs and urban residency), the petitions by hundreds of thousands for redress of their grievances, and the increasing urban violence triggered by the petitions.[32]

Deng initially tolerated the democracy movement, but when it began to question the legitimacy of the reformers like Deng himself, he took a hard line to the "Rightist agitation."[33] But the crackdown on democratic activists did not silence the expression of public resentment about many socioeconomic problems that had emerged since the reform, including inflation, official corruption, increasing crime, and industrial pollution. The dismal situation was captured in the remarks of Hu Yaobang, general secretary of the Central Party Secretariat, who admitted in February 1980 that the party confronted a threefold crisis of faith, belief and trust in its relations with the Chinese people. Indeed, when the Polish Solidarity movement erupted that year, Beijing was so worried about similar labor unrest in China that Deng called for effective measures to forestall possible mass protests and "ensure stability and unity."[34]

Coinciding with the growing social instability and declining public faith in the CCP, the intra-party split between the reformists like Deng and conservative party elders deepened in the early 1980s. The former sought further economic reform and openness to the West to obtain advanced technical and managerial know-how as well as financial investment. Deng himself was keen to reform the military to shed those senior commanders with "ossified thinking." He also desired to uproot the leftist residual from the Mao era represented by Hua Guofeng, Mao's anointed successor, and consolidate his own authority. But a cohort of veteran cadres, senior military leaders, and conservative ideologues loathed the reform policies. Economic conservatives like Chen Yun advocated caution in introducing a free market, private sector and direct foreign investment.[35] Politically, the party's old guard blamed the reformists' laxity in ideological indoctrination for permitting the infiltration of dangerous Western liberal ideas.

The aforementioned democracy movement, social disorder and worsening economic situation all gave the conservatives ammunition for attacking the reform program. In February 1982 a conservative ideologue, Wang Renzhong, even proposed to declare war on bourgeois influences spread by the open-door policy.[36]

In order to build a broad reform coalition, Deng had to gingerly walk a fine line between the two rival factions.[37] After all, he needed support from the conservatives, including from Chen Yun for the economic program, General Ye Jianying for removing Hua and retiring old military commanders, as well as the old guard's tolerance of the open-door policy. Therefore, while adhering to economic reform, Deng conceded considerable ground to the conservatives on political and ideological fronts, such as propagating a moderate evaluation of the Cultural Revolution and Mao's legacy, and sanctioning several ideological campaigns combating bourgeois liberalism from the early to mid-1980s. Deng's ambiguity was manifest at the 12th Party Congress held in September 1982, when he called for the further opening-up of China to the outside world but warned of "corrosion by decadent ideas from abroad," and placed equal emphasis on economic construction, and political and ideological education.[38]

Such was China's domestic political background when the Japanese textbook controversy erupted. The incident was the result of the intensifying struggle between the progressive and conservative views of history in Japan. One of the most important areas of memory contestation is mass education. In the so-called "Biased Textbooks Campaign" (*Henkō Kyōkasho Kyanpein*) that started around 1980, Japanese conservative elites intensely attacked the moderate increase in textbook coverage of the Asian peoples' war suffering, which had been brought about since the 1970s by leftist influence, and sought to tighten control over the textbook authorization process. In January 1982 the LDP issued a statement that school education should "cultivate the Japanese spirit and foster national pride." Education Minister Tanaka Tatsuo even explicitly told textbook writers and publishers who were preparing textbooks for the 1983–86 triennium to "soften their approach to Japan's excesses during World War II" and place more stress on patriotism.[39] Wary of government attempts to distort history, Japanese liberal intellectuals closely monitored the textbook screening process in 1982. At the end of June the Japanese media reported that Mombusho (the Japanese Ministry of Education) had issued

instructions for historical whitewashing in textbooks, such as replacing the term *shinryaku* (invasion) by *shinshutsu* (advance) in relation to the Sino-Japanese war.[40] The news sparked a political storm in Japan, which was quickly picked up by the international media. In response, the Chinese and South Korean governments lodged formal protests with Tokyo in late July and early August.

Beijing's reaction to the incident was not impulsive; the Chinese media waited nearly one month after the initial outbreak of the controversy to start attacking Japan. As noted above, in 1982 Deng was under great pressure as a result of the mounting social crisis and domestic political disunity. Moreover, this occurred shortly before the 12th Party Congress, when Deng would make a compromise with the conservatives in exchange for their endorsement of reform and the open-door policy. To show "softness" in relation to Japan, a country in the category of Western countries, in the textbook controversy would lay him open to even more vigorous attacks from the conservatives and endanger his reform agenda.

Despite the dearth of information on Beijing's policy deliberations in July, one can logically infer from the domestic situation and the reaction in the Chinese media that Deng very likely saw the textbook incident as a good opportunity to shore up his own and the party's prestige and also prepare for the upcoming Party Congress. A tough stance on Japan could show his determination to fend off inimical foreign influence, as well as to check the pro-West wing of the reformist faction, represented by Hu Yaobang, who was also sympathetic to the liberal intellectuals' quest for political freedom.[41] This could greatly appease party hard-liners who were alarmed by the strengthening of the democratic movement as a result of economic reform. Beijing's diplomacy toward Japan over the history issue can therefore be seen as a product of the power struggle between different party factions, since Deng did not enjoy Mao's dictatorial charisma and relied more on the support of veteran political and military leaders. Besides, by lashing out at Japan's amnesia about its past aggression toward China, Beijing could depict Japan as an immoral "other" and thus restore the internal cohesion of the "self," the Chinese nation, and assuage public resentment toward the government.

The international context that enabled Beijing to reap political profit from the "history issue" was the decline, from the 1980s, of the pressure on China to maintain an intimate relationship with the West as a result of

the Cold War. At the 12th Party Congress, Beijing formally adopted an "independent foreign policy" between the two superpowers. Although the continuing Soviet threat prevented China from becoming truly independent of American strategic support, at least rhetorically Beijing began to pull back from the West.[42] In the 1990s, after the Soviet Union collapsed, the geostrategic incentives for Beijing to restrain nationalist diplomacy faded even more rapidly.

