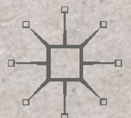
THE HABITABLE CITY IN CHINA

Urban History in the Twentieth Century

EDITED BY
TOBY LINCOLN AND XU TAO

POLITICS AND DEVELOPMENT
OF CONTEMPORARY CHINA



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Toby Lincoln • Xu Tao
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The Habitable City in China

Urban History in the Twentieth Century

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Editors
Toby Lincoln
Centre for Urban History
University of Leicester
Leicester, UK

Xu Tao
Shanhai Academy of Social Sciences
Shanghai, China

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List of Contributors

Ning Jennifer Chang (張寧) is Associate Research Fellow at the Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Taiwan. She has published many articles on Chinese business history and urban culture. Her current projects include British sports in China, and treaty port culture in the late Qing and Republican eras.

Robert Cliver received his PhD in History from Harvard University in 2007, and since then has taught courses in East Asian and Russian history at Humboldt State University. He is the author of articles on topics ranging from eighth-century trade routes in world history to textile workers and their employers in the People's Republic of China.

Karl Gerth is Professor of History and Hwei-chih and Julia Hsiu Endowed Chair in Chinese Studies at the University of California, San Diego. His latest book, *As China Goes, So Goes the World: How Chinese Consumers are Transforming Everything*, explores whether Chinese consumers can rescue the economy without creating even deeper global problems. He is also the author of *China Made: Consumer Culture and the Creation of the Nation*. Currently, he is writing a book that investigates the survival of market practices in China's urban centers following the establishment of Communist rule in 1949.

Christian A. Hess is Associate Professor of Modern Chinese History at Sophia University in Tokyo. His research examines the history of Dalian and the comparative urban history of East Asia. He has published several articles on the history of the early People's Republic of China.

Isabella Jackson is Assistant Professor in Chinese History at Trinity College Dublin. Her research focuses on the history of colonialism in China and the global and regional networks that shaped its treaty ports, and she recently co-edited (with Robert Bickers) a volume on *Treaty Ports in Modern China: Law, Land and Power*

(London: Routledge, 2016). Before taking up her current position, she was a Departmental Lecturer at the University of Oxford and then the Helen Bruce Lecturer in Modern East Asian History at the University of Aberdeen. She is preparing a monograph, provisionally entitled *Shanghai: Transnational Colonialism in China's Global City*, based on her prize-winning PhD thesis on the Shanghai Municipal Council.

Toby Lincoln is Lecturer in Modern Chinese Urban History at the Centre for Urban History at the University of Leicester. His research interests are the history of urbanization in China, urban planning, and the intersection between the city and war. He has recently published *Urbanizing China in War and Peace: the Case of Wuxi County* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2015).

Aaron William Moore is a Lecturer in East Asian history at the University of Manchester. His first book, *Writing War* (Harvard University Press, 2013), examined over 200 diaries by Japanese, Chinese, and American World War II servicemen. In *Bombing the City* (Cambridge University Press, 2016), Moore compares civilian narratives of the air war over Britain and Japan. He is currently writing a book on the life writing of children and adolescents in China, Japan, Britain, and the Soviet Union. In 2014, he was awarded the Philip Leverhulme Prize.

Leon Antonio Rocha is Lecturer in Chinese Studies at the Department of History, University of Liverpool. He received his PhD in History and Philosophy of Science at the University of Cambridge in 2010. He is co-editor, with Robbie Duschinsky, of *Foucault, the Family and Politics* (2012), and is working on two monograph projects, tentatively entitled *Harnessing Pleasure: Imagining Chinese Sex in the Twentieth Century* and *Needham Questions.*

Xu Tao 徐涛 is the Dawn Scholar, an honorable title for outstanding youth scholars, given by Shanghai Municipal Education Commission. He has worked at the Institute of History at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences since 2006. He is the Vice Executive Secretary of the Association of Shanghai Historians and Youth Scholar of the Innovation Project of the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences. His research focuses on mobility and transport in the context of urban history and the study of politics in China. He has published 2 monographs and over 20 articles in Chinese and English, including *Zixingche yu jindai Zhongguo*自行车与近代中国 (History of the Bicycle and Modern China) (Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2015).

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Fig. 7.1 Zhang Jingsheng's 'Beautiful Beijing', adapted by Leon Rocha from *Zuzhifa*, p. 185. In Zhang's text the illustration was accompanied by the caption 'Illustration for the Combination of Town–Country' 城鄉合一圖 (*chengxiang heyi tu*) 153

CHAPTER 1

Introduction: The Habitable City in Chinese History

Toby Lincoln and Xu Tao

In June 1949, on the eve of the foundation of the People's Republic of China, the country's most famous architect, Liang Sicheng 梁思成, published an article in *Renmin ribao* 人民日报 (People's Daily), entitled *Chengshi de tixing ji qi jihua*城市的体型及其计划 (The city's form and its planning). He argued that people living in cities had four basic necessities. These were places to live, work, engage in leisure activities, and a means of transportation. Cities around the world faced problems, many the result of rapid industrialization, which made it difficult for their inhabitants to access these necessities. Liang felt that urban planning provided solutions to these problems, and he proposed 15 objectives that would allow cities to provide the four necessities of life. These included a healthy residential environment with sufficient light, clean air, and green space. Elementary schools and shops selling daily necessities should be within walking distance of people's homes, and places of work had to be close to residential neighborhoods to save time, energy, and money. Turning to transport, motor and pedestrian traffic should be split wherever possible, and roads in residential districts should be narrow. Finally, large shops, museums, theaters, and other public buildings should be constructed in city centers.[1]

T. Lincoln (✉)
University of Leicester, Leicester, UK

X. Tao
Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, Shanghai, China

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Liang Sicheng understood that cities exist for all of their inhabitants. He also realized that in order to be habitable places, cities should be comfortable, healthy, convenient to travel around, and provide opportunities for educational advancement, social contact, and cultural enrichment.

