ABSTRACT

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Memories of Massacres: Evolving Chinese National Memories of the Nanjing Massacre
(Under the Direction of ARI LEVINE)

Within contemporary Chinese society, the Nanjing Massacre has become a symbol of Chinese nationalist pride. This recently acquired political significance, however, is not a reflection of the natural development of national memories of the 1937 Massacre. Conversely, the development of a national narrative of the Nanjing Massacre is an expression of a contentious interplay between continually evolving sociopolitical currents within Chinese society. During the twentieth century, the Chinese nation-state experienced dislocations associated with its transition from a dynastic system to a socialist society led by an oppressive communist regime. Within this context of evolving national political identity, the Nanjing Massacre became an important tool with which both Chinese government elites and citizens derived nationalist identity. Through an analysis of the evolution of national memories of the Nanjing Massacre from 1937-1997, one discerns a highly complex interplay between social, intellectual, and political actors in the development of a nationally-shared understanding of the Massacre's implications for Chinese nationalist identity. Chinese leaders, from Chiang Kai-shek to Hu Jintao, utilized muddled public understandings of the Massacre to manipulate national memories of Chinese victimhood to legitimize their right to political power. Similarly, Chinese citizens, with diverse experiences and memories of the Massacre, also used the event as a historical tool to derive Chinese nationalist identity in an era in which the Chinese sociopolitical and economic character was continually changing. This analysis thus sheds light upon the significant influence of sociopolitical trends and nationalist identity in framing contemporary understandings of the Nanjing Massacre within China.

INDEX WORDS: Nanjing Massacre, Chinese Nationalism, World War II, Historical Narrative, Chinese Victim Identity, Collaboration

MEMORIES OF MASSACRES

EVOLVING CHINESE NATIONAL MEMORIES OF THE NANJING MASSACRE

by

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INTRODUCTION

At the inaugural ceremony of the first national commemoration of the Nanjing Massacre on December 13, 1996, Hu Tingjian, the deputy secretary of the Nanjing city committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), ascended the podium that had been erected in Nanjing's premier square. He looked resolutely into the crowd of thousands of residents and tourists who had congregated that morning and stated, "we [the Chinese people] must not let the Japanese revisionists [who deny the Nanjing Massacre] hurt our feelings or our pride….We must never forget the invasions, slaughters, and enslavement that characterized Japanese acts in Nanjing in 1937."[1] He then signaled police cars to parade throughout the city's avenues and side streets with sirens wailing to memorialize the estimated 300,000 Chinese citizens who died during the Japanese occupation of Nanjing in the winter of 1937-1938. Hu closed the ceremony with a moment of silence, bringing the city to a standstill.

For contemporary Chinese, the Nanjing Massacre signifies an unforgivable assault on the Chinese national spirit.[2] In the mid 1990s, China's leaders made the commemoration of the Massacre a national priority, of which this newly-created commemoration ceremony in Nanjing was only one example. In a rush of initiatives, the government also organized traveling exhibitions on the atrocities and subsidized a nationalist propaganda movie, *Don't Cry, Nanking* (南京1937), that highlighted the Chinese people's fortitude against the predations of Japanese

[1] The Foreign Broadcast Information Service, "Nanjing Commemorates Nanjing Massacre," (Daily Report: China 13 December 1996).
[2] Daqing Yang, "The Malleable and the Contested: The Nanjing Massacre in Postwar China and Japan," in *Perilous Memories*, eds. T. Fujitani, Geoffrey M. White, and Lisa Yoneyama (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), 50.

rapist-murderers. As Hu implied, these government-supported exhibits, entertainment programs, and memorials were intended to harness the collective nationalist identity of the Chinese people into a shared understanding of their country's history as a strong, proud, and ultimately resilient nation despite suffering some of the most heinous atrocities of the twentieth century.

The events of December 1937 have not always assumed this degree of heightened cultural and sociopolitical significance. Instead of being the unifying and symbolic event that it is today, the Rape of Nanjing languished in relative obscurity for decades after the Japanese breached Nanjing's Zhongshan Gate in 1937 and began brutalizing the population. Although American missionaries circulated eyewitness accounts of the murders in Nanjing within Western print media and sent appeals to Japanese and Chinese diplomats in an effort to spur the international community into action, the atrocities in Nanjing received little attention from either international actors or the Chinese Nationalist government.[3] Even after the Chinese Communist Party wrestled control of China from Chiang Kai-shek and founded the People's Republic of China whose propaganda organs aggrandized xenophobic nationalism, CCP leaders found little relevance in promoting memories of Japan's imperialist efforts in Nanjing. Intense, widespread public and bureaucratic identification with the Massacre is a relatively recent national phenomenon whose advancement has developed in tandem with China's increasing engagement with the international community and global capitalism.

In order to understand the contentious development of a trauma narrative of the Nanjing Massacre in China, one must first situate the Chinese experience of traumatic events within the broader historical context of Chinese nationalism and of how Chinese traditionally derived their sociopolitical identity. Historically, China's sense of political community developed in relation

[3] For instance, see Miner Searle Bates' letters to the Japanese and American embassies detailing "only a sample of the great misery of robbery and rape carried on by soldiers among the people." See: Kaiyuan Zhang, ed., *Eyewitness to Massacre* (Armonk, NY: Yale Divinity School Library, 2001), 5-27.

to the Chinese dynastic system. This hierarchical, ethnocentric social model depended upon a unique understanding of the world order, of which China was considered the center and the emperor the supreme leader within that system. It was the emperor's responsibility to maintain China's position at the pinnacle of the world order.[4] This was, of course, a very difficult task, and became even trickier as imperialist powers began extending their commercial and military ambitions into Chinese territory in the nineteenth century. To justify Chinese superiority both to its domestic subjects and to an international diplomatic audience, emperors often utilized highly selective and symbolic rhetoric with which to assert Chinese sovereignty within the broader world order and to legitimate their right to rule. Similarly, emperors also suppressed dissidents' language that contradicted their authority. [5] Although leaders and influential actors within the subsequent Nationalist and Communist regimes accepted that the "new" Chinese nation-state was a member of a community of equally sovereign nations, they also inherited the traditional propensity to justify Chinese superiority within this new international environment with highly symbolic—and often manipulative—representations of Chinese society, history, and identity.

In addition to creating a new sociopolitical model, the end of the dynastic system in 1911 also led to a democratization of the means to influence and shape Chinese society as new media and artistic channels permitted more people to participate in the creation of a national community that informed them of distant domestic and international events. This new national awareness of global events promoted the evolution of a nationalist "othering" mentality that buttressed developing notions of modern Chinese nationalism.[6] The growth of China's print culture

[4] Xing Lu, "The Influence of Classical Chinese Rhetoric on Contemporary Chinese Political Communication and Social Relations," in *Chinese Perspectives in Rhetoric and Communication,* ed. D. Ray Heisey (New York: Ablex Publishing, 2000), 3-5.
[5] Peter Hayes Gries, *China's New Nationalism: Pride, Politics, and Diplomacy* (University of California Press, 2005), 9.
[6] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* 2nd ed., (New York: Verso, 1983), 34-36.

continued throughout World War II, allowing more newspapers and journals in more parts of the country the opportunity to publicize Japanese atrocities and thus nurture the development of a national Chinese consciousness that contrasted Japanese imperialism with Chinese victimhood.[7] It is thus important to read statements about the Nanjing Massacre from Chinese political, intellectual, and media leaders with the full sociopolitical context in mind, because they give great insight into how nationalism and geopolitics affected how Chinese elites choose to portray events, and, perhaps more importantly, how they wanted Chinese citizens to view themselves in relation to those events.

The Rape of Nanjing as Event

Japan's successful experiment with modernization at the turn of the twentieth century expanded the gap between its technological and administrative capabilities and that of Qing-dynasty China, which recently had been ravaged by Western invasions and internal rebellions. This power imbalance grew as Japanese military leaders became increasingly interested in exploiting Chinese resources to satisfy their expansionist ambitions.[8] In preparation for their planned conflict with their regional competitor, the Japanese military establishment spent decades training its men for combat and indoctrinating them into a martial culture of Japanese superiority.[9] This imperial aggression erupted in 1931, when Japanese forces invaded and occupied Manchuria, setting up the puppet state of Manchukuo, where they terrorized and subjugated the Chinese population, subjecting them to biological experimentation and torturing

[7] Before the 1911 Revolution that ended imperial rule, there were only 68 periodicals in circulation throughout China. After Sun Yat-sen's revolution, the temporary constitution declared freedom of speech, writing, and publication, and about 500 periodicals were established as a result. This trend continued throughout World War II. By 1946, there were 1,781 officially registered newspapers, 729 news agencies, 1,763 magazines, and 4,273 total news services. See: Xu Xinyi, "The Chinese Mass Media," in *Handbook of Chinese Popular Culture*, eds. Dingbo Wu and Patrick D. Murphy (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), 170-171.
[8] Saburo Ienaga, *Pacific War: 1931-1945* (New York: Random House, 1978), 57-60.
[9] Iris Chang, *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II* (New York: Penguin Books, 1997), 29-30.

children in schools.[10] Japanese troops prodded Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist government into a full-scale war in 1937, with Japan's leaders bragging that they could conquer the entire country within three months. This arrogance, however, foundered in Shanghai. As the fighting there stretched from the summer of 1937 to the winter, Japanese leaders grew increasingly frustrated and embarrassed with their inability to crush China easily. When Shanghai finally fell in November 1937, perturbed Japanese forces turned their attention to the Nationalist regime's capital of Nanjing.[11]

As Japanese troops approached the city on December 9, the Chinese resistance they had experienced in Shanghai was conspicuously absent. Eyewitnesses in the capital described "the disgraceful collapse of Chinese authority" and the break-up of Chinese armies in the face of Japan's assault.[12] Chiang Kai-shek, who had broadcast an aggressive "fight to win" speech from Nanjing just two months earlier, surprised Tang Shengzhi (the Chinese commander in charge of defending the capital) by urging him to retreat. By the time that Nanjing fell to Japanese forces on December 13, 1937, almost half of its population had fled, leaving the most defenseless—women, children, the elderly, and the poor—to withstand the invaders.

In the next six weeks, the Japanese committed the infamous Nanjing Massacre, during which an alleged 300,000 Chinese soldiers and civilians were killed, and 20,000 women were raped.[13] Although no uncontested figures that document the exact number of victims or the

[10] For more about Japan's biological experimentation, see: Nicholas Kristof, "Unmasking Horror: A Special Report. Japan's Gruesome War Atrocity," *New York Times.* March 17, 1995. For more about Japan's presence in Chinese schools, see: Jung Chang, *Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China* (New York: Random House, 1992), 68-75.
[11] Iris Chang, 33-34.
[12] H.J. Timperely, *Japanese Terror in China* (New York: Modern Age Books, 1938), 18.
[13] The figure of 20,000 female rape victims appears in numerous contemporary publications, including the United Human Rights Council Report entitled, "Twentieth Century Genocides: Nanking Massacre." This estimate also appears in a personal letter written in January 1938 by Miner Searle Bates, a missionary in the Nanjing Safety Zone, and was thus a figure utilized among eyewitnesses at the time to describe the scale of the atrocities. See: Zhang, 14. This estimate, however, is still unreliable; Iris Chang notes that estimates have ranged from 20,000-80,000 rape

tactics that Japanese troops used exist, evidence gathered from survivor accounts and from the diaries of Japanese militarists nevertheless still provides chilling proof of this historical tragedy. Western journalists in Nanjing reported witnessing "murder, wholesale and semi-regular looting, and uncontrolled disturbance of private homes including offenses against the security of women."[14] Foreign missionaries in Nanjing sent graphic descriptions of the trauma to American and Chinese media outlets and to Japanese embassies in hopes that public knowledge of the atrocities would encourage an end to the bloodshed.[15] The appeals failed, and the violence continued until February 1938**.**

Even when the Chinese government did use evidence of Japanese atrocities during World War II to encourage international intervention on its behalf, it did not emphasize the outrages in Nanjing, instead collecting evidence for Japan's indiscriminate raids and chemical attacks on Chinese civilians in other parts of the country.[16] As a result, the resources required to document the atrocities in Nanjing were instead diverted to trace Japanese actions in other regions, leaving the widespread rapes and murders in the nation's capital shrouded in hearsay rather than clarified in official record. To further mystify the event in Nanjing, the evidence of atrocities that *did* make its way into people's consciousness outside Nanjing during the war was often de-legitimized by popular and elite doubts that the accounts emanating from the Nationalist capital could be verified. [17] This initial bureaucratic and societal disinclination to validate the narratives coming from Nanjing heavily influenced the subsequent development (or lack thereof) of nationally shared memories regarding the Massacre. Without a coherent, factual, and verified

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victims, but the propensity of Japanese soldiers to "rape, then kill," coupled with victims' unwillingness to come forward, affected how many rape cases were able to be documented (Iris Chang, 89).