After the textbook incident, China's internal tension only worsened. Not only did the intra-party factional politics continue, but also the reform policy drew complaints from a large part of the population that was adversely affected. The CCP's prestige further tumbled after the violent crackdown of the 1989 democratic movement and the exacerbation of social inequality and cadre corruption from the 1990s. Popular resentment against what they saw as the unfair, corrupt and incompetent state was so intense that it sparked numerous mass demonstrations and even violent riots.[43]

With the inexorable decline of communism, the government resorted to a new ideological framework, nationalism, to facilitate intra-party consolidation and strengthen the regime's legitimacy. As discussed earlier, elite mythmaking gains wider public acceptance if it invokes beliefs and values shared by the public. One commonly used tactic is to wrap national myths in the fabric of patriotic rhetoric, claiming that pride in one's own nation and hostility to others are in the national interest. As John Bodnar argues, patriotic ideas appeal to the public because they are perceived as "fundamentally true" rather than as instruments of elite exploitation.[44] Thus, from the mid-1980s, Beijing began to foster a mixture of what Michel Oksenberg calls "confident nationalism" and "assertive nationalism." It was moderate in the economic sphere, acknowledging the importance of Western technology and investment, but rigid and muscular in the ideological and cultural spheres, often using the "othering" of the Western out-group to glorify the Chinese in-group.[45] The dual nature of the official nationalism was aimed at raising the national spirit while retaining the benefits of the economic open-door policy.

A country that had invaded and humiliated China in the past, and whose historical amnesia was notorious, Japan became an easy target of China's assertive nationalism. By adopting a harsh position on the Japanese "history issue," Beijing conveyed to the public that it would

not compromise with Western countries to hurt national interests. Thus, in a second textbook controversy in 1986, Beijing pressured Nakasone Yasuhiro's government to revise a nationalistic history textbook and fire Minister of Education Fujio Masayuki who had opposed the revision.[46] Incidents of Japanese leaders' worship at the Yasukuni Shrine, including those involving Prime Ministers Nakasone in 1985, Hashimoto Ryūtarō in 1996, and Koizumi since 2001, also invariably provoked Beijing's harsh criticism.

Promoting official nationalism: China's patriotic education campaign

To be sure, China's official nationalism was not intended to provoke anti-West xenophobia that would have damaged its economy, which was so interdependent with the West. Excessive public animosity against foreigners also carries the risk of undermining political stability, which had been the case in both the May Fourth Movement of 1919 and the Xi'an Incident of 1936, when anti-Japanese mass demonstrations rapidly turned into anti-government movements. To signal the domestic orientation of the nationalist propaganda, the official discourse preferred the term *aiguo zhuyi* (patriotism) to *minzu zhuyi* (nationalism), since the latter had anti-foreign, parochial connotations. Using patriotic language could also mediate divergent interests and concerns in society for no one would dispute love for the motherland, not even the liberal dissidents. The government exhorted the people to identify with and rally around the communist state that was allegedly the "paramount patriotic force and guardian of national pride" and, in the name of patriotism, persuaded the public to support the reform policies.[47]

Therefore, in addition to politicizing history disputes with Japan, another main instrument that the Chinese government employed to promote official nationalism was patriotic school education. In 1985, the government resumed "Five-Love Education" (*wu'ai jiaoyu*), a patriotic education program dating back to the 1950s. The State Education Commission (SEC) instructed schools in 1990 to "integrate the teaching of patriotism and national condition (*guoqin*) with the education of love for socialism and the CCP." In 1994, formal guidelines under the heading

"Outline for the Implementation of Patriotic Education" were published.[48] In order to stimulate national pride and cohesion, this campaign placed particular emphasis on teaching China's history of resisting foreign aggression as a collective experience of suffering, struggle and glory. In 1989 the SEC instructed schools to use history classes to make students "remember historical lessons, and not to forget the imperialist invasion and the Chinese people's heroic resistance."[49]

This program of patriotic history education highlighted the 1937–45 Sino-Japanese war, which had previously been treated as merely one of many episodes in China's nearly one hundred years of "national struggle for liberation." Now the war was singled out as the most important military and political conflict in Chinese history because in this war "China could claim its first complete victory against foreign invaders."[50] In 1995, taking advantage of the fiftieth anniversary of China's war victory, Beijing launched a vigorous commemorative campaign designed to bring patriotic education to a climax. The official media published numerous historical documents, interviews and editorials regarding the war, and secondary schools nationwide carried out the "Six Hundred Project" to popularize a long list of patriotic books, movies and television dramas, and songs and poems.[51]

While highlighting the theme of national resistance, the new historiography redefined the KMT's role in the war. Since the patriotic propaganda prepared the nation for the grand cause of overcoming foreign humiliation and restoring national glory, the unification with Taiwan, a province ceded to Japan by an unequal treaty in 1895, became a significant issue of national pride. Beijing jettisoned the old narrative on the CCP–KMT class struggle, as the KMT, which now represented the anti-independence constituency in Taiwan, was Beijing's potential ally. It instead claimed that the two parties had shared the common goal of defeating Japanese aggression. Textbooks published in the late 1980s for the first time included the KMT-led military campaigns against Japan. New war movies also portrayed the KMT in a more positive light, such as *Xuezhan Taierzhuang* (The bloody battle of Taierzhuang) made in 1986, which portrayed a major victory of the Nationalist army in 1938.[52]

Those who now replaced the KMT as the worst villain in the history of the war were the "vicious Japanese imperialist aggressors." Textbooks provided comprehensive coverage of Japanese war crimes, with

Fig. 1. The Nanjing Massacre Memorial, front wall. Photo by author.