This volume explores some of the ways in which Chinese cities have been imagined, planned, constructed, and experienced as habitable spaces in the twentieth century. This was a period of rapid change in China, in which cities were transformed as a 2000-year-old imperial system was replaced by first the Nationalist and then the Communist governments, both committed to their own versions of industrial modernity. Meanwhile, economic and technological changes also caused the growth of cities across the country. Such growth was not linear as war with the Japanese, and the excesses of the Maoist period often made life difficult for urban inhabitants. The reform period, beginning in 1978, has brought a measure of stability, but also a scale and pace of urbanization that is unprecedented anywhere in the world. In this volume, we argue that the concept of urban habitability helps us make sense of how cities have changed throughout the tumultuous twentieth century, because it allows historians to create continuities in time and connections across space. This is because the idea of the habitable city is simple, but can be approached from different perspectives, allowing it to be applied in different situations. Throughout the rest of this introduction, we explain why we use the term urban habitability, precisely what we mean by it, and show how the Chinese have thought about how their cities should be made habitable. We then explore how urban historians of China, who have approached the study of the city using different analytical lenses, have in fact often been discussing how a city is or should be made habitable. Finally, we introduce the individual perspectives of the different chapters in this volume.

What Is Urban Habitability?

The Chinese term for habitable city is *yiju chengshi* 宜居城市. This literally translates as 'a city that is suitable to reside in'. Contemporary scholars of Chinese urbanism use it to discuss the concept of the livable city, and see its origins in United Nations Habitat conferences in 1976 and 1996.[2] We consider how the Chinese have incorporated livability into urban plans in the twenty-first century in more detail below. Outside China, the concept of livability is generally seen to originate with Ebenezer Howard's garden city in the late nineteenth century. Since then, it has been incorporated into the City Beautiful Movement in America, the new urbanism

in the postwar era, and more recently discussions of urban sustainability.[3] Livability could be said to be synonymous with habitability. However, the origins of the concept of livability as it has been and continues to be used in academic and political circles lie outside the Chinese historical experience. We use the term habitability in this volume to highlight how the Chinese have thought about cities within the context of their own history, rather than looking to transplant ideas from elsewhere. Of course, the Chinese have been influenced by ideas about cities circulating around the world. However, they have not thought uncritically about them, and in imagining, designing, planning, and experiencing cities as habitable places, they have not merely copied foreign models, but have adapted them to Chinese realities.

Habitability is the property of being able to support life. Planets are divided into different classes, and it is difficult to imagine life on anything other than a class I planet.[4] The only class I planet that we know of is earth, and the processes that have created life are so fiendishly complicated that there is still much we do not understand.[5] Scientific, philosophical, religious, mystic, and pragmatic ways of thinking about our planet have not always been concerned with whether it can support human life, but the majority have been anthropocentric, privileging our own existence and comfort, often at the expense of its wider ecosystem.[6] Cities are normally seen as spaces created entirely for humanity, and in which humanity's achievements manifest themselves to their greatest extent. While scholars have recently been challenging this anthropocentric approach, arguing that cities, and indeed humanity itself, should not be seen as separate from nature, the city is still a place that exists primarily for its human inhabitants.[7] We do not seek to deny the value of these new approaches. After all, without the resources of the planet, it would be impossible for humanity to build cities in which to live. However, throughout history, cities have been constructed by and for humans, and have provided both necessities of life, while having or creating conditions to enhance the quality of life. It is in this twofold sense that we see cities as habitable spaces.

In twentieth-century China, many people wrote about habitability. One of them was Sun Yatsen, whose concept of people's livelihood 民生 (*minsheng*) was part of an ideology that inspired intellectuals and politicians across the country. However, it was his son, Sun Ke 孙科, who applied his principles specifically to the city. Sun felt that the key to creating a modern urban society was planning, which should focus on providing three basic services. These were transport of all kinds, public health including clean running water and safe disposal of rubbish, and leisure facilities, especially

parks, which would create a pleasant environment.[8] Sun Ke was an early exponent of urban planning in China, and by the end of the 1920s, he had been joined by a host of compatriots. Probably the most prolific writer on cities in the first half of the twentieth century was Dong Xiujia 董修甲. Born in 1891, he graduated from Qinghua University in 1918, and then obtained a master's degree from the School of Urban Management at the University of California, Los Angeles, in 1921. On his return to China, he worked for the Shanghai and Wuhan municipal governments, and advised on the development of the new Chinese capital in Nanjing.[9] Like Sun Ke, who had also studied in the USA, he was influenced by his time in the West.

Dong first published his ideas in a series of articles in the leading Shanghai newspaper *Shenbao* 申报 in 1923, but he elaborated on them the following year in what may very well be the first book on urban planning ever written by a Chinese; *Shizheng xinlun* 市政新论 (A new treatise on municipal government). In it, he highlighted the role of what he called urban design 城市设计 (*chengshi sheji*), which he saw as a scientific plan to construct or improve cities. This would in turn 'make a city's sanitation perfect, its roads clean, its communications convenient, and its appearance beautiful', while it should also be 'for the benefit of the people who live there so that they can live in peace and work happily'.[10] Dong provided more detail than Sun Ke on how cities should be planned as habitable spaces, and in criticizing what he saw as chaotic treaty ports in China, advocated distinct zones for administration, commerce, industry, and housing.[11] Dong's interest in zoning was inspired by his time in the USA, and while he remained committed to its value, the reasons for this changed over time. On the eve of the Japanese invasion in 1937, he wrote that zoning had helped to alleviate some of the problems in cities created by the industrial revolution. However, since the invention of the airplane had brought the threat of bombing of strategic industries and urban populations, it was now also important for air defense. Instead of a distinct administrative zone, Dong now proposed dispersing government offices throughout the city, which could be done without any loss of efficiency because of modern communications technology. In addition, small parks built throughout the city would allow for the deployment of anti-aircraft guns, and aid in stopping the spread of fire. Finally, he favored low-rise residences, which if hit would cause less destruction.[12] Dong's ideas demonstrate his commitment to cities as habitable spaces, but point to how changing historical circumstances in China affected the development of the concept.

The Communist Revolution was to bring further innovations in urban habitability. As we saw above, Liang Sicheng reflected on how cities could best meet people's needs and enhance the quality of their lives, and his influence on Beijing's urban development has been well documented.[13] The most important politician to write extensively about cities during and after the Maoist period was Wan Li 万里, who became head of the National Urban Construction Head Office in 1956, and continued to manage the Urban Construction Department, which replaced it the following year.[14] In a speech in March 1956, he emphasized how urban development should support industrialization. At the same time, habitability remained important. Housing and public services were inadequate for the requirements of production and a good quality of life. Running water should be provided to improve health, and municipal governments should control pollution and protect the environment. Meanwhile, trams were to be prioritized over cars, although in those cities where national defense was not a priority, wider roads could be built. Finally, trees should be planted along roads and in residential areas, and forests nurtured around cities.[15] Wan Li saw urban habitability through the lens of socialist ideology, and his commitment to this is perhaps most clearly demonstrated through his emphasis on green spaces, something that stayed with him into the reform era. In 1983, he discussed the importance of tree planting. For people to live, they needed sun, air, water, and soil, and he pointed to the desert which lacked water and so lacked human life. Having highlighted the importance of having a habitable planet, he turned to the city, criticizing those who saw industrial production as more important than the health of the people of China. He noted a recent report in People's Daily that argued the urban environment had deteriorated since 1949, and asked whether this made for a beautiful city?[16] In this remarkable speech, Wan Li reflected on the environmental damage of Maoist policies, referring to problems that are now uppermost in the minds of Chinese people and policy-makers, and discussed a view of urban habitability that emphasized sustainability.