[14] Timperely, 19.

[15] *Documents on the Rape of Nanking,* ed. Timothy Brook (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, 1999), 39.

[16] League of Nations, *Official Journal,* special supplement, no. 183, 52.

[17] Lewis Smythe, *War Damage in the Nanking Area, December 1937 to March 1938: Urban and Rural Surveys* (Shanghai: Mercury Press, 1938), 81.

narrative of the Nanjing Massacre, post-war political and intellectual leaders were able to utilize hazy national understandings of the event as a political tool with which they fortified their claims to power.

Even within Nanjing at the time of the Massacre, there were ample incentives among residents to question and deny the possibility of such atrocities. Accompanying the violence were pragmatic and morally dubious decisions by Chinese residents to cooperate with the occupiers. Instead of heroically defending the Nationalist capital from Japanese depredations, historical records reveal that some Nanjing citizens chose to pursue the best prospect for survival and stability during the decidedly dangerous and unpredictable Japanese occupation: collaboration. In doing so, Chinese men and women subordinated their nationalist allegiances to pragmatic needs for food, stability, and a functioning municipal regime in order to survive the invasion and occupation.

These complex and morally ambiguous decisions complicated the development of a nationalist "victim narrative" with which both the post-war citizenry and the government could identify as China entered the volatile era of hyper-nationalist Maoist ideology. When Mao Zedong's CCP did emphasize the Nanjing Massacre's memory during the 1950s, it did so within the context of Cold War-era geopolitical threats. Concerned by the United States' motivations for entering the Korean War in 1950, Chinese journalists and leaders used hazy memories of the Massacre as an opportunity to vilify Americans' presence in East Asia. Instead of highlighting Japanese-instigated violence in Nanjing, articles instead accused American missionaries as evil Japanese collaborators who facilitated the killings and rapes. Even with these depictions, however, Cold War-era memories of the Nanjing Massacre did not emphasize the scale or brutality of the Massacre that is characteristic of contemporary narratives of the event. Only

recently, as Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms have facilitated China's rise to international preeminence, has a reinvigorated bureaucratic and public identification with the Massacre occurred on a discernable national scale.

The Development of a Trauma Narrative for the Rape of Nanjing

Customary explanations for why Chinese leaders and citizens "forgot" and later "reclaimed" the Nanjing Massacre focus upon the PRC government's evolving willingness to confront its history of humiliation and victimization. While it does partially explain recent Chinese efforts to reestablish the Massacre within a historiographic narrative, the "China as resilient victim" understanding of twentieth century Chinese history only partially illuminates the nation's evolving memories of the Massacre. By privileging this victim-oriented characterization of Chinese society, studies on historical memory overlook other essential Chinese reactions to the atrocity, including collaboration, complicity, and denial. When viewed as part of a continuum of diverse individual and official reactions to atrocity, post-war efforts to "forget" the Massacre become illuminated as a strategic nationalist response to complex and morally ambiguous decisions that Chinese citizens and leaders made during the Japanese occupation.

Many analyses of nationalist identity development solely emphasize the macro-level: the rhetoric and policies that leaders impose upon civilians that influence the population's internalization of socially significant events. While ideological policies and precedents that Chiang Kai-shek, the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE), and Mao Zedong established did help to relegate the Massacre to a subordinate position in Chinese post-war nationalist memories, these elite-driven actions must be situated within the social context of how the broader Chinese population incorporated them into their own memories about the Massacre. Focusing on how macro-level historiographic renderings of the Nanjing occupation affected

Chinese society's post-war memories of the Massacre ignores the agency that civilians and intellectuals at the grassroots levels exerted upon these national historiographic narratives. In placing the evolution of elite characterizations of the Nanjing Massacre into a dialogue with concurrent social understandings and developments, one can discern a much more contingent, morally ambiguous, and human understanding of why the Nanjing Massacre, after languishing for years in obscurity, has recently been refashioned into defining aspect of Chinese national identity.

Unrestrained by policy and ideological objections, micro-level understandings of the Massacre developed in reaction to constantly evolving conditions on the ground. The inability to determine the duration and impact of Japanese occupation in Nanjing led many Chinese to coordinate their actions with their foreign occupiers. These individual-level decisions to facilitate the occupation complicated and impeded the development of a nationalist "victim" narrative of the Nanjing Massacre. In the post-war era, the surviving practitioners and facilitators of collaboration, whose involvement with the Japanese occupation did not conform to the Communist regime's nationalist discourses of victimization and xenophobia, were unable (and, often, unwilling) to incorporate their morally ambiguous wartime experiences into mainstream historical memories. This post-war political environment thus encouraged the development of a biased memory of Japanese actions in China that largely excluded the Nanjing Massacre from its narrative. By incorporating new scholarship on collaboration into existing studies regarding the evolution of national memories of the Nanjing Atrocity, one discovers that the atrocity's post-war obscurity may have resulted from a mutually reinforcing interplay between grassroots-level reticence and elite political agendas, rather than predominantly from elite evasions of the topic.

Evolving understandings of modern nationalism within Chinese society also greatly

affected the extent to which citizens incorporated the Nanjing Massacre into their identities. Whereas the government-propagated idea of a modern Chinese nation-state juxtaposed against foreign invaders influenced the formation of a sense of shared nationalism, the myriad ways in which individual Chinese citizens consumed these nationalist initiatives influenced the extent to which the Nanjing Massacre became a salient aspect of Chinese identity in the post-war years. Chinese citizens' diverse experiences of collaboration, humiliation, victimization, ignorance, and trauma regarding the event—especially within the context of a dominant discourse of Maoist nationalism—initially impeded the formation of a coherent national memory of the Nanjing occupation. Only when the country regained relative political stability, international prominence, and confidence in its identity during the Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin, and Hu Jintao eras did shared nationalist understandings of the Nanjing Massacre reemerge. Growing confidence in the PRC's government, its policies, and its philosophies enabled both the Chinese population and leadership to feel secure contrasting past suffering and moral ambiguity with their current power. Among the trends associated with China's ascent to international prominence was a revival in intellectual and popular discussions of the Nanjing Massacre, including the ethical ambiguity of some Chinese actions in 1938.

By tracing the development of national memories of the Nanjing Massacre that examine both popular and political psyches, this thesis will provide an important sociopolitical framework within which to trace the contingent development of national memories of the Massacre. There is a tendency to assume that the unanimity of contemporary Chinese memories about the Nanjing Massacre is the natural reflection of widespread, coherent sentiments about Japanese brutality during World War II. It is tempting to believe that the commemorations and memorials derive from a shared public commitment to honor and uphold the 300,000 victims of

the Nanjing Massacre and to cultivate a shared national identity based upon Chinese pride and perseverance in such struggles. An investigation into the interplay between social and political representations of memories regarding the Massacre, however, renders this understanding problematic. Rather than being a coherent, natural social development, the formulation of a national memory of the Nanjing Massacre was, in large part, the result of a highly contentious and complex interplay between a myriad of representatives of Chinese society whose diverse WWII-era and post-war era experiences and objectives influenced how they chose to remember it.

This study will investigate the interplay between Chinese leaders and civilians' evolving willingness to recognize the Nanjing Massacre's complexities as integral aspects of Chinese identity. From Chiang Kai-shek to contemporary CCP leaders, Chinese political elites have used public rhetoric and symbolic currency to frame a narrative of China's recent history that alternately accentuates and deemphasizes the Nanjing Massacre according to evolving national understandings of Chinese identity. Similarly, Chinese citizens, conditioned and constrained by elite willingness to acknowledge the Massacre and by societal reticence to acknowledge questionable Chinese actions during the occupation, have also exhibited oscillating enthusiasm toward delving into the Nanjing Massacre's historical narratives. By analyzing how diverse representatives of Chinese society, from 1937 to 1997, alternately chose to ignore or memorialize the atrocities in Nanjing, one can discern a pattern in which memories of the mysterious Nanjing Massacre have become political tools with which Chinese authority figures and public citizens have comprehended China's continually evolving national identity and international position.

CHAPTER 2
DISCERNING MEANING IN CHAOS
NARRATIVE DEVELOPMENTS DURING WORLD WAR II (1937-1945)

Micro-level Responses to Trauma within Nanjing

Unrestrained by policy and ideological objectives, micro-level understandings of the Nanjing Massacre developed in reaction to constantly evolving conditions on the ground. Unable to determine the duration and implications of Japan's occupation in Nanjing, many Chinese reacted to Japanese encroachments by pragmatically coordinating their actions with their foreign occupiers. These individual-level decisions to collaborate with the Japanese occupation complicated and impeded the development of a nationalist "victim" narrative of the Nanjing Atrocity both during and after World War II.

Chinese collaboration in Nanjing during the Japanese occupation developed as a result of strategic decisions by Chinese, Japanese, and Western residents of the city. Although the contemporary narrative of the Nanjing Massacre characterizes members of the Japanese army as one-dimensional murderer-rapists, the invading troops were not only committing atrocities; they were also establishing an occupation with which to claim political legitimacy over their conquest. This objective, in some ways, necessitated that they work together with Nanjing's Chinese population to affect some degree of "normalcy" within the shattered Nationalist capital. The presence of a popular, independent, and competent International Committee, however, delegitimized Japan's mission as China's savior from Western imperialism. Japanese representatives thus also had to mitigate this opposing source of authority by enlisting Chinese

collaborators to bolster Japanese authority relative to the Western presence.[18] Tasked with the responsibility of quickly fashioning a stable and functioning occupation government in Nanjing to establish legitimacy, the Japanese Special Service Agency (SSA) swiftly bypassed the usual peace-maintenance stage and immediately initiated negotiations for forming a Chinese-staffed Self-Government Committee (SGC). Despite violent attacks and fires that ravaged Nanjing streets, the SSA met on December 23, 1937 to develop plans for reaching out to strategically significant members of the local Chinese elite.[19]

Most of the SSA's recruits came from the Nanjing branches of the Red Swastika Society, a well-respected national relief organization whose humanitarian impulse toward relieving Chinese suffering increased its members' willingness to cooperate with the Japanese. The SSA first approached Tao Xisan, the head of Nanjing's Red Swastika chapter, to serve as a figurehead within the occupation government. Tao was an elderly and well-respected businessman with sturdy connections to Nanjing's old elite networks, making him well-equipped to navigate the morally ambiguous channels of collaboration without inciting suspicion from the Chinese population. Tao conceded to the offer, agreeing to collaborate on the condition that Japanese occupiers promise to halt all killing, torturing, and abuses of power.[20] Despite Japanese troops' obvious disregard for this request (even breaking into Tao's own residence on December 19 to seize valuables), Tao became a prominent collaborator during Japan's occupation of Nanjing, eventually serving as mayor of the new municipal government.[21]

[18] Timothy Brook, *Collaboration: Japanese Agents and Local Elites in Wartime China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 131.
[19] Brook 1999, 223.
[20] Brook 2005, 137.
[21] Brook 1999, 38.