figures of fatalities, gruesome pictures, and even names of villages and individuals that had fallen victim to the aggression.[53] War movies made since the 1980s graphically depicted Japanese acts of brutality, such as the Nanjing Massacre and the germ warfare conducted by Japanese Unit 731. Meanwhile, war commemoration brought Japanese atrocities to the center of national memory. The memorial to the Nanjing Massacre, the icon of Chinese war victimhood, which was completed in August 1985, included a display of numerous photographs, written documents, eyewitness testimonies, and even human skeletons. The inscription on its front wall declared "VICTIMS 300,000" (Beijing's official estimate of the massacre's fatalities), while the inscription on the inner wall instructed visitors "Never forget national humiliation" (w*uwang guochi*) (see figures 1 and 2). Similar museums were built at other sites of Japanese atrocities throughout the country and designated as centers for patriotic education. Chinese scholars were also encouraged to conduct deeper investigation of Japanese atrocities and publish their research.[54]

Mythmaking was evident in the patriotic education campaign. While reversing the previous cover-up of Japanese atrocities, the new narrative went to the other extreme of arousing a sense of Chinese victimhood and demonizing Japan. It failed to strike a balance between the relatively peaceful Sino-Japanese interactions in their earlier history, their later conflicts,

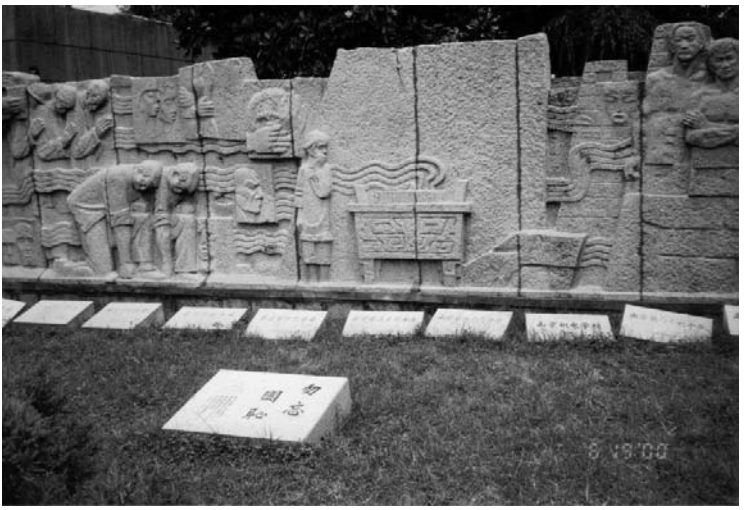

Fig. 2. Detail from the Nanjing Massacre Memorial showing the inscription "Never forget national humiliation." Photo by author.

and post-normalization cooperation. Besides, wartime history was far more complicated than black-and-white struggles between Japanese invaders and Chinese patriots; secret diplomacy, puppet governments and numerous petty Chinese collaborators had existed under the Japanese occupation. By placing the lion's share of the blame for China's past suffering, long-standing backwardness and current socioeconomic difficulties on Japan, the new narrative evaded many sensitive issues that might hurt national self-respect or the party's prestige.

Public opinion radicalization and Beijing's predicament

These self-glorifying and other-maligning myths promoted by the patriotic education campaign elicited vociferous public response in China. These myths were highly imaginable and credible to a "captive audience" whose private memories of the war aggression and genuine resentment toward Japan had previously been masked by class hatred. Compared to other imperialist powers, Japanese aggression was the most recent, the bloodiest and the most painful.[55] In the eyes of many Chinese, Japan was the ultimate enemy, and to combat anything related to Japan was quintessential patriotism.

Elite mythmaking, of course, involves the selective use of historical memories according to their political convenience. This explains why some memories fade with the passage of time, while others are played up under particular circumstances. While tapping into the deeply embedded Chinese cultural images of Japan, the Chinese ruling elites sought to banish to oblivion the history of other external conflicts that did not fit their needs. For example, from the 1990s the Chinese government systematically deleted the 1980s war against Vietnam from public memory. Textbooks omitted the war, war heroes disappeared from public view, artists stopped depicting the war, and even relevant library materials were removed.[56]

The patriotic campaign centered on Japan initially scored great success in stimulating public resonance. The Chinese were receptive to information on Japanese war atrocities, of which they had some knowledge but which had never been officially documented. For example, a book produced by a People's Liberation Army (PLA) publisher in 1987, *The Great Nanjing Massacre*, sold 150,000 copies in the first month and was reprinted time and again to meet the market demand.[57] Since then, numerous such books have appeared, often on the initiative of local governments or individual publishers. Not only the state but also the non-official mass media enthusiastically took up the subject of patriotism. As Geremie Barmé observed: "Patriotic sentiment is no longer the sole province of the Party and its propagandists … nationalism is functioning as a form of consensus beyond the bounds of official culture."[58]

While the appeal to patriotism can make it easier to promote national myths, placing too great an emphasis on patriotic emotions may engender a mass ideology of extreme self-glorification and anti-foreignism. According to the self-categorization theory, group interaction causes extreme opinions to prevail because members of the group compete among themselves to act out socially desirable values and ideas.[59] In the case of China, when patriotism became the buzzword in public discourse, everyone wanted to be an ardent patriot in order to win social status and respect, so that more people began to advocate extreme views on both past events and current policies, proclaiming uncritical love for China and their desire to defend it from aggressive foreigners. The idealization of patriotic warriors generated visceral anti-Western sentiments, of which Japan was the main target. The official history still maintained that Japanese militarists should be differentiated from the ordinary Japanese, but the public was

too preoccupied with Chinese suffering to recognize such fine distinctions. Best-selling books, Internet chat rooms and other private discussion forums on Japan and war history commonly condemn the entire Japanese nation as evil.

The extreme anti-Japanese popular nationalism in China was reflected in the recent phenomenon on the Internet of "*fenqing* (indignant young people) culture." *Fenqing* use cyberspace to make unbridled insults against the Japanese people, culture and government, accusing those Chinese who have connections with Japan of being *hanjian* (Chinese traitors).[60] *Fenqing* culture has many fanatical followers among young urbanites. For instance, in 2001 a famous Chinese actress was attacked on the Internet for wearing a dress resembling the Japanese military flag in a fashion magazine photo. Soon after she apologized on national TV, an angry member of the audience splashed human waste on her during a stage performance. Although he was immediately arrested by the police, he was hailed as a warm-hearted patriot on the Internet and in the tabloid magazines.[61] *Fenqing* do not, of course, represent the whole Chinese population, but the fact that they are far more vocal than moderate citizens and set the tone for policy debate on the Internet, the most open and dynamic public space of discourse in China, makes them a particularly powerful constituency in support of anti-Japanese policies even in an authoritarian China.