Sadly, despite Wan Li's exhortations, rapid urbanization in the reform era has brought with it an exacerbation of environmental problems. In recent years, Chinese have turned explicitly to ideas of the livable city to address these and other issues. The term *yiju chengshi* used in this sense first appeared in the Beijing master plan 2004–2020, and since then over 200 cities have incorporated the concept into their planning objectives. Meanwhile, the Chinese Society for Urban Studies produced the 'Scientific

Evaluation Standards of Livable Cities', while the 'Livable City Index' was published by the Ministry of Housing and Rural Development.[17] This means that there are now multiple standards for urban livability in China, and this is without considering the various global indices, all with their own criteria.[18] The report on Beijing's livability written to coincide with the publication of the master plan describes a livable city as one that is, 'suitable for people to reside in and live their lives, and is suitable for the unification of people's natural ecological environment, their harmonious society and their cultural environment'.[19] Going into more detail, the plan outlines several conditions for urban livability. Those concerning the natural environment state that a city should at least provide fresh air, clean water, a peaceful living environment, open green spaces, and that the climate should be suitable for people's daily activities. Moving on to society and culture, livable cities should be safe and equipped with adequate fire services and policing. In providing people with a suitable income, an emphasis is placed on housing, and connected to this is the provision of sufficient employment opportunities. Beyond this, cities should make life convenient, have good healthcare, shopping, and education, while allowing people to move around on public transport. Finally, they should promote community spirit and protect local historical and cultural traditions.[20] As with the ideas that we have explored above, the Beijing plan reflected Chinese realities as well as international influences. The harmonious society accords with the overarching philosophy that guided Hu Jintao's 胡锦涛 tenure. The plan's concentration on environmental factors was a reaction to the ravages of rapid urbanization, and its highlighting of the relationship between income and housing a nod to the extent to which a market economy now operates in China. At the root of all this though is that the Beijing plan envisaged the city as a livable space for all of its citizens, and that the conceptualization and components of livability are much the same as those that we have identified throughout the twentieth century as being constituents of the habitable city.

Urban Habitability in Historical Approaches to the Chinese City

There have been cities in China for millennia. As with others around the world, their design and construction, at least in theory, reflected the prevailing social and cosmological hierarchy. This was manifested in the

Record of the Investigation of Crafts 考工记 (*Kaogong ji*), which prescribed how cities should be planned to emphasize the importance of the emperor and his relationship to the cosmological order, although few if any cities in China matched it in perfection.[21] While the *Kaogong ji* remained the ideal for urban planning, it was recognized that cities served numerous functions for their populations, not least because they were of different sizes. In the 1960s, William G. Skinner theorized that cities existed in a hierarchy running from small towns at the center of a rural marketing network right up to those at the heart of one of his eight macro-regions, loose physiographic economic units that comprised late imperial China.[22] Skinner's ideas have been refined, but they explain how cities had both political and economic functions, and how in China's most developed areas such as the Lower Yangzi Delta, they sat atop an urbanized countryside, characterized by a dense network of small towns and villages. Skinner and other urban historians of China have not focused on urban habitability, but their acknowledgment that cities served multiple functions opens the door to this approach.[23]

Cities throughout the imperial period were constantly changing, but in the late nineteenth century, they began to be radically transformed. Historians normally approach the study of cities before 1949 from the perspective of modernity, and those after 1949 from the perspective of the socialist city. Perhaps part of the reason for this, other than the tendency to treat the Communist Revolution as a turning point in Chinese history, is that China's war with Japan is often studied as a distinct era of major disruption. This means that continuities in urban change across the twentieth century have not been adequately explored. Ideas of urban modernity and the socialist city will continue to be valuable analytical lenses for some time. However, in approaching the city from the perspective of urban habitability, the chapters in this volume emphasize continuities in time and connections across space. Beyond this, habitability highlights a particular way of seeing urban space, and brings a new perspective to Chinese urban history, rather than seeking to overturn previous conceptions. To understand this, we highlight how urban historians of China have often been talking about habitability, even if they focus on modernity, the socialist city, or the impact of the Japanese invasion. We approach our brief overview of the literature by considering how cities have been imagined and planned and then how they have been experienced.

Works on urban governance and planning explore how Chinese sought to solve the problems created by rapidly expanding cities. In the last

decades of the Qing dynasty, officials and other elites in society commenced a series of reforms that would eventually coalesce around ideas of urban modernity. Cities were often seen as dirty, old city walls were destroyed, and road systems constructed to allow commerce to flow. New parks provided lungs for the city and space for inhabitants to engage in sporting and leisure pursuits. Finally, schools, hospitals, libraries, and other institutions were built to improve the lives of the inhabitants. Under the Nationalist Government, which came to power in 1927, many of these reforms continued and became state policies.[24] Meanwhile, the government imposed its ideas on how cities should be planned and managed. In the new capital of Nanjing, for example, a new administrative area was deemed necessary, and this was later emulated in plans for Shanghai.[25] The outbreak of war with Japan in 1937 put paid to many programs of urban reform, and destruction of cities was severe. However, where recovery and rebuilding occurred, this was driven by the same ideas of molding both space and people that had been important before the war.[26] For the most part though, the state and those charitable and social institutions working in the city turned to more immediate needs, as citizens' demands for food, shelter, and protection from Japanese bombs took precedence over access to parks or good transport facilities.[27] After 1949, the state became the prime actor in urban planning, as the Communist Party tried to create socialist cities. Scholarship has focused on Beijing, where the walls were removed, and new buildings constructed at the behest of Soviet advisors. This was emulated across the country, as cities were opened up and new districts built. At the same time, the construction of factory complexes was influenced by the soviet micro-district, which was planned to fulfill all of people's needs. It is thus that the socialist city would be created.[28]