A personal friend of Tao Xisan, Zhan Rongguang was another member of the Chinese elite who was of strategic significance to the SSA. Zhan, a local businessman fluent in Japanese, became a close advisor to Japanese representatives in Nanjing during the early days of the occupation. Post-war historical narratives have characterized his interactions with Japanese invaders as particularly deplorable because he purportedly used his Chinese ethnicity to deceive and manipulate Nanjing residents for Japanese pacification purposes. Allegedly, an eyewitness heard him advise male refugees at Jinling College on December 31 to register with the Japanese, ensuring them that the occupiers would show mercy to those who complied.[22] Given Zhan's intimate knowledge of Japanese actions within the capital, he was probably aware that, five days earlier, Japanese troops had summarily executed Chinese men at the University of Nanjing after the men had similarly come forward to register (also, coincidentally, at the advice of fellow Chinese citizens).[23] Zhan's legacy is thus one of egregious opportunism. By exhibiting a seemingly cavalier willingness to disregard his fellow countrymen's wellbeing in the expedient pursuit of self-gain, historical accounts of Zhan thus characterize him as one of the archetypes of Chinese collaboration during World War II. It must be noted, however, that the memoirs and letters from which historians have characterized Zhan's actions are, by nature, subjective and incomplete sources of information. It is thus difficult to ascertain the extent to which Zhan had knowledge of the repercussions of his advice, and whether his willingness to encourage men to register with the Japanese was truly voluntary.

Zhan Rongguan was not the only enigmatic figure within the collaborationist regime in Nanjing. Wang Chengdian, or "Jimmy Wang," also developed a socially and politically expedient role for himself within the Nanjing Self-Government Committee that permitted him to

[22] Brook 1999, 138.
[23] Zhang, 12.

enjoy not only the support of the Japanese occupiers, but also granted him the agency with which to accomplish objectives that ameliorated conditions for the city's Chinese population. In his journal, Dr. Robert Wilson, an American physician practicing at Nanjing Hospital during the Massacre, describes Jimmy Wang as having "many connections with the city underworld, and other undesirable characteristics."[24] Dr. Wilson's negative appraisal of the morally dubious Nanjing businessman resonated with other members of the IC. Foreigners had developed a cynical view of Jimmy Wang when they discovered that he had been working simultaneously for both the IC and the SSA—a conflict of interests that showcased his opportunistic nature. Their cynicism, however, was constrained by their accompanying understanding that Jimmy Wang's influence within the SGC increased the efficiency with which the occupation government catered to the besieged Nanjing population. For instance, when the IC members discovered that the SGC had appointed Mr. Wang as director of the SGC food supply operations, Lewis Smythe (an American sociologist at the University of Nanjing) remarked, that, although Jimmy Wang probably accepted the responsibility because of financial incentives, "he is the one man in the outfit that may get some rice moving before March 1."[25]

Jimmy Wang's ability to nurture a multiplicity of connections with (often conflicting) sectors of society enabled him to act as a simultaneous advocate of the Japanese-led SGC and a surreptitious investigator for the IC. Dubbed "a [secret] member of [the IC]," by German IC Chairman John Rabe, Jimmy Wang skillfully navigated the intersections within Japanese, Chinese, and Western political channels. His political fluidity streamlined communication between these diverse and opposing constituencies and enabled the IC to garner otherwise clandestine information on Japanese actions in the city. On February 8, 1938, Jimmy Wang

[24] Brook 1999, 233.
[25] Brook 2005, 140.

accompanied John Rabe and three other IC members to Lotus Lake to inspect the site of a recent mass murder. Unable to garner pertinent information about the attack, the IC representative handed the investigation to Jimmy Wang. In his diary, John Rabe recounted that Wang was able to extract crucial details about the Japanese-led attack from a local Chinese man that the IC included in an official international report on the Lotus Lake murders.[26] Jimmy Wang's ability to cross social boundaries thus facilitated the IC's acquisition of vital details regarding the extent to which Japanese soldiers terrorized and tortured their conquered populations. Members of the IC later used these reports to condemn Japanese actions in the International Military Tribunal for the Far East. Without the aid of opportunistic collaborators, such as Jimmy Wang, to collect such vital details, these reports would likely have lacked details regarding crucial aspects of Japan's actions during its Nanjing occupation.

It should be noted, however, that Jimmy Wang's legacy is not wholly one of heroic risks he took to infiltrate the enemy in the interest of the Chinese population. Both fellow Chinese citizens and the international observers in the IC disapproved of many of Wang's occupation-era actions. For instance, German legation secretary George Rosen wrote in an exclusive memorandum to the German foreign ministry that Jimmy Wang was an influential player in the successful wartime effort to reestablish Chinese brothels for war-wearied soldiers and besieged citizens. Rosen's confidential report notes the sizable monetary gain that Wang received from the distasteful enterprise.[27] Despite Wang's demonstrated interest in supporting the Chinese citizenry during the Japanese occupation, such documents from the winter of 1937-1938 also highlight his penchant for manipulating the war-time chaos and uncertainty to extract financial rewards. Regardless of his questionable motives and dubious loyalty, however, Jimmy Wang's

[26] Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi, ed., *The Nanking Atrocity, 1937-1938: Complicating the Picture* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), 221.
[27] Wakabayashi, 222.

willingness to collaborate with Japanese occupiers ensured that a proactive Chinese representative was at the forefront of implementing administrative policies that could mitigate the adversity that the Nanjing citizenry experienced after Japan's attack. While this representation implied that the occupation government was initiating programs as diverse in their implications as brothels and grain distribution systems, it also reflected that, to an extent, life was able to resume some semblance of normalcy. When the entire administrative apparatus could have broken down and failed to provide services for Nanjing's beleaguered population, its leaders instead fashioned a semi-functioning regime to which the Nanjing people could turn for stability. Japanese representatives acknowledged early in December 1937 that this objective would be unfeasible without enlisting the voluntary support and cooperation of Chinese citizens, such as Jimmy Wang and Zhan Rongguan, to adapt Japanese political goals to Nanjing's social and cultural structures.

None of this collaboration and occupation-building would have been possible, however, without the complicity and tacit support of Westerners in the International Committee. Although recent Chinese historical appraisals of the interaction between this international body and the SGC characterize them as "in opposition from beginning to end," these studies overlook a subtle confluence of pragmatic considerations that facilitated cooperation between the two governing bodies.[28] Chief among these was the recognition—by both Chinese and Westerners—that the necessity of survival often superseded that of heroic resistance. On the evening of the first day of Nanjing's occupation, John Rabe sent a letter to the Japanese army promising that the IC would "be glad to cooperate in any way we can [with Japanese occupiers] in caring for the civilian

[28] Daqing Yang, "Convergence or Divergence? Recent Historical Writings on the Rape of Nanjing," *The American Historical Review* 104, no.3 (1999): 34.

population of the city."[29] Despite Japan's increasingly brutal actions and excessive violence within the capital, the Westerners in the IC continued to demonstrate a desire to work with the occupiers to reinstate stability in the ravaged city.

This complicit posture stemmed from the IC's perception of its role during the Nanjing occupation. Rather than acting as an active advocate for the Chinese people, the IC perceived its function to be a buffer that could mitigate damage during the military takeover. This posture resulted, in part, from the foreigners' assumption that Japanese actions in Nanjing would not reach egregious levels of violence and brutality; as a result, they assumed that their role as "neutral peacekeepers" would suffice to maintain stability in the Nationalist capital.[30] Beyond these miscalculations, however, a lack of political legitimacy constrained the scope of the IC's actions. Without an independent political mandate or the military resources to act in the Nanjing citizens' interests, the IC had to adopt a posture of peaceful accommodation: one that eschewed excessive violence, but that also permitted and facilitated collaboration with Japan's SSA during the winter of 1937-1938.

The collaboration between the Japanese-led SGC and the IC stemmed from a competition over material and political resources. The SSA's goal was to formulate the SGC as an administrative alternative to the IC; this objective necessitated that the Japanese seize the IC's resources and supply systems in order to claim authority over the Nanjing citizens' wellbeing. The SGC, however, lacked the IC's efficiency and motivation to meet the Chinese citizens' needs sufficiently. To coordinate efforts to deliver provisions successfully, foreigners in the Safety Zone were thus coerced into a cooperative relationship with the SGC (and, consequently, with the SSA puppeteers).

[29] Brook 1999, 3.
[30] Brook 1999, 15.

Japan's invasion of Nanjing had disrupted many crucial food supply systems, leaving the city's population vulnerable to shortages and malnutrition. Jimmy Wang led negotiations between John Rabe and Japanese representatives in the SGC to transfer primary rice and flour distribution responsibilities from the IC to the SGC in exchange for Japan's promise to permit the IC to continue its relief work.[31] This settlement initiated a close partnership between American Charlie Riggs and Jimmy Wang, who successfully developed a food supply system that kept Safety Zone refugees nourished throughout January and February, "moving heaven and earth to get the Japanese to allow them to have more rice, flour, and coal for the population and then to truck it in [to the Safety Zone]."[32] The IC, cognizant of the danger that fighting Japanese occupiers would pose to the city's food supply, decided that collaboration in the interest of survival overshadowed the symbolism of "heroically" opposing the invaders.

While the occupation government's inefficiency and corruption coerced groups and individuals, such as the IC and the Red Swastika Society, into collaborating with the SGC to mitigate these operational follies, these decisions also led to the collaborators' national dishonor during and after the Nanjing occupation. Robert Wilson described the Chinese members of the SGC as "a second-hand crowd," a group of men who collectively lacked public stature and experiences in municipal management.[33] They did, however, possess the strategically indispensable quality of having sufficient patron-client ties to Nanjing society to bridge the gap between Japanese occupiers and Chinese citizens in order to accomplish administrative objectives.[34] These men's willingness to utilize Chinese social networks to facilitate Japanese collaboration led to their ostracism after the occupation ended. Their roles in history have been

[31] Brook 2005, 147.
[32] Brook 1999, 99.
[33] Zhang, 404.
[34] Brook 2005, 140.

relegated to a position of dishonor and invisibility, which impedes efforts to ascertain the exact implications of these morally ambiguous decisions to collaborate within the Nationalist capital. While these collaborators can be characterized as self-interested and morally deplorable opportunists, they can also be described as pragmatic activists: men who managed as best they could given the constantly evolving, dangerous, and chaotic circumstances in war-time China, and who may have, in fact, saved Chinese lives in the process.

Characterizations of the Nanjing Massacre by the Nationalist Leadership

Neither the Nanjing collaborators' complex and morally ambiguous decisions nor the egregious violence in the Nationalist capital fit elite agendas. On December 16, 1937, just three days after Nanjing fell to the invading Japanese forces, Chiang Kai-shek sent a message to the nation from his field headquarters at Nanchang, Jiangxi Province. Aware of the atrocities unfolding in the city and of his government's failure in mitigating them, Chiang chose to frame his address as a nationalist appeal that treated Nanjing as a lost cause by encouraging the citizenry to keep resisting the Japanese in other parts of the country. He informed the public that, "[t]he basis of our confidence in China's ultimate success in prolonged resistance is not be found in Nanking, nor in the big cities…but in the villages, and in the widespread and unshaken determination of the people."[35] His message, which goes on to commend further the Chinese people's perseverance and public spirit, does not mention the Nanjing Massacre again.

While Chiang Kai-shek did not know the full extent of the atrocities committed in Nanjing at this point in the war, he did know that his army had retreated prematurely and that Japanese troops had indiscriminately shot Chinese civilians as they entered the city; it is important to note that he consciously avoided the Nanjing topic in favor of highlighting the

[35] Chinese Ministry of Information, comp., "A Message to the Nation from Field Headquarters on December 16, 1937, after the Fall of Nanking," *The Collected Wartime Messages of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek: 1937-1945* (New York: Kraus Reprint Co. 1967), 50.

citizenry's fortitude in other regions of the country.[36] In his initial rhetorical representation of the Nanjing Massacre, Chiang thus characterized it as a peripheral loss for China and one that would not undermine the Chinese national spirit found in the rest of the country. This first account of the Rape of Nanjing as an event to be understated within the broader national narrative of the war in China set an important precedent for how the Nationalist leadership framed it throughout the war as they struggled to maintain their legitimacy in the face of mounting military and political threats.