Chinese public sentiment against Japan would not have escalated so rapidly without the considerable liberalization of the mass media. From the 1990s the Chinese publishing industry flourished, launching thousands of new papers, magazines and journals, many of which depended on income from advertisements or foreign money rather than state funds.[62] The non-official media were therefore often driven by commercial profit to pursue sensationalism. While diversifying information sources and expanding the public space of discourse, the media liberalization also brought about a worrisome trend, the rapid spread of malicious rumors about Japan, which incited the Chinese public against that country.

Public opinion may become especially radicalized if society gains more influence over the institutional carriers of national memory at a time when the state is still capable of repressing undesirable public debate. Because patriotic discourse almost always falls within the limits of tolerable free speech, those seeking to advance their social prestige, commercial interests or political agenda are tempted to jump on the patriotic bandwagon.

Chinese intellectuals, therefore, also endorsed patriotism as the consensual national ideology, not only because it was the social fashion, but also due to the harsh state repression of liberal discourse after 1989. Casting their ideas in patriotic terms was a safe, effective way of advancing their own political agendas. For example, the "popular-civic nationalists" invoked nationalism to encourage greater mass participation and foster Chinese civil society and democracy. Another group, consisting of self-proclaimed nativist academics and tabloid nationalist writers, even adopted a xenophobic and isolationist perspective in order to incite a mass movement to combat Western imperialist domination.[63] These nationalist intellectuals spoke in particularly harsh and passionate terms against Japan, disregarding facts and logic.[64] Depicted as representing Chinese public opinion and defending China's best interests, these nationalist views became so powerful that they pushed more moderate views out of the mainstream of popular discourse.[65] A telling example is the "New Thinking" debate on Japan around 2002–2003, where moderates who spoke out against the growing anti-Japanese nationalism in China were strongly criticized in intellectual circles and shouted down on the Internet by radical *fenqing*, who called them "traitors."[66] Consequently, members of the Chinese elites are reluctant to express moderate views on Japan.[67]

Becoming increasingly incited against Japan, Chinese public opinion demanded settling historical accounts with that country. The first outburst of popular repugnance occurred in the mid-1980s when Chinese university students openly protested against Nakasone's visit to the Yasukuni Shrine and distortions in Japanese history textbooks. Since then anti-Japanese mass demonstrations have become a routine concern in bilateral relations. Unlike before when people were largely insulated from the outside world, from the 1990s many followed international news closely and engaged in policy debates, especially on Internet Bulletin Boards. These attentive, vocal, mostly urban Chinese also tended to be the same radical nationalists who eagerly sought any piece of negative information about Japan. Whenever something controversial happened in Japan, they could immediately learn about it and voice protests.

Against this backdrop of surging Chinese popular nationalism, media reports of Japanese domestic struggles over the memory of the war greatly galvanized history activism in Chinese society. Under mounting domestic and international pressure since the 1980s, the Japanese government had

to concede some ground on war history, such as to increase coverage of Asian victimization in history textbooks and respond to the international citizens' movement for redress of war victims by compensating certain groups such as the "comfort women."[68] But the new trend provoked a neo-nationalist backlash in Japan against what was seen as the government's capitulation to foreign pressure, and against progressive historians, accused of spreading masochistic views among young people. The right-wingers advanced a self-glorifying view of history by organizing symposiums, publishing cartoons and popular readings, and even compiling textbooks of their own, including the controversial New History Textbook that a rightist organization produced and pushed through the textbook authorization process in 2001.[69] The rightist attacks compelled the Japanese government to retreat from earlier concessions to the "progressive offensive." As a result, textbooks approved in 2000 markedly deleted or watered down descriptions of military atrocities.[70] Many of these changes seemed to have arisen from the so-called "voluntary restraint" of textbook publishers, but they were actually the result of political coercion by Mombusho and the Office of the Prime Minister.[71]

The intense contestation over war memory between various political forces in Japan, especially the voices of the more vocal and well-funded right-wingers, immediately caught the attention of the Chinese public who now enjoyed more open access to external information. Incidents like the Japanese government's approval of revisionist history textbooks and right-wing politicians' "slips of the tongue" to gloss over aggression brought the gap between the two nations' memory of the war into sharp relief and easily incited the already inflamed Chinese public opinion. Chinese nationalists were also provoked by Koizumi's visits to the Yasukuni Shrine in 2001–2006, which were primarily aimed at fostering Japanese national pride and "normal state" mentality, as well as ensuring a power base for his governance.[72] Not only has Yasukuni enshrined Class-A Japanese war criminals since 1978, but also the newly redesigned and expanded military history museum associated with the shrine, Yushukan, termed Japan's aggression in the 1930s–1940s "the Greater East Asian War" and glorified "the elevated thoughts of the noble souls" who had fought in that war on behalf of Japan.[73] As Japan's top leader, Koizumi's worship at the shrine signaled official accommodation and even promotion of its clearly revisionist interpretation of history. The Chinese saw it as a

direct insult, for they believed themselves to have suffered the most from Japanese aggression during the war. Hence, genuine indignation, a victim mentality and biases against Japan all interacted to produce an intense and frequently destructive anti-Japanese mass campaign in April 2005.

The public agitation placed the government in a difficult dilemma. On the one hand, the objective of official nationalism was primarily domestic.[74] Beijing sought to restrain anti-Japanese sentiments when they jeopardized important national interests such as economic cooperation with Japan. Especially after the harsh criticism expressed by President Jiang Zemin during his 1998 state visit to Japan backfired, Beijing began to soften its rhetoric on Japan's treatment of its war history.[75] On the other hand, a crude clamping down on popular nationalism would incur criticism against "soft-kneed" government diplomacy and weaken its patriotic credentials.