We know most about urban daily life in Shanghai, where scholars have explored how the poorest in the city gained access to basic necessities. Others have described daily life in factories in discussions about the nature of the working class, explored the importance of granting agency to prostitutes in gendered histories of the city, looked at the methods by which people migrated to Shanghai, and how they accessed and enjoyed different types of leisure pursuits. Studies are not just confined to Shanghai, and we now have a picture of how people lived in many cities across the country, including Beijing, Chengdu, and Tianjin.[29] Some of this work crosses into the wartime era, where it should be no surprise that it has focused on urban survival. Subjects covered include access to food and other necessities, the lives of refugees, but also how citizens dealt with bombing, and

how, in some cities, war provided the space for the development of urban culture.[30] Moving into the Maoist period, most work has explored life inside factory *danwei* 单位 (work unit), which had their origins in factory complexes in the Republican period, and became highly politicized during the Cultural Revolution. As with work on daily life before 1949, much of this has examined how people accessed basic necessities and beyond this other things they deemed important. However, not all urbanites were fortunate enough to work in large state owned industries, which for all their faults provided an iron rice bowl; cradle-to-grave security. More recent work on this period has begun to deconstruct this narrative of socialism, and explore how cities were spaces in which people were consumers as well as producers, and this suggests that there were other ways in which they accessed those necessities and comforts that made cities habitable spaces.[31]

The rich literature on urban history in the twentieth century, in addressing issues such as urban modernity, the nature of the working class, the impact of war, the nature of the Communist state, and the idea of the socialist city also often discusses urban habitability. The chapters in this volume focus on habitability, and in doing so offer a new perspective not just on the ways in which historians have thought about the history of cities, but also on how that history interacts with that of China more generally. As outlined above, the concept of habitability is at once simple, but offers numerous perspectives. The chapters in this volume highlight some of these, and in doing so give voice to different individuals, groups, spaces, and processes. What unites them, as it does the many voices described above, is how they discuss the city as a habitable space.

Chapter Summary

Xu Tao's chapter links one aspect of habitability, security, to the wider history of empire in China through a description of the Shanghai Volunteer Corps (SVC). Until the early twentieth century, this militia worked for the foreign population of the International Settlement, which is an indication of how one concept of habitability held for the foreigners, and another for Chinese. In response, a Chinese corps of the SVC was formed to extend protection to all the city's inhabitants. Initial resistance from the Shanghai Municipal Council (SMC) highlights how entrenched racist and imperialist attitudes worked against the development of security. However, over time, the Chinese corps found acceptance, both for its actions in keeping the city safe and for excellence in training and other events such as shoot-

ing competitions. When the city faced a more serious threat than the usual level of violence in the form of the Japanese invasion in 1932, it was the Chinese that the foreign elites relied on to help with communications and translation.

Aaron Moore moves the focus to the city of Kunming, and explores how China's war with Japan from 1937–1945 provided opportunities for urban inhabitants in addition to creating dangers. His children's diaries provide an insight into how a significant, but understudied, group of people living in the city thought about urban life. Of course, it must be remembered that these diaries reflect wider Nationalist Government ideas about the city, such as its perceived difference from the countryside, as much as they give voice to the thoughts and feelings of the children themselves. For refugees from the countryside, many of whom had family connections in Kunming formed in the decades prior to the outbreak of war, during which the city had become integrated into the regional urban network, it was a space of safety and opportunity. However, it did not entirely escape the fighting, as air raids were common. Like Japanese advances through the countryside, which caused families to flee to Kunming in the first place, these disrupted children's education and family life.

Christian Hess' chapter shifts the focus to Dalian in the northeast of China, and a different, but no less important, geopolitical environment as the Soviet occupation of the city and the outbreak of the Cold War provided the context in which the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) established a police force in the late 1940s. As with Xu Tao's SVC volunteers, training was important to the smooth running of the police, and this was heavily militarized, reflecting the CCP's experience of its base area in Yenan. The newly established force was faced with a variety of issues. According to the Yalta Treaty of 1945, Japanese had to be repatriated, and the police pursued those who resisted the reimposition of Chinese control. Nationalists, who were prevented by the Soviets from establishing a permanent presence in the city, relied on spies and saboteurs to destabilize it. Such provocation continued into the Maoist era, when there were concerns over industrial sabotage. By now though, the police had developed into the powerful state organ that was to be key in mobilizing and controlling the population throughout the Maoist era and beyond.

With Ning Jennifer Chang's contribution on horse racing in Shanghai, the focus of the volume shifts away from issues of security, and toward how urban inhabitants access those goods and services they deem to be necessary and important to life. Like Xu Tao and Isabella Jackson, she

draws attention to how foreign inhabitants in treaty ports created spaces reserved for their own use. Over time, tensions lessened, as Chinese invested in horse racing, and it became an activity that all the city's inhabitants enjoyed on a regular basis. Part of the reason for this was its spectacular nature. As a public event, it fulfilled a need among Shanghai's inhabitants to display and observe fashion and wealth, in addition to the pleasure it gave spectators and gamblers. In the early days of the treaty port in the nineteenth century, horse racing performed a community service for foreigners in Shanghai, giving them a sense of identity and allowing them to emulate the upper classes back in metropolitan spaces. The bulk of Chinese were mere spectators until they opened race courses of their own, and it was this competition that ensured that by the 1920s, the Shanghai Race Club joined others in catering to all of the city's inhabitants. Horse racing provides a gendered glimpse into the city as women displayed their fashions, a spectacle for men and women alike. While this remained important, gambling grew in popularity, and so horse racing became an important addition to the range of consumption choices that both defined Shanghai's identity as the most cosmopolitan city in China, and made life habitable for its residents.

Robert Cliver's chapter shows how thinking of cities as habitable spaces in the Maoist era helps to move us beyond the CCP's master narrative of the successful construction of socialist cities. Provision of the necessities of life was a key goal of the party, and nowhere was this more important than in the factory, the most important site of urban socialist transformation. A comparison of the silk industry in Shanghai and Wuxi reveals how the pre-revolutionary context defined how successful the policy of new democracy was to be in both cities. In Wuxi, patriarchy was maintained as male factory managers assumed positions in the new bureaucratic hierarchy the party created. For women filature workers, the promise of the revolution to improve conditions in factories remained unfulfilled. In Shanghai, by contrast, workers and their factory bosses were not divided by gender, native place, or social class, and they worked more closely together to ensure that the benefits of revolution were shared more equally. Location was important, not just in improving labor relations, but in providing welfare services. In Wuxi, labor officials, rather than workers themselves, used their limited resources to make improvements such as better heating, lighting, and ventilation in factories. However, workers' needs for childcare facilities were largely not met. In Shanghai, nursery facilities had

improved significantly by 1952, a clear case of how similar goals to create a habitable space differed in outcome in different cities.