The atrocities in Nanjing occurred within a highly contingent and volatile war-time environment in which the Nationalist (or Guomindang) government under Chiang Kai-shek was experiencing a crisis of legitimacy. Its continuing failure to quell the growing power of its ideological rival, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), coupled with its inability to control substantial parts of the country, led the Guomindang government to use nationalism to unite an increasingly fragmented country against the threat of Japanese invasion.[37] Along with nationalist appeals to Chinese pride and perseverance came a simultaneous discouragement of regional idiosyncrasies, which would affect the extent to which statesmen publicized the Rape of Nanjing throughout the country. Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists wanted to nurture a social understanding of China as a coherent whole in the fight against Japan, of which the Nationalist government was the center.[38] This effort to cultivate national understandings of the war was even more crucial for Chiang Kai-shek's legitimacy as the country's supreme leader because his Republic of China was rapidly disappearing as a unified polity between 1937 and 1945.[39] To rhetorically combat

[36] Takashi Yoshida, *The Making of the Rape of Nanjing: History and Memory in China, Japan, and the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 46.
[37] Diana Lary, "The Context of the War," in *China at War,* eds. Stephen Mackinnon, Diana Lary, and Ezra F. Vogel (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), 5.
[38] Lary, 3.
[39] Wu Tienwei, "Contending Political Forces During the War of Resistance," in *China's Bitter Victory: The War with Japan, 1937-1945,* eds. James C. Hsiung and Steven I. Levine (Santa Barbara, CA: East Gate Books, 1992), 51.

this fragmentation, Nationalist leaders crafted public rhetoric that emphasized the idea of a shared Chinese experience of World War II's traumatic events that overlooked regional differences in favor one overarching narrative of Japanese brutality and Chinese perseverance.[40]

Chiang's emphasis on a national Chinese experience of Japanese atrocities tended to understate violence that only affected localized areas in favor of generalized rhetorical representations of atrocities, to which people could relate regardless of their geographical location. Although Nationalist leaders did not ignore the brutality in Nanjing, they tended to talk about it in general terms, and as just one example of a broader catalog of Japanese brutality during World War II, from which Chinese citizens could "pick" with which trauma they identified most. A radio address by Chiang Kai-shek on February 19, 1938 exemplifies Chinese leaders' efforts to nationalize and generalize the atrocities:

> Think today, my fellow-countrymen, about our great humiliation at the hands of Japan. Think about the enemy's violent actions, his ceaseless attacks upon our territory, the suffering he has imposed upon our people, the destruction he has caused to our private property and cultural institutions, and especially the oppression, cruelty, looting, arson, rape, murder, and conscription of children and youth.…Never in history have a people been so grievously afflicted as our brethren who are now under the Japanese yoke.[41]

This address rhetorically manipulates descriptions of regionally specific tragedies, such as the Nanjing Massacre, into one aspect of a national narrative. Despite the fact that Chiang broadcast this address soon after the end of the Nanjing Massacre and that his descriptions of atrocities seem to imply references to Nanjing, he never mentions it specifically.

This elite Nationalist aversion to discussing the traumatic event directly is a discernable trend one can trace throughout Chiang Kai-shek's official war-time statements. Very rarely did he memorialize the Massacre explicitly, and when he did discuss it specifically, he intended it as a symbolic example of more widespread atrocities occurring within China over the years. For

[40] Yoshida, 27.
[41] *Wartime Messages*, 53-54.

instance, Chiang—reinvigorated by Japan's increasingly imminent defeat—sent a July 1945 broadcast to the Chinese people reaffirming the Guomindang's commitment to upholding China's honor. This broadcast represents one of the few times that Generalissimo Chiang specifically referred to the Nanjing Massacre by name. In the address, he states, "We should on this occasion recall the sufferings we have gone through in the past eight years. We should never forget the mass slaughter the enemy perpetrated in Nanking and other cities, and his bestial bombing of Chungking."[42] Even though Chiang does mention the Nanjing Massacre in this speech, he presents it as part of a wider narrative of trauma rather than as the uniquely heinous event as it is depicted in contemporary historiography. This belated Nationalist willingness to discuss the events in 1937 Nanjing also reflect the Guomindang leadership's readiness to highlight the event only when its accompanying humiliation and dishonor can be juxtaposed with China's present strength and imminent victory.

In addition to publicizing accounts of Japanese atrocities that they thought would bolster their domestic legitimacy to lead China, Nationalist leaders also crafted representations of historical traumas that they believed were the most politically expedient when agitating for international assistance against the Japanese; often, this also necessitated that the Nanjing Massacre be deemphasized or overlooked. When the Japanese invaded Manchuria, China had enjoyed little international sympathy.[43] Western intervention remained unlikely during mid-1930s due to prevailing Western diplomatic strategies of isolationism and appeasement.[44] Although the Nationalists were aware of this posture, they still consistently sought Western

[42] *Wartime Messages*, 53-54.
[43] Lary, 6. When Chinese leaders asked the League of Nations to force Japan out of Manchuria in 1931, the League ruled in their favor, but did nothing to enforce the ruling.
[44] Hans J. Van de Ven, *War and Nationalism in China: 1925-1945* (London: Routledge-Curzon Publishing, 2003), 175. During the mid- to late 1930s, a strategy of continental defense and isolationism prevailed in the USA, while Neville Chamberlain's election as Prime Minister on May 26, 1937 brought with it a new policy of appeasement that suggested an unwillingness to intervene in Europe, much less in East Asian affairs.

support because they calculated that having the allegiance of important international actors when a settlement with Japan became possible would tip the power balance at the negotiating table in their favor.[45]

One way in which Chinese leaders sought to gain international support for their plight was to couch depictions of Japanese atrocities in ways that would elicit the most sympathy from Western powers. In their judgment, these European nations were still scarred from the memories of atrocities committed during World War I, during which indiscriminate bombings and chemical weapons were used for the first time on a large scale, and would thus be more apt to empathize with accounts of atrocities that reflected these forms of trauma.[46] Because such violence was not present during the Nanjing Massacre, representatives of the Chinese government who appealed to the League of Nations for support did not emphasize the atrocities that occurred in the Nationalist capital. Instead, they detailed accounts from other parts of the country where Japanese troops had used chemical warfare and indiscriminate bombing. The orders to do so came directly from Chiang Kai-shek, who urged Wellington Koo, First Delegate to the League of Nations for the Republic of China, to emphasize: "Japan's inhumane methods [of] warfare [and] particularly frequent use [of] poison gas."[47] It is important to note that the Chinese government did condemn the Massacre on the international stage on February 2, 1938 at the sixth meeting of the 100th Session of the Council of the League of Nations in Geneva. Even this address, however, delivered just days after the Massacre ended, emphasized indiscriminate bombing in towns first before acknowledging: "[There exists] the scene of horror in Nanking…wholesale looting, violation of women, murder of civilians, eviction of Chinese from

[45] Van de Ven, 176.
[46] Yoshida, 51.
[47] Yoshida, 39.

their homes, mass executions of war prisoners, and the impressing of able-bodied men."[48] Even in the address in which Koo condemned the Nanjing Massacre, he undermined its symbolic importance by framing it as accessory evidence of Japanese violence by introducing it after emphasizing Japan's indiscriminate bombing of civilians. This rhetorical exercise was strategic, reflecting Koo's understanding that Western Europe was more apt to identify with indiscriminate bombing campaigns than with rapes in Nanjing.

Therefore, a highly selective definition of "atrocity," developed during Chinese statesmen's interactions with Western powers that appealed to European nations' painful experiences in World War I. At the 101st Session of the Council on May 10, 1938, Koo again protested against Japanese atrocities in China, but this time he did not mention Nanjing at all. Instead, he only condemned indiscriminate bombing and Japan's use of poison gas. In an important characterization of the "hierarchy" of atrocities in China, Koo stated in a September 16, 1938 speech before the League that, "[o]f all the methods of warfare which the Japanese forces have employed against my country, the gas attacks and the air bombings are the most inhuman in character."[49] Using the statistics gathered by representatives of the Nationalist government, he then estimated that Japan's indiscriminate bombing had killed 10,482 civilians and wounded 13,319 between August 1937 and May 1938. [50] These are numbers which pale in comparison to the speed and destruction with which the Japanese forces mutilated and killed residents of Nanjing. Because, however, the uniquely brutal tactics employed in Nanjing (such as rape, live burials, and mutilations) did not fit the Western definition of atrocities predicated upon their experiences in World War I, Chinese bureaucratic representatives relegated the Nanjing

[48] Wakabayashi, 251.
[49] Yoshida, 39.
[50] Yoshida, 39.

Massacre to a position of symbolic unimportance when they issued international appeals for Western intervention.

Characterizations of the Nanjing Massacre by the Chinese Media

Although the Nationalist leadership had an important role in framing the initial reports on the Nanjing Massacre as politically expedient characterizations of trauma, depictions of the Nanjing Massacre in Chinese media publications also contributed to the development of a narrative that deemphasized the atrocities in Nanjing. Chinese reports of Japanese brutality in the capital began appearing in newspapers and magazines in unoccupied areas several weeks after the capital fell to Japan. Although newspapers did publicize the unfolding atrocities in Nanjing, they tended to use the trauma as a springboard from which to condemn Japanese atrocities in other parts of the country rather than focusing on the event's idiosyncrasies. For instance, a December 24 article in *The China Press* reported the events at Nanjing by stressing the collapse of discipline in Japanese troops, whose "looting, raping, and other unprintable atrocities" reinforced in the journalist's mind images of earlier Japanese barbarism during their 1937 bombing of the "USS *Panay* and HMS *Ladybird"* and of conducting "indiscriminate bombing attacks on Canton."[51] In one of the first national journalistic depictions of the Nanjing Massacre, then, the Massacre was represented not as a uniquely symbolic event, but merely as further evidence in a long list of international Japanese atrocities in China during World War II. By comparing the Rape of Nanjing with other attacks, this journalistic account shifted focus away from the uniquely horrific nature of the Massacre, since it implied that the event was still comparable in scale and brutality to prior Japanese attacks on other nations.

The location of the Nationalist government during the war also affected the Nanjing Massacre's media portrayal. Facing an imminent Japanese assault on its capital of Nanjing, the

[51] Wakabayashi, 250.

Guomindang transferred its government offices to Chongqing, an interior city almost 1,000 miles away from Nanjing.[52] Every major newspaper that had been based in Nanjing moved with the Nationalists, leaving the capital suddenly without the media concentration it had enjoyed since the Guomindang claimed it as their administrative center in 1928.[53] With this move west, the Nationalists simultaneously turned their central bureaucratic and media attention away from the atrocities that unfolded in their absence.[54]

The Nationalist government was not the only entity to turn its attention from large cities to rural villages, however. Wartime reporters, such as Fan Changjiang and Cheng Shewo, argued that the clustering of newspapers in major cities like Shanghai, Beijing, and Nanjing could breed mutual mistrust and animosity between urbanites and villagers, which was detrimental to China as a united country defending against Japanese aggression.[55] Journalists' intent to use newspapers as an instrument of national integration left Nanjing in the shadows. The media in Chongqing—under the direction of Guomindang policies—wanted to depict the war in ways that would appeal to broad sectors of the citizenry living in widespread areas of an extremely large and diverse nation; the unique atrocities concentrated in Nanjing did not fit this perspective of nationalized depictions. This change would have a profound impact on from the narrative of the Nanjing Massacre both during and after the war. Not only did they obstruct the dissemination of information about Japanese activities in Nanjing, but national framings also privileged a non-regionally specific memory of the war that relegated the idiosyncratic events in Nanjing to the background of post-war narratives of Chinese suffering.

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[52] Dingbo Wu and Patrick Murphy, *The Handbook on Popular Chinese Culture* (Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1994), 171.
[53] "Basic Facts on the Nanjing Massacre and the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal," *China News Digest* (Bound Brooks, NJ, New Jersey Hong Kong Network, 1993).
[54] Chang-Tai Hung, *War and Popular Culture: Resistance in Modern China, 1937-1945* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994), 185. At one point during World War II, 22 newspapers and 12 agencies were clustered in the capital.
[55] Hung, 185-186.

Along with the media's geographic shift away from Nanjing during the war, media correspondents deployed selective rhetoric that affected their depictions of the Nanjing Massacre. The Chinese journalists who reported Japanese atrocities in World War II were part of a new generation of reporters who were dissatisfied not only with traditional journalistic practices in China, but also with the media's traditional use of language. In their view, most reports in the established press were dull, uninspiring, and often too sophisticated for common people to understand. These reporters aspired to create a common language that would speak to both the masses and intellectuals and that could unite a country divided by regional differences and riddled by domestic and international conflict. This effort led to a shift away from elegant, long-winded prose and towards wartime political vocabulary comprised of a small number of emotionally charged and timely phrases, whose effectiveness depended on the ability to render complicated national issues in simple and memorable terminology.[56] Such a shift often undermined the communication of detailed information about events in favor of small, "marketable" packages of news-bites that a wide variety of people could understand.