Such a predicament was behind Beijing's decision to suspend exchanges of leaders' visits with Prime Minister Koizumi from 2002. Since the 1998 diplomatic debacle, Beijing had evidently felt the imperative to modify its policy toward Japan. Compared to Koizumi, Jiang preferred to maintain the status quo on the history issue, hoping to restrain further polemics and repair the damaged relations. Nonetheless, fearing attacks from the nationalist public and leftist party elites should he make any compromise, he demanded that Koizumi stop visiting Yasukuni. When the fourth-generation leader Hu Jintao took power in 2002, he and the moderate Foreign Ministry were eager to seek a breakthrough in Sino-Japanese relations. However, rejection of the conciliatory "New Thinking" on Japan by both the Chinese public and the elites forced Hu to put the plan on the backburner.[76] Because he was still consolidating his power within the party, for which support from Jiang's remaining power base was essential, Hu had to uphold the explicit linkage that Jiang had established between a halt to Koizumi's visits to the Yasukuni Shrine and resumption of state visits between the two countries. Politically it was too costly for him to back down from his predecessor's harsh stance on Yasukuni.[77]

Today, it is widely believed in China that Japan owes the Chinese people an apology for its war crimes. Although Beijing indeed wished to tone down history-related disputes in the hope of repairing Sino-Japanese relations after Jiang's counter-productive visit, when high-profile events that rekindled the controversies over the memory of the war occurred, such

as the Japanese prime minister's worship at the Yasukuni Shrine, Beijing had to adopt a firm position in order to assuage public rage. Thus, the growing bottom-up impetus for addressing the bilateral historical legacy, combined with intra-party challenges to leadership stability and nationalist provocation from Japan, all forced the Chinese leaders to confront Japan on the history issue even when they would have probably preferred to compromise.

Conclusion

Remembering the past is not a simple act of recording historical events, but a process of constant reconstruction of these events in light of present social and political changes. Although elite mythmaking has been a central factor in causing Sino-Japanese political disputes over their war history in the 1930s–1940s, this practice also appears to be present in China's official interpretation of the national resistance against other foreign imperialist oppression in its history. Paul Cohen has pointed out that mythologizers tend to portray history as a one-dimensional picture, imposing a subjectively predetermined, often simplistic theme on the otherwise complex and multifaceted historical process.[78] Chinese textbooks glorify dramatic clashes between Chinese nationals and foreigners such as the Boxer uprising as spontaneous, anti-imperialist mass movements, while failing to critically examine the backwardness and xenophobia in Chinese society at the time that were reflected in these movements. In January 2006, a preeminent Chinese academic Yuan Weishi attacked the textbook account of the Boxers in an article published in *Bingdian*, a weekly magazine associated with the official China Youth Daily.[79] The government responded to Yuan's article by shutting down the magazine and replacing the editor-in-chief and his deputy. When the magazine was allowed to reappear two months later, it immediately published a lengthy rebuttal of Yuan that defended the Boxers as patriotic heroes who had "prevented China from being carved up by foreign imperialism." While acknowledging some of the Boxers' atrocities against foreigners, the author attributed them to the limitations of the peasant class (but exculpated the latter since they were the victims of foreign oppression), noting that ultimately the Chinese people had found power in Marxism and the communist movement which had won them

national independence, prosperity and dignity.[80] Evidently, this debate over the one-hundred-year history of the Boxer uprising went far beyond an academic discussion to involve political contestation over power and legitimacy in today's China.

The Chinese ruling elites not only mythologize the nation's interaction with foreign countries but also tightly control the interpretation of internal history. One example in point is the heavily politicized treatment of CCP history. For the Chinese government, party history is one of the most critical ideological tools for legitimating the party's rule and, as a required university course, plays a major role in the political training of future members of the bureaucracy, of both the government and the party.[81] Instead of basing itself on rigorous academic research of historical facts, Chinese party historiography is strictly limited by political theories established by party functionaries holding leading positions within the CCP. One such theoretical guideline is the *Resolution on Some Questions of History*, a document passed at a CCP Central Committee plenary in 1945 and the party's first attempt to give an overall interpretation of its history. The second major document is the *Resolution on Some Questions Concerning the History of the Party since the Founding of the People's Republic of China*, adopted by the party in 1981. While some party historians since the reform years have tried to reconstruct the past in a more scholarly way, less oriented to propagandistic goals, overall the study of party history is highly institutionalized, and the content remains "stereotyped and monotonous" to the present day.[82]

The case of the Sino-Japanese conflict over the memory of the war indicates that elite manipulation of history can pit the memories of former enemy countries against one another. This does not always give rise to a salient "history issue" in international relations because of the ruling elites' reluctance to undermine their immediate strategic or economic goals by inciting political conflicts over history. But when elites feel that their power may be threatened by domestic opposition forces, they may be tempted to resort to polemics over sensitive historical issues in the international arena.

This case also demonstrates that the politically motivated national mythmaking process is not the sole province of a monolithic ruling elite capable of designing a coherent strategy on historical memory and implementing it at will. Memory contestation is the rule rather than the

exception, precisely because the political motivations behind historical interpretation differ across social groups and over time. The ruling elites are often divided over how to deal with history, and they can be challenged and swayed by dissenting memories held by other social elites and even the general public. Some of these challenges to official historiography are the state's own making. Elites cannot twist history arbitrarily but have to design a credible narrative that is easy for the public to accept, such as to array it in the popular garment of patriotism. But once embraced by the public, patriotism can assume a much more fanatical and even xenophobic tone, generating strong momentum for uncompromising struggles with other countries.

The twin driving forces of the "history issue," top-down elite mythmaking and bottom-up mass reactions, suggest that international clashes of memory are not easily depoliticized. "Let bygones be bygones" is easier said than done. Elites have high stakes in manipulating national history and exploiting international history disputes. Moreover, even when elites find it no longer cost-efficient to continue pursuing the "history issue," the population is unlikely to put such disputes aside merely because it has been instructed to. While no country is immune to egocentric nationalism, the incentive for elite mythmaking tends to be strong in a political system combining weak regime legitimacy, internal disunity, and social unrest. Hence, any remedies to international history conflicts need to address both the misunderstandings between countries and the domestic political and social ailments that generate them.