Robert's focus on the early Maoist era reminds us that habitability is often planned, and Leon Rocha's chapter describes how such plans are sometimes utopian dreams. Zhang Jingsheng's 張競生 vision for Beijing was inspired by May Fourth sentiments and drew on Ebenezer Howard's designs for a garden city to create an ideal metropolis that would make new men and women out of its inhabitants. Best known for his work on love, sex, and eugenics, Zhang's vision remained a utopian ideal. Like Howard, his ideal city separated commercial, industrial, residential, and other zones to create spaces that provided the necessities of life. However, Zhang, more than any other person discussed in this volume, wanted to provide for people's moral and spiritual life. Architecture would create beautiful places, and music piped through the city would replace the brash urban soundscape with a melodic symphony. All citizens would be buried in the Memorial Temple, where in a sense their lives would be judged, with criminals consigned to caverns beneath the halls where the heroes of the city and the nation would be venerated. In this and many other ways, Zhang linked his ideal city to the revival of China, a project that was uppermost in the minds of intellectuals in his generation.

Isabella Jackson moves from utopian dreams to practical reality, and describes how imperial authorities in the treaty ports of Shanghai and Tianjin sought to create better living environments in those sections of the city where they had most control. However, creation of habitable spaces for one section of the population could impinge on the lives of others. This was especially the case when government efforts were directed exclusively at the foreign populations of these cities. Like, Xu Tao's and Ning Jennifer Chang's chapters, this activity initially provoked resistance, although individual Chinese were not above moving to foreign concessions when it became apparent that these offered a better quality of life than elsewhere in the city. As the Chinese population of the concessions grew, the authorities often worked either explicitly or implicitly to improve the lives of the richest inhabitants. However, high population density meant that attempts to separate rich and poor, or industry and housing, failed. The tensions over noise levels emanating from factories indicate how industrial activity that was essential for the lives of some conflicted with the need for peace and quiet, which was seen as crucial to the lives of others.

Toby Lincoln combines grand visions and practical plans in his exploration of how the expansion of cities incorporates the countryside into con-

ceptualizations of urban habitability. As Aaron Moore notes in his chapter, urbanization created a discursive divide between town and country, but this occurred within a wider narrative that no longer privileged rural values, but instead sought to create an urban society. This meant that Lake Tai, situated to the West of Shanghai, and for centuries the center of agriculture in this fertile region, was now seen as part of the urban system, and valued primarily as a natural resource that could satisfy the needs of the region's expanding cities, and make them more habitable. Its main value lay in being a transport conduit between cities, but the exploitation of its shoreline for tea, sericulture, and other resources was also important. For the city of Wuxi, which expanded out toward the lake throughout the twentieth century, tourism was another resource, which often competed with industry and farming. In the Republican period, it existed side-by-side with the emergence of an industrial city, and gardens and parks along the shoreline benefitted residents and visitors alike. Continued expansion throughout the rest of the twentieth century drew the lake into the boundaries of the city, but pollution from agriculture and industry threatened to ruin the natural beauty of the lake, the very resource that made it so important to Wuxi's habitability and its tourism industry.

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CHAPTER 2

The Chinese Corpsmen in the Shanghai Volunteer Corps

Xu Tao

Introduction

On the evening of the first Friday of April 1954, a special banquet was held in the prestigious Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club. The unusualness of the banquet lay in the fact that it was held in commemoration of the Shanghai Volunteer Corps (SVC), an organization that was founded in Shanghai 100 years earlier. The SVC was, however, formally disbanded in 1942. In the nostalgic context of commemorating the British Empire that had already irreversibly declined, the splendid banquet and fierce cricket match were not of great importance. Despite this, what interests the present author is the Chinese faces in the SVC. Who were these Chinese? When and why did they join such an organization? What was the role that the Chinese members of the SVC played historically? Is the research into the Chinese Company of the SVC relevant to our understanding of the history of modern Shanghai? This article focuses on the Chinese members of the SVC (hereinafter referred to as Corps). It discusses the history of the Chinese Company first and then analyzes the role of the Interpreter Company that became independent during the 28 January incident, when the Japanese attacked Shanghai in 1932. This research sheds light on the particularity of Chinese Corps members in the history of modern Shanghai.[1] In doing so, this chapter illustrates how the SVC, and the

X. Tao (✉)
Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, Shanghai, China

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Chinese who formed an important part of this organization, contributed to the safety and security of the inhabitants of Shanghai, and in so doing helped to make the city habitable.

The Creation of the Chinese Physical Recreation Association

On 8 December 1905, Guan Jiongzhi 关絅之 and Jin Shaocheng 金绍城, two Chinese officials working for the Mixed Court of Shanghai's International Settlement (IS), and B. Twyman, the British deputy-consul to Shanghai and one of the jurors, argued fiercely over whether Madame Li-Huang 黎黄氏 had played a role in human trafficking and where the suspect should be brought to under escort. Both sides clung to their own views and the meeting ended in a deadlock. What was worse, the failure in conversation resulted in a brawl. No reason was given for the humiliation the foreigners subjected the Chinese officials to. The Chinese in Shanghai flew into a rage, and they launched demonstrations. Yuan Shuxun 袁树勋, the circuit judge 道台 (*Daotai*) of Shanghai, argued strongly on just grounds, while the authorities of the concession took a hard line on this issue. Ten days later on 18 December, the incident took a further turn for the worse and ended in bloody clashes. The Shanghai Municipal Council (SMC), the body that ruled the IS, gave the order to shoot demonstrators. The Chinese responded by laying siege to the Shanghai Municipal Police (SMP) at Laozha (present-day East Beijing Road) and the City Hall in Nanjing Road. A small room of the SMP was burnt[2] and more than 30 Chinese were killed or injured.[3]

The IS was not a colony, and so there was no protection from the army of any country stationed there. Chinese officials were not allowed to take part in the handling of security affairs such as the police's arrests of thieves and brigands and soldiers' inspection and capture of bandits. The SMP and the SVC were always responsible for the IS's security. On the day of the incident, as one of Yuan Shuxun's memorials stated, '[t]he SMC did not keep a good lookout and even withdrew the concession policemen. Consequently, on the day of insurgency, although shops were open as usual in the morning as the merchant association required in its leaflets, they were forced by ruffians to close their doors one after another due to the lack of protection from the [concession] policemen. [Additionally,] the *tuanlian*-styled soldiers – that is the Corps – were all protecting the Westerners' residence, being entirely indifferent to the life and property of the Chinese.'[4]