This new way of rhetorically framing information affected how newspaper journalists communicated the Nanjing Massacre; instead of having incentives to document and disclose the atrocities in Nanjing fully, journalists produced short, pithy depictions of the atrocities that, while disturbing, failed to convey the full scope and brutality of the events. [57] For instance, on January 23, 1938, the Chongqing-centered *Dagong Bao*, arguably the most popular and influential publication at the time, released an article entitled, "Ferocious Enemy Keeping on Arson and Looting in Terror-Ridden Nanjing and Foreign Journalists' Inspections Rejected" that reported Japanese brutalities in Nanjing. The article, however, failed to specify much more

[56] Hung, 160-161.
[57] Joshua A. Fogel, ed., *The Nanjing Massacre in History and Historiography* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000), 145.

beyond what was encapsulated in the headline; it discussed foreign media's inability to investigate atrocities while reiterating the presence of theft, but no additional details enriched the information contained in the headline. [58] Readers were left with a generalized understanding of the trauma occurring in Nanjing, but without the information needed to establish it as a uniquely horrifying event whose scope set it apart from other violence.

A comparison of how Chinese and Western newspapers reported the Massacre differently highlights the Chinese media's propensity to omit detail in favor of short, easily consumed news-bites. Whereas Chinese papers depicted the atrocities through relatively vague statements like, "raping, looting, and other unprintable atrocities," Western journalists published much more descriptive accounts with the potential to convey that the atrocities in Nanjing were a uniquely brutal example of Japanese violence.[59] For instance, *The London Times* ran an article in a local Shanghai newspaper describing with gruesome detail scenes on the street that one could often not find in Chinese newspapers: "Streets were covered with the innocent citizens' remains. At the city gate along the Yangtze River dead bodies were piled up to a meter high .Trucks and other vehicles were running over the bodies."[60] While this example raises the possibility that more detailed Western accounts of the Rape of Nanjing could have contributed to a social understanding of trauma that accentuated the Nanjing Massacre's exceptional brutality, several obstacles hindered their efficacy in developing the Rape of Nanjing's national narrative. First of all, Western media sources' influence within Chinese media channels was largely limited to urban centers, so huge swaths of the rural population were denied access to these accounts of the

[58] "Ferocious Enemy Keeping on Arson and Looting in Terror-Ridden Nanjing and Foreign Journalists' Inspections Rejected." *Dagong bao*. December 23, 1937. Accessed from: The Memorial Hall for the Victims of the Nanjing Massacre by Japanese Invaders Media Archive: Nanjing, China, http://www.nj1937.org/english/show_massacre.asp?id=65.
[59] Wakabayashi, 250.
[60] Article from *The London Times*, reprinted in a local Shanghai newspaper on December 28, 1937. Accessed from: The Memorial Hall for the Victims of the Nanjing Massacre by Japanese Invaders Media Archive: Nanjing, China, http://www.nj1937.org/english/show_massacre.asp?id=65

atrocities in Nanjing. Furthermore, even Western media accounts that did circulate throughout China were often limited to English-language publications, like *The China Daily*. The language barrier posed by the lack of English translators throughout China during World War II often meant that the information contained in foreign language newspapers escaped the consciousness of the majority of Chinese citizens, further preventing the Nanjing Massacre from becoming a viable aspect of public memory of suffering during the war.[61] China's literacy rate was admittedly low during the war, thus implying that neither translation into Mandarin nor journalistic penetration in rural areas would have significantly broadened public exposure the information about the Massacre. These barriers did, however, prevent educated, influential members of rural society—who could broadcast news to their illiterate peers—from consuming such reports.

These varied factors of geographic relocations, changes in journalistic norms and objectives, and barriers to news dissemination combined to create a media portrayal of the Nanjing Massacre that initially did not characterize it as the exceptionally horrific event that Chinese today remember it to be. The media-driven push to spur national unity by shifting the focus away from big cities and by appealing to the unique nationalist sentiments held by residents in diverse rural regions of the country left Nanjing in a marginal position when it came to publicizing its atrocities. When this incomplete portrayal of the Rape of Nanjing was combined with the nationalized, generalized depictions that Chinese statesmen propagated, the narrative of the atrocities in Nanjing began to coalesce into a shadowy myth of brutality that was constantly overshadowed by a variety of morally dubious social, political, and military reactions

[61] It should be noted that some Chinese newspapers translated Western media reports into Chinese for local readers to consume. These newspapers, however, were limited to southern seaside cities, like Shanghai and Hong Kong, so their impact was generally limited.

to the chaotic events in the Nationalist capital, none of which stood to gain from an accurate characterization of the trauma.

CHAPTER 3
SORTING THROUGH THE RUBBLE
NARRATIVE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE IMMEDIATE POST-WAR YEARS (1945-1976)

Despite the limitations in historiography that bureaucratic and media portrayals of the Massacre posed, the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE) created the conditions for the development of a new understanding of the Nanjing Massacre that had not been possible during the war. Not only did it bring together the narratives of victims, journalists, statesmen, and perpetrators into a more complete framing of the event for the first time, but it also collected evidence for the scope of the atrocities that far surpassed what was documented as the Massacre had unfolded.

Immediately following Japan's surrender in August 1945, the Nationalist government launched investigations into Japanese activities in Nanjing, coalescing survivor accounts, contemporary newspaper reports, damage surveys, and burial records kept by charity organizations in Nanjing, such as the Red Swastika Society.[62] With this evidence, the military tribunals in both Tokyo and Nanjing agreed that about 20,000 cases of rape had occurred, about one-third of all city buildings had been damaged, and between 200,000 and 300,000 Chinese civilians had been killed.[63] In this sense, the Tokyo trials aided in the establishment of a narrative of the Nanjing Massacre that recognized it as an exceptional event in the historiography of Chinese traumatic experiences. The tribunals accepted uncritically the documents, diaries, and eyewitness accounts supporting the Massacre, and although the degree of retribution exacted

[62] Yang 2001, 53.
[63] The Nanjing and Tokyo tribunals reached different verdicts regarding the death toll in Nanjing: the Tokyo tribunal estimated the number of deaths at around 200,000, while Nanjing's estimate was much higher, at around 300,000 people killed.

upon the Japanese perpetrators was arguably insufficient given the degree of atrocities committed, international law courts had verified the Nanjing Massacre, validated its evidence, and set a precedence for its later characterization as a horrific, "genocidal" event by setting death toll estimates in the hundreds of thousands. Despite this legal recognition, however, the IMTFE, like the Chinese media and political leaders, failed to craft a narrative of the Nanjing Massacre that Chinese society could integrate into a sustainable national memory of its suffering during World War II. When placed within the sociopolitical context of post-World War II China, it becomes more logical to discern why, armed with internationally legitimized evidence for its scope and brutality, the Massacre nevertheless sank back into obscurity after the Tribunal closed its doors on November 12, 1948.

The first cause of the Massacre's post-IMTFE obscurity centered within the court proceedings themselves. Although the tribunals released a verdict that recognized the Rape of Nanjing's occurrence, the court reached that decision amid a great deal of controversy that affected the memory of the Massacre both internationally and within China. Attempts to cover up and deny the atrocities, for instance, were large aspects of each defense case. General Matsui Iwane, the commander of the Central China forces during the Nanjing invasion, and one of his assistants, General Muto Akira, both resolutely denied charges that implied widespread human rights abuses during the Massacre. Matsui admitted that many soldiers had diverged from standard operating procedures in Nanjing, but denied that anything on the scale of a "massacre" had taken place. Similarly, Muto had been in Nanjing until the end of December, 1937, but claimed that he'd seen no soldiers behaving badly. He did acknowledge that he had seen reports

of looting and rape, but that those reports only amounted to 20 instances, at most.[64] Matsui and Muto were just two examples of the scores of Japanese representatives who attempted to save both their personal reputations and Japan's international repute by denying the scope of the atrocities committed in Nanjing. The Japanese were not the only ones deemphasizing the Nanjing Massacre's significance, however. Justice Radhabinod Pal, an Indian nationalist who doubted Western European colonial powers' right to pass judgment on Japan's own imperialist policies, rejected Allied arguments that Japan launched sinister offensives in China. In his dissenting opinion, Pal expressed his belief that, "the published accounts of Nanking 'rape' [can]not be accepted by the world without some suspicion of exaggeration."[65] Even accepting the Massacre's occurrence, Pal still thought that such a symbol of Japanese-inflicted horror was simply a "stray incidence."[66] Just as Chinese political elites and journalists had done, Pal deemphasized the symbolic significance of the Massacre in international tribunal records. These efforts to downplay the atrocities in Nanjing worked. When the tribunal ended after nearly two and a half years, only six Japanese were executed for the hundreds of thousands of Chinese civilians who had been killed during the war. After the humiliation that the Chinese people had endured under Japanese forces, the fact that Japan had escaped full retribution in the tribunals deepened China's sense of shattered pride and helplessness. To commemorate the Rape of Nanjing as the symbol of this subjugation and degradation seemed unnecessary.

Even though the IMTFE's effects on how the Nanjing Massacre's master narrative developed within international legal precedent was ambiguous when the tribunal ended in 1948,

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[64] Mark Eykholt, "Aggression, Victimization, and Chinese Historiography of the Nanjing Massacre," in *The Nanjing Massacre in History and Historiography*, ed. Joshua A. Fogel (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000), 23.
[65] Brook 1999, 273.
[66] Tim Maga, *Judgment at Tokyo: The Japanese War Crimes Trials* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 67.

the fact that it officially recognized the exceptional nature of the atrocities in Nanjing meant that the Massacre still had the potential to become an important aspect of Chinese memories of suffering during World War II. This, however, largely did not happen in the years immediately following the IMTFE because China' post-war domestic sociopolitical climate was not conducive to the nostalgic commemoration of a humiliating trauma. The Nationalist government, still recovering from an exhausting struggle with Japan, was increasingly threatened by the Chinese Communist Party's growing power, and had little incentive to encourage the memory of a traumatic event that symbolized the Nationalists' dismal failure to protect its own people from Japanese predations.

When Mao Zedong and the CCP toppled the Guomindang less than one year after the IMTFE ended and founded the People's Republic of China, the political framework within which the Nanjing Massacre was to be remembered altered drastically. The rise of communism in the years following the IMTFE abruptly decapitated the development of a trauma narrative for the Massacre by altering the idea of the "Chinese struggle" from a national conflict against Japan (in which memories of the Massacre would have been relevant) to a class conflict against the ruling class. [67] Another distorting factor was the dominance of a Mao-centered historiography that propagated sanctioned narratives of the war from a Yan'an-centered perspective.[68] These viewpoints ignored both those areas in which widespread collaboration occurred and those which remained under Nationalist control during the war. The Nanjing Massacre, which unfolded within both of these shunned perspectives, had little relevance within the Maoist-propagated historiography.

[67] Yang 2001, 54.
[68] Rana Mitter, "Old Ghosts, New Memories: China's Changing War History in the Era of Post-Mao Politics," *Journal of Contemporary History* 38, no. 1 (2003): 119.

It is important to note, however, that the CCP did not ignore the Nanjing Massacre completely; it was used sporadically for propaganda purposes, although these accounts highlighted the injustices committed by Americans, rather than the Japanese, in Nanjing. Under the CCP, the United States, rather than Japan, became China's principal enemy. Concerned by the United States' motivation for entering the Korean War in 1950, Chinese journalists and leaders used the Nanjing Massacre to vilify Americans' "imperialist" presence in East Asia. Instead of highlighting Japanese-instigated violence in Nanjing, articles instead characterized American missionaries as subversive Japanese collaborators who facilitated the killings and rapes. An article in the 1951 edition of the national newspaper *Xinhua Yuebao* reflected how this new target affected the Nanjing memory. Although the article recognized the event as "the first great wartime Japanese atrocity in China," the author seemed more interested in revealing "the American crimes" during the Massacre rather than those committed by the Japanese. The article contended that the Americans who remained in Nanjing during the winter of 1937 and 1938 only did so to "protect their companies, churches, schools and residences, with the blood and bones of the Chinese people." It also charged that the International Safety Zone Committee was made up of imperialists and fascists who served as the vanguard for the invading Japanese troops in a "faithful collusion" between the Japanese and American. One Chinese survivor was quoted as saying, "the American devils called out the names [of the Chinese] and the Japanese devils carried out the execution." [69] Bolstered by the Chinese masses' obsessive loyalty that such nationalist narratives cultivated, Mao accumulated the power to execute his two failed experiments in ideological integration and economic expansion: the Great Leap Forward and the Great Proletariat Cultural Revolution.