Notes

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1. "Anger over Japan PM's Shrine Visit," *BBC News* (Online), 13 Aug. 2001.

2. Quoted from the remarks of Chinese State Councilor and former Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan, *The Japan Times*, 13 Dec. 2005.

3. Numerous works have discussed the negative influence of historical legacy on contemporary Sino-Japanese relations. See Allen Whiting, *China Eyes Japan* (Berkeley, 1989); Thomas J. Christensen, "Chinese Realpolitik," *Foreign Affairs* 75, no. 5 (Sept./Oct. 1996): 37–52; Nicholas Kristof, "The Problem of Memory," *Foreign Affairs* 77, no. 6 (Nov./Dec. 1998): 37–49; Thomas U. Berger, "Tangled Visions: Culture, Historical Memory and Japan's External Relations in Asia," paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association (Boston, MA, 1998).

4. Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge and New York, 1989), 22; and John Gillis, *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity* (Princeton, 1994), 3.

5. Stephen Van Evera, "Hypotheses on Nationalism and War," *International Security* 18, no. 4 (spring 1994): 5–39. For example, Thomas Christensen, *Useful Adversaries* (Princeton, 1996), argues that Mao Zedong's anti-American propaganda in 1958 was intended to mobilize mass support for his grand strategic goal of accelerating China's industrial modernization.

6. Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford, 1986).

7. Jonathan Friedman, "The Past in the Future: History and the Politics of Identity," *American Anthropologist* 94, no. 4 (1992), 849.

8. Omer Bartov, "Defining Enemies, Making Victims: Germans, Jews, and the Holocaust," *American Historical Review* 103, no. 3 (1998): 771–816; and Ruth Linn and Ilan Gur-Ze'v, "Holocaust as Metaphor: Arab and Israeli Use of the Same Symbol," *Metaphor and Symbolic Activity* 11, no. 3 (1996): 195–206.

9. C. G. Jacobsen, "Myths, Politics and the Not-So-New World Order," *Journal of Peace Research* 30, no. 3 (1993): 241–50. See Liah Greenfeld and Daniel Chirot, "Nationalism and Aggression," *Theory and Society* 23, no.1 (1994): 79–130.

10. This is a formula advocated by progressive Japanese intellectuals to define war responsibility. See Ishida Takeshi, *Kioku to bōkyaku no seijigaku* (The politics of remembering and forgetting) (Tokyo, 2000), 165; and Ienaga Saburō, *Sensō sekinin* (War responsibility) (Tokyo, 2000), 29–35.

11. On war myths in postwar Japanese conservative historiography, see Yinan He, "Overcoming Shadows of the Past: Post-Conflict Interstate Reconciliation in East Asia and Europe" (Ph.D. diss., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2004), 74–82.

12. Rana Mitter, "Behind the Scenes at the Museum: Nationalism, History and Memory in the Beijing War of Resistance Museum, 1987–1997," *The China Quarterly* 161, no. 1 (2000), 283.

13. For analyses of China's United Front strategy, see Okabe Tatsumi, *Chūgoku no Tainichi seisaku* (China's Japan policy) (Tokyo, 1976), 22–39; and Wang Jisi, "International Relations Theory and the Study of Chinese Foreign Policy: A

Chinese Perspective," in Thomas Robinson and David Shambaugh, eds., *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice* (Oxford, 1994), 482–505.

14. For Chinese official accounts and diplomats' personal recollections of "people's diplomacy" toward Japan, see Xue Mouhong, *Dangdai zhongguo waijiao* (Contemporary Chinese diplomacy) (Beijing, 1990), chap. 16; Sun Pinghua, *Nihon to no 30 nen: Chūnichi yukō zuisōroku* (30 years with Japan: Miscellaneous thoughts on Sino-Japanese friendship) (Tokyo, 1987); and Xiangqian Xiao, *Eien no rinkoku to shite* (Being eternal neighbors) (Tokyo, 1997).

15. Herbert Bix, "Inventing the 'Symbol Monarchy' in Japan, 1945–1952," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 21, no. 2 (1995): 319–64.

16. Carol Gluck, "The Past in the Present," in Andrew Gordon, ed., *Postwar Japan as History* (Berkeley, 1993), 70. Even the Japanese leftist approach to war responsibility had limitations. It mostly shunned the question of the responsibility of "the people," or collective responsibility, and converged with conservative narratives of Japanese victimhood. For a sharp critique of the left-wing intellectuals' view of Japanese war responsibility since the mid-1950s, see Ōnuma Yasuaki, *Tōkyō saiban kara sengo sekirin no shisō e* (From the Tokyo Trial to postwar thoughts on war responsibility) (Tokyo, 1993), 169–74.

17. For more on the Japanese domestic struggle over war memory after World War II and the eventual institutionalization of the conservative national myths, see He, "Overcoming Shadows of the Past," 74–77, 82–90.

18. Consuelo Cruz, "Identity and Persuasion: How Nations Remember Their Pasts and Make Their Futures," *World Politics* 52, no. 3 (April 2000): 275–312.

19. The following discussion is based on a number of substitute teaching materials used around 1950 when formal textbooks had yet to be produced, and four editions of official textbooks produced in the 1950s–1960s.

20. *People's Daily* editorials frequently made such arguments before the 1970s. See Tian Huan, ed., *Zhanhou zhongri guanxi wenxianji* (Documents on postwar Sino-Japanese relations) (Beijing, 1997), 1:469–72, 590–93, 780–82.

21. Daqing Yang, "Convergence or Divergence? Recent Historical Writings on the Rape of Nanjing," *American Historical Review* 104, no. 3 (June 1999): 858.

22. Chen Bo, "Genggao di juqi Mao Zedong sixiang hongqi, wei chuangzuo gengduo genghao de geming junshi ticai yinpian er nuli" (Lifting higher the red flag of Mao Zedong's thoughts, striving to produce more and better revolutionary military movies), *Dianyin Yishu* (Film art) (Beijing) (Aug. 1960): 5–6.