As early as 1899, Wang Xinfu 王欣甫, the district magistrate of Shanghai, had written a report to Gangyi 刚毅, the Grand Secretary and

Imperial Commissioner. Wang pointed out that it was necessary to establish a 'Chinese merchant volunteer force'.[5] Unfortunately, the international community in Shanghai greatly differed from each other in their opinions on this, and so the proposal to set up a Chinese volunteer corps was not accepted.[6] Despite this, the Mixed Court Riot in 1905 became a great impetus to the founding of the Chinese Physical Recreation Association (hereinafter referred to as the Association). In April 1906, with the help of the imperial Qing's local officials, three compradors—Yu Qiaqing 虞洽卿 from the Russo-Chinese Bank,[7] Hu Jimei 胡寄梅 from Banque Sino-Belge, and Yuan Hengzhi 袁恒之 from the First National City Bank of New York—acted as the founding executive directors and invited the President of the Shanghai General Chamber of Commerce to be the Honorary Chairman of the Association. With 300,000 *tael* of silver, they created the Chinese Physical Recreation Association with an eye to safeguarding the interest of Chinese merchants and protecting the Chinese in the concession.[8] The Association was the first 'creator of such a type of merchant organization in the entire country'.[9] It was widely recognized as the originator of the Chinese 'volunteer corps'.[10]

At the very beginning, the facilities of the Association were not well prepared. It was headquartered at 4 Gaoyang Lane of Nanjing Road. Its drilling fields were located on two pieces of vacant land in the south and north of Huaxing Road and North Zhejiang Road. Chen Gongzhe 陈剬哲 recalled: 'The old location of the Chinese volunteer corps were poorly constructed bungalows. There were eight interlinked principal rooms. Each room was eleven feet wide and twenty feet long. These rooms were in connection with a corridor. On the left side the janitor's closet, kitchen and toilet were attached. In front of the rooms there were two fields for drilling. Apart from the third and fourth rooms that were knocked into one as an exercising lobby, the remaining rooms were all dormitories.'[11]

Where the Association staff was concerned, some St. John secondary school and college's alumni—Chen Jiming 陈既明, Zheng Songsheng 郑松生, Xu Tonghao 徐通浩, Shi Yungan 石运干, and so on—were employed by Yu Qiaqing as the Association's instructors.[12] In the meantime, Yu and his comrades mobilized young office workers in foreign firms, cash shops, banks, and other stores to join the Association. 'At first many young men chose to join the Association. Later they were unhappy because they had to put on training clothes and caps made of yellow coarse cloth. Seeing this, Yu Qiaqing, Hu Jimei and Yuan Hengzhi wore such training apparels before a big crowd of people. Thanks to their effort, the corpsmen began to accept such a dressing style and carry out a drill every day. Initially there

were 240 members in the Association and each member paid one dollar a month as the membership dues. The number of corpsmen later grew to about four or five hundred.'[13] The Association was 'divided into four teams of foot soldiers, one cavalry, and one brass band. And the "soldiers" were all neatly-dressed and well-trained'.[14]

Incorporation into the SVC

Differing from other volunteer corps that emerged in Shanghai, the Association's original goal was to protect the Chinese residents in the concession.[15] Yu Qiaqing had pointed out that '[the Association] was adjacent to the concession and occupied a very special position.…[T]here were a huge number of residents in the concession that was lined with business shops. Not only was the commerce there more prosperous than that inland but the Chinese population there was greater than that of the resident aliens. Even those foreigners who lived temporarily in Shanghai tried to protect themselves by means of a volunteer corps. Why didn't we Chinese, who lived and did business in the concession, strive to establish the volunteer corps in defence of our sincere and honest businessmen and residents?'[16]

Shortly after the establishment of the Association,[17] Yu Qiaqing and Yuan Hengzhi wrote to the chairman of the SMC and applied for the membership of the SVC on the grounds that '[both Association and Corps] stayed within the concession and it was their bounden duty to protect the merchants and residents in the Settlement'.[18] The Association's leadership also expressed that they would strictly abide by the rules of the Corps and follow orders, 'in pooling efforts to defend the concession'.[19]

Nevertheless, the fact that bloodshed had just taken place between the Chinese and foreigners must be taken into consideration. A feeling of suspicion crept over the concession, just as one news report indicated. It read as follows:

> When the Chinese Physical Association was first formed we confess to have shared, with most foreigners in Shanghai, a certain amount of distrust in regard to its motives and purpose. As a distinct organization of a military character, with headquarters either in or on the borders of the Settlement, it offered to promote friction from time to time between the foreign and Chinese authorities here. Recent events then proved the necessity, in any time of emergency, that all the organized armed forces in the Settlement

should be under direct control of the foreign authority, and there was not too much disposition at that time to regard any help from the natives of this country as likely to be trustworthy.[20]

In this report, the following was also mentioned:

No demonstration is required at this late day of the capacity of the Chinese for military service when properly equipped and led.…The progress and history of the Chinese Company at Shanghai, we may be sure, will be watched throughout the Empire with the most earnest attention[.] [Foreigners shall recognize] a real desire on the part of Chinese, who have a stake in the Settlement, to take a practical part in the defence of those interests. In this sense the Association's incorporation into the Corps is feasible. And the necessary precondition for such an incorporation is the volunteering spirit. Furthermore, with the help of varying institutions and measures, the Chinese will be the same as the resident aliens in living worthily up to the motto of Omnia Juncta in Uno [All Joined in One].[21]

At that time inasmuch as the SMC was unable to find any reason to reject the establishment of the Chinese Company,[22] it had to work hard on the institutions that could be used to restrict the Chinese Company and bring it under the SMC's control. After careful consideration, the SMC formulated special rules for the Association, 'placing various restrictions on it'.[23] These consisted of six stipulations in the beginning: (1) the Company will comply with all the regulations of the Corps, and will adopt the standard drill with words-of-command in English; (2) two foreign officers will be appointed for the command and special instruction of the company; (3) the non-commissioned officers and men will be required to perform 20 drills, and thereafter submit to an examination by a Board of Officers, previous to enrolment; (4) each member of the Company will be suitably guaranteed by a respectable Chinese resident in the Settlement; (5) the strength of the Company will be fixed at 100 men, and if the number falls below 50, the Company will be disbanded; (6) arms will be issued to the Company only during drill and when on service.[24]