[69] Daqing Yang, "The Challenges of the Nanjing Massacre: Reflections on Historical Inquiry", in *The Nanjing Massacre in History and Historiography*, ed. Joshua A. Fogel (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 2000), 178.

Even as the hyper-nationalist fervor of the Cultural Revolution (GPCR) years declined in the early 1970s, and as conservative cadres de-radicalized the CCP and dismantled the cult of Mao, the relative social liberation during the years immediately following Mao's substantive loss of power did not nurture an environment in which memories of Japanese atrocities in Nanjing could occupy a discernable position within national narratives. Following Zhou Enlai's insistence for stable and orderly economic growth, the CCP sought to develop amicable relations with Japan, whose post-war economy had growth substantially under the United States' guidance.[70] In 1972, the two countries officially normalized relations, with the PRC government formally renouncing its claims to war reparations for Japanese actions during World War II in exchange for a new diplomatic posture of friendship. *Renmin ribao* commented on this joint statement, observing:

> Both the Chinese and Japanese peoples have been connected by a long history of friendship….The Chinese peoples' respect the teachings of Mao Zedong, which strictly distinguishes a majority of the Japanese people from a handful of militarists and extends deepest sympathies for the sufferings inflicted in the Japanese peoples. Since the establishment of our nation, we have cultivated friendly relations with the Japanese people, while the Japanese people have always desired friendship with the Chinese people.[71]

During China's early forays into economic reform in the mid-1970s, many Chinese media outlets, in efforts to reframe Sino-Japanese relations as fundamentally amicable, characterized Japanese aggression in China as the unfortunate folly of a few "tiny elites" rather than as illustrative of individual Japanese soldiers' propensity to commit egregious acts toward the Chinese.[72] This reframing of historical relations between the two East Asian powers was economically motivated by the two nations' developing international financial regimes. Japanese

[70] Maurice Meisner, *M*ao*'s China and After: A History of the People's Republic* (New York: The Free Press, 1986), 409.
[71] Yoshida, 103.
[72] Yoshida, 104.

business and political leaders, newly empowered through the integration of Japan's development state apparatus, were attracted to China's potentially huge markets, vast natural resources, and cheap skilled labor pool.[73] Similarly, Chinese political leaders sought Japan's advanced technologies and capital resources with which to fuel the rapid economic development that they believed was a necessary condition for international power.[74]

Adhering to this elite-centered effort to justify China's engagement with the Japanese economy, Deng Xiaoping also participated in downplaying World War II-era Japanese militarism. During a speech in 1975, he depicted the Japanese military-industrial complex as only a minor factor in Japanese development.[75] These characterizations colored Chinese memories of World War II—and the Nanjing Massacre specifically—by refocusing attention away from the morally ambiguous acts of Japanese and Chinese actors on the ground and centering blame upon far-away leaders and dismantled military-industrial regimes. By deemphasizing individual-level decisions and actions, the Chinese media and leaders during the immediate years following the GPCR permitted Chinese society to ignore the ethically ambiguous decisions and brutal aggression that Japanese and Chinese actors executed during the Nanjing Massacre in favor of a simplified narrative that promoted transnational economic partnerships.

Within this new sociopolitical framework, the Nanjing Massacre of 1937 largely disappeared from public environments. It served no political purpose for the CCP to publicize the memory of an event that did not fit its evolving policies of either proletariat revolution or fervent economic growth. Within the highly dictatorial, oppressive, and ideological political

[73] Chalmers Johnson, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle: The Growth of Industrial Policy, 1925-1975* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press), 1982.
[74] Eykholt, 28.
[75] Foreign Broadcast Information Service, "Teng Hsiao-ping Comments on War, Japan Peace Accord," *Daily Report: China* (August 18, 1975), A3.

climate that Mao Zedong nurtured, the CCP immediately suppressed any emerging social narratives that contradicted or diverged from the CCP's party platform and arrested or humiliated people who propagated the stories.[76] Even after more pragmatic and conservative CCP leaders, such as Deng Xiaoping, gained control of Party leadership positions in the mid-1970s, their economically-motivated desire for amicable Sino-Japanese relations obstructed intellectual or popular investigations into the events surrounding the Massacre. As a result, socially shared memories of the Nanjing Massacre disappeared amid a thick blanket of communist propaganda and policies. This relative obscurity might even have suited Nanjing's survivors, who may have been too ashamed to speak about their suffering or too afraid to acknowledge their association with the Nationalist regime or the Japanese occupation for fear of persecution. The IMTFE's gains in affirming the scope of the brutality that Japanese troops visited upon Nanjing residents were thus lost in the overwhelming tide of the rising CCP in the years immediately following the IMTFE. In the crucial formative years of Chinese society's development of the Nanjing Massacre's master narrative of social suffering, a dictatorial communist regime suppressed the commemoration that may have developed out of the IMTFE's verdict in 1948.

[76] Lu, 8.

CHAPTER 4
LIBERATION OF NATIONAL MEMORY
NARRATIVE DEVELOPMENTS DURING CHINA'S RISE TO POWER (1976-1997)

Under the Mao regime, many aspects of WWII—including the Nanjing Massacre—were relegated to subordinate positions within national and popular memory. The dynamics of post-1976 economic and political reform and the trauma of the Deng regime's suppression of the Chinese democracy movement during the 1989 Tiananmen protests, however, have forced both the Chinese government and the public to analyze the country's WWII experiences in order to understand their geopolitical position as an international industrial powerhouse. Such reinterpretations of the past are relevant because, much like Nationalist-era China, contemporary Chinese leaders face what they perceive as threatening international encroachments upon China's "rightful" sovereignty, both economically and territorially. By referencing and refining past lessons, Chinese leaders and citizens have rationalized and mitigated the uncertainties and challenges of an emerging global economic and military power.

In the power vacuum that developed after Mao's death in 1976, CCP leaders, such as Hua Guofeng and Deng Xiaoping, sought to manipulate the tumultuous post-Maoist ideological environment to justify their bids for succession power. These elite-level manipulations influenced the sociopolitical conditions that structured memories regarding the Nanjing Massacre in the immediate post-Mao era. As a reward for smashing the Maoist "Gang of Four," Hua Guofeng was installed as the new Chairman of the CCP in 1976 and was entrusted with the delicate task of reforming Mao's misguided initiatives. To this end, Hua reformed cultural and educational policies to nurture an intellectual revival that had lain dormant since the Cultural

Revolution's initiation in 1966.[77] These initiatives created a relatively more permissive political environment in which formerly banned theater productions, literary journals, and films could resume production, and in which young writers could publish memoirs about their personal experiences during the Cultural Revolution.[78]

Although Hua's primary motivation to enact such liberal reforms was to win the crucial support of conservative political and intellectual elites for his CCP Chairmanship, these reforms also gave Chinese citizens the opportunity to consume a variety of interpretations of Chinese history that had heretofore been unavailable to such an extent. This initial post-Maoist cultural freedom set up nascent social expectations among the intelligentsia for a multiplicity of personal interpretations about China's "century of humiliation" that would affect the development of both the burgeoning pro-democracy movement and the eventual construction of a national memory of the Nanjing Massacre.

Despite Hua's efforts to consolidate CCP and intellectual support for his Chairmanship, he failed to fashion a faction powerful enough to prevent Deng Xiaoping from emerging from the post-Mao power struggles as the new ideological center and paramount leader of the Communist Party. A well-known CCP leader capable of rallying popular and political support for his leadership, Deng was confident in his ability to wrest control from the relatively unknown and increasingly ineffective Hua. Appealing to growing public agitations for liberation from Mao's oppressive ideology, Deng publicly hinted at his support for crude forms of democratic reforms—such as the rehabilitation of political prisoners and Party-centered political liberalization—to propel him to power.[79] Together, Hua Guofeng and Deng Xiaoping's politically-motivated permissiveness toward nascent forms of liberalization set in motion

[77] Meisner 1986, 449.
[78] Meisner 1986, 449.
[79] Meisner 1986, 452-453.

expectations among influential sectors of Chinese society—namely intellectual and media circles—that would both impact the development of the Party's struggle with pro-democracy elements within society, and, ultimately, national memories of the Nanjing Massacre.

A political rival of Mao Zedong for his advocacy of capitalist market reforms as a means to develop China's socialist regime, Deng's vision to rebuild China and the CCP rested upon a belief in the productivity and growth potential of market reforms. This profound shift in the CCP's economic policies had a sizable impact on national memories regarding the Nanjing Massacre. The revolutionary fervor and radical nationalist mobilization that characterized Maoist policies gradually waned as Deng Xiaoping settled into power and directed the CCP's energy to consolidating China's international status economically and diplomatically.[80] Highly sensitive to the political effects that a nationwide revival of memories regarding the Nanjing Massacre would have on Sino-Japanese relations during the late 1970s (just as China's international economic partnerships were beginning to have a significant impact on the country's GDP and international stature), Deng Xiaoping avoided public discussions of Japanese atrocities in the Nationalist capital during WWII in favor of gestures that emphasized friendship between the two countries. National ceremonies commemorating Mao Zedong after his death in 1976, for example, hardly mentioned Japanese militarism, even though Mao's leadership during the era of Japanese aggression had significantly fueled his and the CCP's rise to power.[81] During the early years of China's capitalist economic development, the CCP propagated memories of World War II within which the violence and moral ambiguity of the Nanjing Massacre did not fit.

The motivations behind this elite aversion to memorializing the Nanjing Massacre were not only economic in nature. Post-Maoist leaders' political legitimacy rested on their ability to

[80] Eykholt, 26.
[81] Eykholt, 27.

convince the masses that China's "century of humiliation"—in particular, the recent violence, poverty, and social dislocations of the Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution—would not be repeated.[82] This imperative necessitated that the CCP leaders in the late 1970s separate their policies from those associated with Mao, while simultaneously leaving enough ambiguity concerning his culpability to allow his continued worship, a vital source of CCP legitimacy within the Chinese citizenry. Thus, the political quandaries regarding Mao's legacy largely overshadowed CCP acknowledgement of other important eras in twentieth-century Chinese history, including the Nanjing Massacre.[83] Concerned with creating and perpetuating political power, early post-Maoist CCP leaders found the legacies and implications of Maoist initiatives much more politically relevant than the increasingly shadowy events of WWII.

The peaceful transnational maintenance of Sino-Japanese friendship, however, which had been initiated in the early 1970s under Zhou Enlai's leadership and maintained in the late 1970s by the signing of the Treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1978, faltered in the early 1980s. Japanese Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) leaders, whose confidence had been greatly bolstered by global recognition and admiration for their successful economic "miracle," became more comfortable promoting among the Japanese population cultural pride and "love of country" that had lain dormant since Japan's defeat in WWII. In 1982, leading LDP politicians instructed the Ministry of Education (MoE) to "soften" appraisals of Japanese history that would promote patriotism among Japanese schoolchildren. As Chinese newspapers reported that the MoE was initiating textbook revisions in order to downplay Japanese aggression within China, strong negative reactions resonated throughout the country, as Chinese citizens argued that Japan was

[82] Meisner 1986, 458.
[83] Meisner 1986, 460.

being permitted to "disown" its shameful history by virtue of its present economic success.[84] Deng Xiaoping, who in 1982 was still consolidating his claim to the CCP Chairmanship, found the textbook controversy to be a politically expedient tool with which to nurture nationalist support for his (and, indirectly, the CCP's) continued leadership within China. By highlighting the divergences between Japanese textbooks' "incomplete" and "inaccurate" history of the Nanjing Massacre with China's "national memory" of widespread, horrific suffering, Deng's protests of Japanese textbook revisions sought to reframe the Massacre as a uniquely horrific instance of Chinese victimization and suffering around which all Chinese citizens could rally in protest of Japan's indecent historical revisions.[85]

It is important to note, however, that Deng Xiaoping's manipulations of historical memory depended upon the presence of a receptive audience within Chinese society who would consume his framings of the Massacre, integrate them into their identities as Chinese citizens, and then apply those identities to their perspectives regarding the LDP's textbook initiatives. The socioeconomic characteristics that cultivated such an amenable public audience had been developing for nearly a decade when Deng Xiaoping's Nanjing Massacre memorializing initiatives began in the early 1980s. Still reeling from the disastrous effects of Mao Zedong's hyper-egalitarian nationalist movements of the 1950s and 1960s, Chinese citizens during the 1970s sought a new ideological focus upon which to harness popular nationalism.