23. Jin Yuan, *Qiyuan: Yige zhanfan guanli suozhang de huiyi* (Unusual destiny: Reminiscences of a director of a prison for war criminals) (Beijing, 1999), chaps. 25–27.

24. See Zhang Xiangshan, *Zhongri guanxi: Guankui yu jianzheng* (Sino-Japanese relations: My humble opinions and testimony) (Beijing, 1998), 66–70. Zhang was a member of Premier Zhou Enlai's inner group responsible for designing and implementing diplomacy toward Japan.

25. *Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao* (The manuscripts of Mao Zedong since the founding of the nation) (Beijing, 1987–1990), 13:316.

26. Prime Minister Tanaka's speech at the welcome dinner hosted by Premier Zhou, 25 Sept. 1972, in Tian, ed., *Zhanhou zhongri guanxi wenxianji*, 2:105.

27. Ibid., 89–95.

28. Ibid., 103–4.

29. Factional politics was a constant phenomenon in Mao's era, but overall his power prevailed in intra-party debate over grand strategic designs and major foreign policy decisions such as the Korean War, the two Taiwan Strait crises, the Sino-Soviet split and the rapprochement with the US and Japan.

30. Greenfeld and Chirot, "Nationalism and Aggression," 95.

31. Bartov, "Defining Enemies, Making Victims."

32. More than 100,000 out-of-towners came to Beijing and Shanghai to petition for their cases in 1979 alone, and many demonstrations and protest marches were staged in Beijing and other cities. Richard Baum, *Burying Mao: Chinese Politics in the Age of Deng Xiaoping* (Princeton, 1994), 76–78.

33. Ibid., 69–84.

34. Ibid., 91, 112.

35. On the intra-party split over economic reform strategies in the 1980s, see Harry Harding, *China's Second Revolution: Reform after Mao* (Washington, DC, 1987), 77–90.

36. Baum, *Burying Mao*, 142.

37. Harding, *China's Second Revolution*, 90–93.

38. Baum, *Burying Mao*; and Merle Goldman, *Sowing the Seeds of Democracy in China: Political Reform in the Deng Xiaoping Era* (Cambridge, MA, 1994).

39. Caroline Rose, *Interpreting History in Sino-Japanese Relations: A Case Study in Political Decision-Making* (London and New York, 1998), 68–71.

40. However, subsequent investigations discovered the report was inaccurate because the change from *shinryaku* to *shinshutsu* did not occur that year and some original textbook drafts before the screening already contained the term *shinshutsu*.

41. On Hu Yaobang's connection with the liberal intellectual movements in the 1980s, see Goldman, *Sowing the Seeds of Democracy in China*.

42. David Shambaugh, "Patterns of Interaction in Sino-American Relations," in Robinson and Shambaugh, eds., *Chinese Foreign Policy*, 204; and Harry Hard-

ing, *A Fragile Relationship: The United States and China since 1972* (Washington, DC, 1992), 121–23.

43. Elizabeth Perry, "Crime, Corruption, and Contention," in Merle Goldman and Roderick MacFarquhar, eds., *The Paradox of China's Post-Mao Reforms* (Cambridge, MA, 1999); and Lu Xiaobo, *Cadres and Corruption: The Organizational Involution of the Chinese Communist Party* (Palo Alto, 2000).

44. John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, 1992).

45. Michel Oksenberg, "China's Confident Nationalism," *Foreign Affairs* 65, no. 3 (1987): 501–23.

46. Akihiko Tanaka, *Nitchū kankei 1945–1990* (Sino-Japanese Relations, 1945–1990) (Tokyo, 1991), 137–39, 150–52.

47. Suizheng Zhao, "'We Are Patriots First and Democrats Second': The Rise of Chinese Nationalism in the 1990s," in Edward Friedman and Barrett McCormick, eds., *What If China Doesn't Democratize? Implications for War and Peace* (Armonk, NY, 2000), 26–27.

48. Pu Weizhong, ed., *Aiguo zhuyi yu minzu jingshen* (Patriotism and national spirit) (Beijing, 2000). Also see Alisa Jones, "Politics and History Curriculum Reform in Post-Mao China," *International Journal of Education Research* 37, no. 6–7 (2003): 545–66.

49. *Zhongguo Jiaoyu Nianjian* (Yearbook of Chinese education) (1990): 103.

50. See "Jiang Zemin's Speech at the Veterans' Symposium, August 25, 1995," in Tian, ed., *Zhanhou zhongri guanxi wenxianji*, 2:939.

51. *Zhongguo Jiaoyu Nianjian* (1996): 422, 957–64.

52. The film's directors testified that their production had received strong support from top party leaders and propaganda departments for it could not only stimulate Chinese patriotism but also contribute to CCP–KMT cooperation in the cause of national unification. See *Zhongguo Dianying Nianjian* (Yearbook of Chinese films) (1987): 3/12–3/16.

53. See, for example, People's Education Press, *Junior High School Textbook*, vol. 4, and *High School Textbook*, vol. 2 (1992) (in Chinese).

54. Yang, "Convergence or Divergence?"

55. Shogo Suzuki, "The Importance of 'Othering' in China's National identity: Sino-Japanese Relations as a Stage of Identity Conflicts," *The Pacific Review* 20, no. 1 (March 2007): 23–47.

56. See "Was the War Pointless? China Shows How to Bury It," *New York Times*, 1 March 2005.

57. Xu Zhigen, *Nanjing datusha* (Beijing, 1987).

58. Geremie Barmé, "To Screw Foreigners Is Patriotic: China's Avant-Garde Nationalism," *The China Journal*, no. 34 (July 1995): 211–12.

59. Margaret Wetherell, "Social Identity and Group Polarization," in John Turner, ed., *Rediscovering the Social Group: Self-categorization Theory* (Oxford and New York, 1987), 142–70.

60. *Fenqing* culture targets not only Japan but Western bourgeois culture in general, but its anti-Japan tone receives the most responses from the audience.