The Chinese merchants, residents, and corpsmen were very discontented with the SMC's way of doing things and held that such rules were the foreign community's discrimination against the Chinese. 'One year after the establishment of the Association, the number of members was declining by degrees on the grounds that there were varying disputes between the Association and the authorities of the concession.'[25] Later,

the situation was more favorable to the SMC and the restrictions that were placed on the Association grew less rigorous. Yu Qiaqing finally chose to collaborate with the SMC in agreeing to almost all provisos formulated by the SMC apart from the candidacy for the head of the Company, which was changed from ‘foreign officers only’ to ‘foreign officers first’.[26]

On 17 March 1907, Yu Qiaqing, the Association’s founding director, and the SMC signed a formal agreement, by which 83 Chinese joined the SVC. From this time on, there was the Chinese Company within the SVC.[27] As soon as the agreement was signed, the SVC’s commandant, W.M. Watson,[28] officially requested that the SMC appoint L.J. Cubitt as the head in command of the Chinese Company, G. Grayrigge and R.M. Saker the deputy heads, and some Chinese—Shi Yungan, Xu Tonghao, Hu Yunqiu 胡筠秋, Hu Yunlai 胡筠籁, Jin Jiyang 金继扬, and so on—as the acting platoon heads. Cubitt had led the Custom Company and spent 17 years handling the militia’s affairs, and moreover he immediately gave up the leadership in the Custom Company and concentrated his attention on the training of the Chinese Company after being chosen as the head. Grayrigge had been in charge of the Indian guards and worked for the SVC’s headquarters. Saker had been the deputy head of the Custom Company and was awarded a military decoration due to his performance in the South African Campaign. Meanwhile, the acting platoon heads were all the best of the best among the Chinese and renowned for both their physical strength and moral virtues.[29]

Struggling for Equal Rights

The SVC’s Chinese name—*Wan Guo* 万国—literally meant 10,000 countries, implies a great diversity in its composition. But, in fact, there was merely a diversity in name, taking into consideration the fact that in the Corps consisting of the so-called 10,000 countries the Chinese had been nowhere in evidence. The reason why there was a lack of Chinese corpsmen was twofold. On the one hand, the primary goal of the Corps was to guard against the Chinese, so that the resident aliens doubted whether they and the Chinese could be of the same mind in defending the IS’s order and interest. ‘[The inclusion of the Chinese into the Corps] would undoubtedly introduce into the existing organization an element hardly contemplated by the originators.’[30] And ‘[t]he possibility of a clash of sentiments in the breasts of the members of a Chinese Company raised peculiar difficulties, to be surmounted before this certainty could be pledged in their

case'.[31] It was racism that created such difficulties. The vast majority of the rulers of the IS and the entire population of resident aliens had Orientalist views of the Chinese that were racist to a greater or lesser extent. These might explain why the American and Portuguese companies, which joined the Corps at almost the same time (on the days of 17 January and 26 February 1906, respectively), were not subject to the same restrictions as the Chinese.

Immediately after the establishment of the Chinese Company, an unexpected thing took place. Huang Xunbo 黄勋伯, who lived in Hongkou and was a Cantonese corpsman working for Reiss & Co., was found stabbed to death by several robbers on the night of 29 March 1907, when he attempted to save his neighbors from being robbed. The SMC appreciated his chivalrous deed so much that it held an international military funeral for Huang. On the day of the funeral, a public memorial ceremony was performed in the newly built funeral shed while guns thundered out a salute and the brass band played music. Corps of various countries attended the funeral and marched along North Henan Road, Nanjing Road, Sinza Road, and finally reached the new Canton Cemetery, where Huang Xunbo's coffin was temporarily deposited. It was estimated that hundreds of thousands of local residents watched the ceremony.[32]

Another event worthy of discussion was the Chinese Company's victory in the Novices Cup, a shooting contest. At that time, various shooting competitions prevailed among the corpsmen according to historical records about the SVC. Among the varying competitions, the inter-port, inter-company, and inter-team were the most popular ones. On 10 October 1909, the Chinese Company made its debut in the Novices Cup,[33] one of the most popular inter-company shooting competitions. With a surprising score of 135 points, the Chinese Company's ten expert marksmen—Xu Tonghao, Shi Yungan, Hu Yunqiu, Hu Yunlai, Jin Jiyang, Yuan Hengzhi, Lu Baoquan 陆葆泉, Liu Shousun 刘绶荪, Wang Xianghou 王芗侯, and Yang Zhengxiang 杨振骧—outshone all other shooters, among whom the highest score was merely 121 points. Then came the presentation of the awards by a renowned resident alien, whose Chinese name was Si Dihua 司底华. Both foreigners and local residents applauded the Chinese Company's good performance in the shooting competition.[34]

Huang Xunbo's chivalrous deed and the Company's victory in the shooting contest caused a great change in the resident aliens' attitude toward the Chinese corpsmen. As a consequence, the six stipulations that acted as restrictions placed on the Chinese Company when it was admit-

ted into the Corps were revised. From 21 September 1909, the Chinese corpsmen were allowed to bring bayonets home. On 1 March 1916, with the SMC's approval, the commandant of the Corps allowed the Chinese Company to keep their guns. On 16 July 1916, one of the members of the Chinese Company was promoted to the position of deputy head of the Company. In 1918, there were 169 Chinese corpsmen in the SVC. Such a number was far more than the number limit—100 only—that was placed on the Chinese Company when it was admitted into the SVC, and from then on, the number of Chinese corpsmen kept growing. On 10 February 1921, one of the Chinese corpsmen was chosen as the acting head of the Chinese Company. On 20 May 1922, Xu Tonghao formally replaced Grayrigge as the head of the Chinese Company. On 1 January 1923, Xu Tonghao was promoted to a higher rank. Xu was in charge of all affairs in relation to the Chinese Company. It was groundbreaking considering the fact that it was the first time that there was a Chinese adviser in the headquarters of the Corps, and he later became Orderly Officer to the Commandant of the SVC. On 28 June 1928, the standard drill with words-of-command in English was changed into Chinese.[35]