While China's persistently increasing GDP and growing international significance reinvigorated pride in some Chinese citizens, China's open door policy also permitted Chinese citizens to see how far China had fallen behind international economic trends. Most importantly, it also highlighted that Japan had emerged from WWII as a dominant international economic

[84] Jasper Heizen, "Memory Wars: The Manipulation of History in the Context of Sino-Japanese Relations," *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies* 6, no. 2 (December, 2004): 152.
[85] Heizen, 153.

power, seemingly without having to atone for its actions during the war. Newly aware of the progresses and accomplishments that other capitalist countries had achieved, Chinese citizens were forced to reconcile their long-established nationalistic belief in the superiority of Chinese civilization with China's current status as an economically backward country.[86] Conditioned by centuries of indoctrination into Chinese superiority and centrality and humbled by the "century of humiliation," Chinese citizens during the early Deng Xiaoping era had to integrate a diverse and, often conflicting, set of historical memories as they reestablished a socially-shared understanding of Chinese nationalism.

As Deng's economic reforms, Special Economic Zones, and emphasis on foreign direct investment brought an influx of foreign capital to the country in the early and mid-1980s, and as more and more Chinese citizens profited from these developments, citizens regained the optimism and pride necessary to reinvigorate and reframe Chinese nationalism within a modern internationally interdependent context.[87] From 1980 to 1989, China's GDP grew at an average annual rate of 9.7%, almost doubling the average GDP growth rates for the rest of the Asian continent (which was the world's most rapidly growing region at the time).[88] Furthermore, during the 1980s, GDP per capita more than tripled, from PPP-$420 in 1980 to PPP-$1380 in 1990.[89] Within a socioeconomic context of burgeoning private markets, growing individual and national capital resources, and expanding opportunities for investment and development, Chinese citizens during the 1980s were more engaged with and cognizant of international relationships than previous Chinese generations had ever been, and were thus more apt to respond to CCP

[86] Eykholt, 46.
[87] George T. Crane, "Special Things in Special Ways: National Identity and China's Special Economic Zones," in *Chinese Nationalism*, ed. Jonathan Unger (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, Inc), 149-153.
[88] World Bank, *World Development Report 1991* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 206-207.
[89] Facts generated from a table depicting China's GDP per capita growth. Globalis, China GDP per capita, http://globalis.gvu.unu.edu/indicator_detail.cfm?IndicatorID=19&Country=CN

leaders' protests that Japan, an economic competitor for regional preeminence and a previous imperialist aggressor, was attempting to erase memories of the suffering it inflicted upon proud Chinese citizens.

Within this increasingly tense geopolitical environment, the CCP, cognizant of the potential nationalist power of focusing public attention on the Nanjing Massacre, permitted scholars to investigate the event during the early 1980s.[90] Nanjing University partnered with the Number Two Historical Archives in Nanjing to research the Massacre, undertaking studies into death totals and the methods of execution, murder, and torture that the Japanese army employed during the occupation. The committee interviewed more than 1700 survivors of the Massacre and incorporated the testimonies into the 1985 Massacre Memorial.[91] This museum was part of the CCP's ideological and financial investment in the propagation of a new national memory of WWII that created three museums to establish a new interpretation of the war. In 1983, the CCP had also funded the construction of The Memorial for the Compatriot Victims in the Nanjing Massacre by the Japanese Invading Troops. The building, fashioned in the shape of a coffin to emphasize the fact that it was built upon one of Nanjing's mass graves, featured a viewing site at which visitors could observe the grave—a symbol of Japanese soldiers' wanton aggression.[92]

These museums, which largely excluded the CCP from their historiography, emphasized the "China as victim" image, and implicitly juxtaposed China's past vulnerability to foreign aggressors within its current power as a Communist economic powerhouse.[93] The Nanjing Massacre became the preeminent symbol of China's previous experience as an international victim, and the Massacre Memorial became an important tool with which CCP leaders could

[90] Eykholt, 46.
[91] Eykholt, 47.
[92] Heizen, 153.
[93] Mitter, 127.

penetrate popular consciousness and develop national memories of the war that justified and maintained their power. Accompanying the opening of such CCP-financed memorials in the early to mid-1980s were unveilings of many small monuments that independent artists erected throughout the city, adorned with inscriptions such as, "The invading Japanese troops massacred our 300,000 compatriots in Nanjing in December 1937. As many as 2,000 were killed in the vicinity….This monument is erected in order that future generations will never forget and will be determined to strengthen China and make her prosper forever."[94] These artistic and historical representations of memories of the Massacre made the event commemoration easily accessible to broad segments of the Chinese public for the first time.

Although China's growing economic prowess and international stature created a context in which Chinese citizens could feel comfortable contrasting their present power with past instances of weakness, such as the Nanjing Massacre, the event did not coalesce into a coherent national memory during the 1980s for several sociopolitical reasons. Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms and "open door" policy permitted members of Chinese society to refashion their personal understandings of nationalism according to their individualized experiences with capitalism: the opportunities and frustrations of enterprise, and the possibilities and risks of private ownership. While the poverty associated with large-scale capital transfers to private ownership and the dislocation that accompanied broad population movements into cities meant that Chinese citizens' experiences with capitalism were not all positive, Deng Xiaoping's reforms nevertheless enabled Chinese citizens to gain access to a set of economic opportunities to which they have never before been privy. Accompanying these new opportunities, a more diversified variety of Chinese nationalism suffused the PRC's towns and cities that remained

[94] Daqing Yang, "A Sino-Japanese Controversy: The Nanjing Atrocity as History," *Journal of Sino-Japanese Studies* 3, no. 1 (November 1990): 14.

largely unchallenged until the late 1980s.[95] China's growing private sector and the diversification of occupations within both rural and urban areas meant that there was no longer any monolithic, uniformly "Chinese" experience from which both Chinese citizens and leaders could extract nationalistic identity.[96] These economic and social developments made it harder for intellectual and political leaders to construct a "national narrative" of Chinese memories about the country's history, including the Nanjing Massacre.

Accompanying this social fragmentation and economic stratification during the 1980s was a growing factionalism and corruption within the CCP, as members of the CCP leadership and engaged in an ideological battle over the implications of Deng's economic reforms and of China's increased participation in globalization. As Deng Xiaoping's initiatives widened the socioeconomic disparities within the population during the mid- to late-1980s, and as inflation and unemployment grew, social tensions emerged within China that prompted conservative hardliners, such as Chen Yun and Hu Yaobang, to oppose Deng's economic reforms and ineffective policies for controlling mounting public discontent in the late 1980s. Indeed, upon social and political pressures and increasingly obvious indications that an overemphasis on promoting SEZ's and unregulated foreign access to Chinese capital was creating more economic problems than benefits (such as increasing debt and corruption), Deng somewhat moderated his economic policies in the late 1980s toward a less fervent promotion of reckless foreign investment.[97]

[95] Wang Gungwu, "Openness and Nationalism: Outside the Chinese Revolution," in *Chinese Nationalism,* ed. Jonathan Unger (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, Inc.), 119.
[96] Meisner 1986, 470.
[97] Maurice Meisner, *The Deng Xiaoping Era: An Inquiry into the Fate of Chinese Socialism, 1978-1994* (New York: Hill and Wang Press, 1996), 280-286.

Within this tense climate of political factionalism and oscillating policies, CCP political elites turned to history to rationalize their positions and bolster their claims to power.[98] Without the current presence of external foes—such as Western imperialists, Japanese aggressors, or Nationalist traitors—the present-day CCP leadership had to "create" a new source of inclusive Chinese nationalism with which to unite an increasingly diverse and economically stratified Chinese society. To weave together and control such a fragmented society, CCP leaders turned to the distant events of WWII, including the Nanjing Massacre, to revive waning popular nationalistic loyalty to the Communist state by appealing to mounting popular anti-Japanese sentiment.

This strategy of cultivating nationalism, however, backfired on the CCP leadership. When placed within the context of growing public dissatisfaction with Japan's inordinate economic power and China's continuing efforts to "play catch-up" in the mid-1980s, the CCP's efforts to strategically reinsert memories of the Nanjing Massacre into a national effort to revive patriotism and loyalty instead morphed into a catalyst that set off anti-Japanese student demonstrations throughout the country. These protests began on September 18, 1985 as students at Beijing and Tsinghua Universities commemorated the 54th anniversary of Japan's invasion of Manchuria. After the ceremony, in a dramatic and symbolic reenactment of the pro-democracy May Fourth Movement of 1919, 1,000 students marched to Tiananmen Square in a spontaneous act of protest, shouting "Down with Japanese militarism" and "Strongly oppose the second invasion" (a term referring to Japan's economic penetration into China.)[99] Implicit in these statements were the students' beliefs that the government was partially responsible for this

[98] Mitter, 120.
[99] Eykholt, 37.

"second invasion" because of its excessive emphasis on the cultivation of friendly economic relations with the former aggressor.

These student protests continued sporadically throughout 1985, commemorating various dates that marked important developments in Japanese expansion efforts in China. In the course of the demonstrations, however, the students' target shifted from anti-Japanese sentiment to widespread criticism of the Chinese government's involvement with fraud, embezzlement, corruption, and oppression. Despite dramatic increases in public consciousness of bureaucratic corruption during Zhao Ziyang's tenure as Communist Party chief in the late 1980s, Deng and Zhao demanded greater "speed" and "boldness" in implementing the market reform that exacerbated social inequalities and heightened public suspicions of bureaucratic fraud.[100] Just as the government had attempted to use anti-Japanese sentiment to promote patriotism and loyalty to the Party, protestors also used anti-Japanese feelings as a pretext for voicing their discontent with the CCP. Within this context, the Nanjing Massacre became a preeminent symbol of both Japanese brutality and the Chinese government's characteristic unresponsiveness, which had relegated its people to poverty and hardship throughout history. These anti-Japanese and anti-CCP protests culminated in the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests, which the CCP finally quelled and suppressed the culture of free expression that had developed during China's initial forays into economic liberalization. After the June 4, 1989 crackdown, the CCP suppressed all forms of dissent and limited public access to politically controversial events.

The Tiananmen Square Protests emphasized to CCP leaders the potentially explosive implications that a combination of weakened popular support for the CCP regime and heightened public cognizance of domestic and international affairs could create for the CCP's popular legitimacy. Resultantly, the state leadership acknowledged the necessity of a carefully

[100] Meisner 1996, 385.

constructed and well-regulated Chinese nationalist ideology with which to revive waning popular allegiance to the government. Acutely aware of the additional geopolitical threats that China's new involvement in the international arena posed for the country's reinvigorated sovereignty, CCP leaders during the early 1990s sought an ideology that that could create an "official and popular constituency" for ensuring that China would not succumb to imperialist pressures again.[101] As the 1997 return of the long-time British colony of Hong Kong to mainland sovereignty approached, CCP leaders also recognized the urgent need for a unifying historical narrative with which the reintegrate the heavily Western-influenced city within Chinese society.

Within this fragile climate of political suppression, economic expansion, and social fragmentation, the CCP tightened its grip on national information flows in order to shape a monolithic nationalist narrative that could rally public support despite the increased repression. The Massacre became an integral aspect of this political maneuver. The Beijing government encouraged and funded scholarship and literature that linked imperialist aggression within China to the past and present. Within this context, the lessons of WWII became especially relevant. In addition to the three government-funded WWII-era memorial museums, the government also subsidized films, such as 1995's *Don't Cry, Nanking*, whose plots conformed to the CCP's official narrative of Chinese society's eventually redemptive suffering during WWII.