61. See http://www.netandtv.com/newspage/htm2002-4/200243160054219637.htm (accessed 25 May 2007).

62. Barmé, "To Screw Foreigners Is Patriotic."

63. See Bin Xu, "Chinese Populist Nationalism: Its Intellectual Politics and Moral Dilemma," *Representations,* no. 76 (fall 2000): 120–40.

64. For some examples, see Song Qiang et al., *Zhongguo haishi nengshuo bu* (China can still say no) (Beijing, 1996); and Xiao Jiwen, *Riben: Yige buken fuzui de guojia* (Japan: A country that refuses to admit guilt) (Nanjing, 1998).

65. China's emerging middle class tends to be more moderate about world affairs. But they are only a small fraction of the Chinese population and their views are not yet articulated given the current political environment in China. See Alastair Iain Johnston, "Chinese Middle Class Attitudes towards International Affairs: Nascent Liberalization?" *The China Quarterly* 179 (Sept. 2004): 603–28.

66. Peter Hays Gries, "China's 'New Thinking on Japan'," *The China Quarterly* 184 (Dec. 2005): 831–50.

67. Author's interviews with about twenty Chinese international affairs experts in Beijing and Shanghai in May 2006 show that Chinese elites are commonly cautious about what they can say about Japan in the public arena lest they become targets of radical nationalists.

68. Robert Fish, "From The Manchurian Incident to Nagasaki in 20 Pages: The Pacific War as Seen in Postwar Japanese High School History Textbooks," in Edward Beauchamp ed., *Education in Modern Japan: Old Voices, New Voices* (Armonk, NY, 2004). In 1995 the Murayama Tomiichi government established the Asian Women's Fund to compensate surviving sex slaves in the name of the Japanese people rather than the government. So far Tokyo has refused to offer them an official apology or state compensation. On the comfort women controversy and politics of memory in Japan, see Ueno Chizuko, "The Politics of Memory: Nation, Individual and Self," *History & Memory* 11, no. 2 (1999): 129–52; and Jordan Sand, "Historians and Public Memory in Japan: The 'Comfort Women' Controversy," ibid., 117–26.

69. Gavan McCormack, "The Japanese Movement to 'Correct' History," in Laura Hein and Mark Selden, eds., *Censoring History: Citizenship and Memory in Japan, Germany, and the United States* (Armonk, NY, 2000); John K. Nelson,

"Tempest in a Textbook: A Report on the New Middle-School History Textbook in Japan," *Critical Asian Studies* 34, no. 1 (March 2002): 129–48.

70. *Asahi Shimbun*, 10 Sept. 2000 and 5 April 2001.

71. Tawara Yoshifumi, "Junior High School History Textbooks: Whither 'Comfort Women' and the 'Nanking Massacre'?" *Japan in the World*, Nov. 2000, available at http://www.iwanami.co.jp/jpworld/text/textbook01.html (accessed 25 May 2007).

72. It was reported that Koizumi won the LDP presidency against his opponent Hashimoto in 2001 because he promised to Nihon Izokukai (Japanese Bereaved Families Association) on the eve of the race that he would visit Yasukuni after entering office. Japanese conservative elites, though mostly supporting a nationalist agenda for Japanese foreign policy, were divided over these visits. While a number of LDP politicians argued that actions taken to promote national pride through war history reinterpretation did not need to be provocative, history hawks like Koizumi, Abe Shinzo and Aso Taro were determined to confront any foreign pressure, including Asian protests against worship at Yasukuni, which they saw as unfair interference in Japan's internal affairs.

73. Quoted from the English website of Yasukuni, http://www.yasukuni.or.jp/english/ (accessed 4 May 2007).

74. Yongnian Zheng, *Discovering Chinese Nationalism in China* (Cambridge, 1999).

75. During the visit, frustrated with Japanese Prime Minister Obuchi Keizō's unwillingness to provide the same written apology about the war that he had just given South Korean President Kim Dae-jung, Jiang attacked Japan's wartime history and demanded Japanese contrition. But Jiang's tough attitude enraged many Japanese who found him lacking basic diplomatic etiquette for openly expressing disproval of Japan when he was there as a state guest. See Gilbert Rozman, "China's Changing Images of Japan, 1989–2001: The Struggle to Balance Partnership and Rivalry," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 2, no. 1 (2002): 95–129.

76. Author's interview with a well-informed Chinese international affairs analyst in Beijing, 14 May 2006.

77. Author's interviews with a Chinese diplomat and an international analyst from the PLA, 11 and 17 May 2006. This also explains Hu's agreement to hold a summit meeting with the new Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzo in fall 2006. Hu now felt less constrained by Jiang's policy on Yasukuni because Abe avoided provoking Beijing by shunning the Shrine after taking power. Moreover, Hu gained ground in domestic politics: he not only fired the mayor of Shanghai who belonged to the Jiang faction but also succeeded in turning his own proposal to "build a harmonious socialist society" into official policy at a plenary of the CCP Central Committee in October 2006.

78. Paul A. Cohen, *History in Three Keys: The Boxers as Event, Experience, and Myth* (New York, 1997), 214.

79. Yuan Weishi, "Xiandaihua yu lishi jiaokeshu (Modernization and history textbooks)," *Bingdian*, 11 Jan. 2006 (available at http://zqb.cyol.com/gb/zqb/2006-01/11/content_118530.htm) (acccessed 4 May 2007).

80. Zhang Haipeng, "Fandi fanfengjian shi jindai zhongguo lishi de zhuti: Ping Yuan Weishi jiaoshou 'xiandaihua yu lishi jiaokeshu'" (Anti-imperialism, anti-feudalism are the central theme of Chinese modern history: Comments on Professor Yuan Weishi's "Modernization and History Textbooks"), *Bingdian*, 1 March 2006 (available at http://jds.cass.cn/Article/20060301104216.asp). Yuan soon responded with a new article in April 2006 (available at http://www.tecn.cn/data/detail.php?id=9363) (both accessed 25 May 2007).

81. Susanne Weigelin-Schwiedrzik, "Party Historiography," in Jonathan Unger, ed., *Using the Past to Serve the Present: Historiography and Politics in Contemporary China* (Armonk, NY, 1993), 172.

82. Ibid., 151–73.