Accompanying these government-funded initiatives has been a reassertion of public identification with the Nanjing Massacre. Memoirs and stories depicting the post-war generation's identification with a national narrative of vanquished suffering proliferated in the 1990s. Fang Jun's 1997 memoir, *The Devil Soldiers I Knew,* for instance, relies on highly emotional imagery to emphasize present-day Chinese society's intimate connection with the country's historical "victim narrative":

[101] Mitter, 125.

….I saw our Chinese flag waving, the bright red five star flag! The hot blood rose in my heart. I ran towards our national flag, my feet sinking into the snow….I wanted to cry, I wanted to laugh…our motherland! Who says I'm just one person alone? Isn't our strong and great motherland together with me?...

Motherland, you have gone through so many trials….

The Japanese invaders willfully trampled over your territory, willfully ravaged your people….

You! My motherland! You have not been overcome!

Among the forest of nations in the world, you are a giant….

Motherland, I celebrate you.[102]

Publications such as Fang's fortified and propagated an officially sanctioned national memory of Chinese experiences during WWII in general, and of the Nanjing Massacre, in particular. Public opinion seems to have responded to these cultural and artistic stimuli. Opinion surveys that the *China Youth Daily* administered in 1995-96 suggest that 83.9% of the Chinese youth who were polled associated Japan primarily with the Nanjing Massacre, and that 74% believed that China would become a preeminent global power within 30 years.[103] The results of this survey thus reflect the alignment of two complementary strands of the CCP-sanctioned national narrative within Chinese popular culture: that although China suffered under Japanese depredations, Chinese society has persevered under the CCP, reflecting the country's ultimate resilience, justifiable claim to international leadership, and the CCP's right to lead the country.

Despite this new, national focus upon the events and implications surrounding the Nanjing Massacre, problems stemming from the CCP leadership's efforts to retain oppressive political control over an increasing stratified and economically liberated populace remain that hinder intellectual and popular efforts to investigate the nature and extent of Japanese and Chinese actions within the Nationalist capital in 1937. Most detrimental have been continuing CCP efforts to control scholarly access to vital primary documents that shed light on the daily

[102] Mitter, 129.

[103] Joseph Fewsmith and Stanley Rosen, "The Domestic Context of Chinese Foreign Policy: Does "Public Opinion" Matter?" in *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform*, ed. David M. Lampton (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), 162.

activities of actors within the occupation zone.[104] This censorship not only bars a complete documentation of how the Nanjing Massacre unfolded, but it also undermines the rigor of existing scholarly accounts of the Massacre. Without unrestrained access to critical documents, scholars are forced to rely on less compelling and rigorous forms of historical documentation, including post-war interviews and primary sources with only tangential connections to activities within the city in 1937. By utilizing these sources in efforts to calculate the extent of Japanese atrocities in Nanjing, scholars have sometimes undermined their own mission for clarity and truth by inviting critics to undermine their discoveries on the basis of dubious evidence. This difficulty has important implications for the future of collective Chinese memories of the Massacre. Without an objective catalogue of data regarding the event, it will continue to be very vulnerable to the manipulations of interested parties and groups, from the CCP to grass-roots nationalist movements in present day China.

[104] Eykholt, 49-52.

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION

There is a scholarly tendency to assume that the unanimity of contemporary Chinese memories about the Nanjing Massacre is the natural reflection of widespread, coherent sentiments about Japanese brutality during World War II. It is tempting to believe that the commemorations and memorials derive from a shared public commitment to honor and uphold the 300,000 victims of the Nanjing Massacre and to cultivate a shared national identity based upon Chinese pride and perseverance in such struggles. An investigation into the complex evolving interplay of political and popular understandings of the Massacre, however, renders these conclusions problematic. Rather than being a natural, coherent development, the formulation of a national memory of the Nanjing Massacre was, in large part, the result of a highly contentious and complex interplay between a myriad of representatives of Chinese society both during and after the Massacre. It is important to note that this "master narrative" has been subject to a metamorphosis over time that was largely dependent not on the facts of the trauma itself, but on representations that elite members of Chinese society created about the event. As the implications of the IMTFE reveal, the presence of facts and figures seem to matter less in the development of a narrative of social trauma than the stories that prominent or influential members of the traumatized population tell about it.

An eternal challenge facing historians is the reality that historical facts are inextricably linked to national memories of past events, which themselves are constantly influenced and structured by contemporary struggles, opportunities, and national identities. The Nanjing Massacre is, in this sense, a prime example of the connection between national memory and

historical fact. This event, whose initial historical rendering failed to capture the scope and nature of Japanese actions accurately, has been continually shaped and reframed according to the strategic and psychological necessities of both China's political and intellectual elites and the Chinese public.

As the atrocities in the Nationalist capital unfolded in the winter of 1937-1938, domestic political and social currents were not conducive to the memorializing of the Massacre. GMD leader Chiang Kai-shek was in the midst of a legitimacy crisis, in which both domestic Communist revolutionaries and foreign Japanese imperialists were attempting to gain control of vast regions of Chinese territory. Chiang had no rational incentive to highlight the Nanjing Massacre, an event which only emphasized his inability to protect Chinese citizens from violence and chaos. The prevailing social context during WWII also did not promote the development of nationally shared memories of the massacre. Not only were members of the Chinese population in disparate regions of the country experiencing the conquest and occupation in diverse ways that obstructed nationally-shared identification with the uniquely horrific nation of the occupation, but the actions and decisions of individual Chinese citizens within the Nationalist capital also impeded the formulation of a cohesive national memory of the massacre. Many Nanjing residents, unsure of the duration or character of the Japanese occupation of their city, chose the pragmatically expedient act of collaborating with the Japanese-instituted Self-Governing Committee. These morally ambiguous and practical choices complicated narratives of the Massacre that emphasized Chinese "victimhood" at the hands of violence Japanese conquerors. Although the actions that these collaborators, such as Jimmy Wang and Zhan Rongguan, took may have helped ameliorate the economic conditions of Chinese citizens during the Nanjing occupation, their morally dubious decisions discredited their accomplishments immediately after

the Massacre, and may have helped contribute to the inability and unwillingness of Nanjing survivors to investigate and publicize their experiences in the immediate post-war years. Consequently, despite the presence of international military tribunals and domestic court proceedings that could have used this evidence to clarify national memories of the Massacre, crucial documents and records documenting the event were largely unutilized in framing an accurate catalogue of the event both during and immediately following the war.

Why did the Nanjing Massacre became an obscure memory unbefitting its uniquely horrific character? This is a question that merits close analysis of both elite-centered political and economic incentives and of evolving social acceptance of the Massacre as an aspect of Chinese national identity. Occurring at the start of an era in Chinese history characterized by radical and abrupt ideological changes, the Nanjing Massacre's hazy historiography became a useful political and social tool with which the CCP leadership could rally public support around its evolving socialist policies. As the CCP's primary external threats evolved from class enemies during the Mao era, to the US and Japan in the 1950s to 1980s, and to subversive domestic and foreign actors in recent times, political elites searched for a historical framework upon which to solidify Chinese nationalism and to encourage public support for the CCP's geopolitical policies. The Nanjing Massacre, a unique historical tragedy whose characteristics were manipulated to symbolize a variety of different threats to Chinese sovereignty—from US "collaborators" and Japanese murder-rapists, to the Nationalist government's disregard for its people in Nanjing—became a politically expedient tool for the CCP as they devised strategies for maintaining control over an increasing diffuse, fragmented, and alienated Chinese society.

To this end, political, intellectual, and media representatives utilized China's highly centralized and tightly controlled print media and cultural channels to create opportunities for the

Chinese public to identify with the victimization and resilience that the Nanjing Massacre had the potential to symbolize. During the 1950s, an era in which the Massacre received comparatively less political and social attention due to its irrelevance to Maoist indoctrination, journalists and political leaders used reports of traitorous American collaborators in Nanjing who assisted the Japanese soldiers in violently subduing the population in order to rally public sentiment against the US's involvement in the Korean War , which Chinese CCP leaders equated with threatening imperialist objectives. Within this geopolitical context, Japanese actions during the Massacre were subordinated to fuel anti-American sentiment among the Chinese citizenry.

As the radicalism and xenophobic nationalism associated with Mao's Great Leap Forward and Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution waned during the early to mid-1970s, more conservative and economically pragmatic leaders, including Hua Guofeng and Deng Xiaoping, reframed Mao's radical socialist ideology to promote more stable and internationally-receptive economic growth. Within this "open-door policy," CCP leaders had to reframe Chinese nationalism in ways that downplayed xenophobia and emphasized amicable relations among former international adversaries, such as the US and Japan. This new geopolitical incentive necessitated a revamped understanding of Japanese actions during WWII. Instead of emphasizing the violence that individual Japanese soldiers committed in Nanjing, political and media elites characterized Japan's military aggression as the result of a "few" evil Japanese elites, rather than spontaneous acts of rage that Japanese citizen-soldiers committed against Chinese citizens. This historical reframing permitted market-oriented CCP leaders to engage with contemporary Japan without encouraging Chinese citizens to associate current Japanese leaders with wartime aggression.

As Japan's successful experiment with state-supported economic modernization became increasingly apparent during the late 1970s and early 1980s, however, leaders in Japan's Liberal Democratic Party grew more interested in channeling Japanese citizens' increasing national pride into a patriotic education initiative. Japan's Ministry of Education implemented textbook revisions in1982 that promoted this "love of country" to the extent that it reframed historical events, including the Nanjing Massacre, in ways that diminished attention to incidents that portrayed Japan negatively. As news of Japan's unwillingness to acknowledge the horrific nature of the Massacre spread throughout China, Deng Xiaoping utilized growing public outrage at Japan's education initiatives to highlight the atrocities that took place in WWII-era Nanjing and to channel anti-Japanese sentiment into a popular nationalism that supported the CCP. Within this context, the public commemoration of the Nanjing Massacre became increasingly important, and the CCP government sponsored a variety of museums, programs, and media to promote awareness of the Japanese actions throughout Chinese society.

Accompanying this government-initiated increase in public identification with the victimization and humiliation associated with Massacre was an increasingly volatile confluence of the socioeconomic effects of Deng Xiaoping's political and economic policies. Despite China's skyrocketing GDP and quick ascent to international prominence, the rapid economic reforms had created widened economic disparities and political corruption by the mid-1980s. To an increasingly disaffected and impoverished Chinese public, Deng Xiaoping's CCP seemed unable and unwilling to solve social problems that stemmed from the government's emphasis on economic growth. Exacerbating these social pressures was the fact that the CCP had already nurtured within intellectual and media channels the belief in the efficacy and importance of displaying negative sentiment toward foes, as exemplified by its support of publicly-rooted anti-

Japanese sentiment following the textbook controversy in 1982. As anti-Japanese public sentiment gradually evolved into anti-CCP protests in the mid- to late-1980s, culminating in the violent Tiananmen Square Massacre in 1989, CCP leaders recognized the necessity of maintaining an iron grasp upon the development of nationalist sentiments within Chinese society that would not threaten the government's power or legitimacy. As China became an economic power during the 1990s, political elites continued to manipulate public memory regarding the Massacre to nurture a carefully-constructed and well-regulated public identification with the PRC, which recognized both China's past victimization under encroaching imperialists and its current international preeminence as a pragmatic Communist government.

It is important to note, however, that successful political and intellectual manipulations of historical memory depended upon the presence of a receptive audience within Chinese society who was both willing and able to integrate memories of the Massacre into their nationalist identities as Chinese citizens. This social endeavor had not always been possible in China; without well-developed national media, political, and cultural channels, leaders in dynastic China had great difficulties cultivating widespread public loyalty to the emperor. As Chinese society became increasingly politically and economically integrated during the twentieth century, political elites became more able to utilize socially significant events to mold popular nationalism in ways that promoted their diverse political and economic agendas. Hence, it is crucial to analyze the evolving sentiments of the Chinese public when tracing developments in national memory, because these continuously transforming popular attitudes have profound impacts on the efficacy with which political elites can reframe historical events to further their policies.

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