In the first two decades of the twentieth century, the Chinese Company had never been inferior to its foreign counterparts within the Corps. Rather, it even outdid the foreign companies in military acts such as drill, mobilization, and defense. 'For years, [the Chinese Company was] as excellent as those advanced foreign companies.'[36] In January 1925, T.E. Trueman complimentarily said: '[The Chinese Company] are so well-disciplined and militarily strong that it enjoys great popularity and reaps great admiration.'[37] Many pieces of foreign records echoed these compliments when the Chinese Company was mentioned.[38]

The Chinese businessmen regarded the Chinese Company's excellent performance outshining other foreign companies as their own honor. Consequently, young Chinese in the IS were very proud of being recruited by the Chinese Company. 'The young Chinese were extraordinarily enthusiastic about joining the Chinese Company, so that the number of reserve force was usually more than 100 regardless of the quota of 100 people.'[39]

In the eyes of Yu Qiaqing, the Association's founding director, the Chinese Company had removed by degrees the early restrictions, and successfully competed on an equal footing within the Corps. Moreover, it always won the laurels in the shooting competitions. Such achievements were the products of his incremental struggle for equality against the biased authorities of the IS. He spoke highly of the Chinese Company,

which aspired to stabilize and safeguard the Settlement, made a compromise out of consideration for the general interest, and strived for the best. The Chinese Company never gave up the crusade for equality in the Corps and even aimed for equality to be applied to the entire Chinese population in the state within a state. Finally, the Company successfully persuaded the resident aliens in the IS to remove their doubts and fears and admire the Chinese corpsmen. In the concession, the Chinese Company not only won international fame but also played an effective role in the handling of various administrative affairs.[40]

The Creation of the Interpreter Company and Final Disbandment of the SVC

Since the formal establishment of the Chinese Company, whenever the security of the IS was seriously challenged, the Company would always enthusiastically cooperate with the Corps in defense of the Settlement. For example, the Company was involved in defensive maneuvers ten times prior to the 1930s.[41] In such actions, apart from the regular military jobs, the Chinese Company played an irreplaceable role in coordinating foreigners and local residents due to the Chinese members' linguistic advantage. In view of this, the SMC proposed the establishment of an independent interpreter company consisting exclusively of Chinese members. Nevertheless, the plan could not be implemented for various reasons.

On the night of 28 January 1932, the Zhabei Incident (a.k.a. the 28 January Incident) broke out when the Japanese attacked Shanghai. The war brought about unexpected disasters. The authorities of the IS had imposed a curfew in the afternoon and Colonel Thoms,[42] who was the commandant of the Corps, issued an emergency order. According to this, the SVC set up defenses in different districts of the IS. In collaboration with the station troops from Britain, America, France, and Italy, the Corps created a defense zone. The Chinese Company consisted of more than 300 regular, standing, and reserved members, and played a great defending role in the most dangerous border of the Settlement. Additionally, they recruited enthusiastic people to form the Interpreter Team. The interpreters went to different parts of the defense zone and focused on the translation work among soldiers of a great diversity of origins. Thanks to their great efforts, the gap between the Chinese residents and foreign soldiers was bridged and an emotional reconciliation between them created.

From the announcement of the emergency order to the signature of the military truce, there was a span of 77 days, in which the Chinese Company took on many tasks.[43]

Additionally, the SMC urgently asked for help from the Chinese community, hoping that the latter would like to provide more reliable interpreters. More than 200 Shanghai residents responded to the call. During the war, many troops—for example, the British Navy, British Army, US Navy, US Army, Italian Navy, and SVC Units—desperately needed the interpretation service. Colonel Thoms held that it was necessary to create a permanent interpreter team. Therefore, he applied to the SMC for approval. Consequently, the Interpreter Company was established on the first day of October 1932, and was officially admitted into the Corps. Chen Shixia 陈时侠, then the head of the Chinese Company, also played the leading role in the Interpreter Company. According to one piece of evidence, on 28 April 1934, the 27th session of the Chinese Company was composed of 161 regular and standing members with the exception of the Company's head, while the Interpreter Company had 32 members.[44] It must be pointed out that organizationally the Chinese and Interpreter companies were independent of each other.[45] In practice, the line drawn between them was, however, not very clear considering the fact that both shared one company head and exchanged manpower very frequently.

After the 28 January Incident, tensions between China and Japan intensified. The specter of total war was hanging over Shanghai. Faced with such a worsening situation, the SMC feared that the formation and fighting capacity of the Corps would be insufficient if war should break out. The authorities of the IS wanted to expand the Corps into a mixed brigade. In doing so, the Corps would 'gain greater strength and become better organized, thereby increasing its ability to stabilize the social order'.[46] If the enlargement of the Corps was put into effect, the Chinese Company would naturally be expanded into a battalion. The upgrading plan was to combine the Chinese Company and Interpreter Company into one. The new Chinese Battalion would embrace the varying Chinese teams consisting of the Regular, Standing, Interpreter, and Reserve. Unfortunately, the plan could not be carried out on the grounds that the proposed mixed brigade was finally given up due to the lack of funding and manpower.

After the breakout of World War II, the British Army withdrew its garrison from China, and the SVC's activists also returned to join the war on the home front. On the night of 8 December 1941 immediately after the breakout of the Asia-Pacific War, the British gunboat HMS Peterel

anchoring in the Huangpu River was sunk by the Japanese Army, and the American USS Wake surrendered to the Japanese within the next 20 minutes. Meanwhile, the Japanese troops did not encounter many difficulties while launching land attacks and soon occupied the entire IS in Shanghai. Although the SMC had not been annihilated by then, most British and American employees were gradually laid off with the exception of the SVC that was kept to provide help in maintaining social order. On 2 September 1942, the Corps was finally disbanded by the SMC.[47]

Conclusion

Security and order are indispensable to the development and sustainability of all cities. Security and order attracted many talented people to accumulate in Shanghai and transformed Shanghai into a shining oriental pearl with dazzling modernity. However, China as a whole was plagued by foreign invasions and domestic rebellions after 1840. As a consequence, many Chinese cities encountered constant destruction caused by wars. Apart from the rampant wars, the conflict between the Chinese and foreigners in Shanghai's IS would possibly be turned into armed resistance from both sides against the backdrop of rising Chinese nationalism.

Faced with enemies from within and without, tension between the Chinese and foreigners in Shanghai was not a zero-sum game. Rather, due to the common interest existing on both sides, conflict gradually gave way to uneasy cooperation. Since 1843, when Shanghai formally joined the club of treaty ports, a group of Chinese urban elites emerged in the city. Represented by leading figures such as Yu Qiaqing, Yuan Hengzhi, and Fang Jiaobo, these new elites embraced nationalism while resisting resolutely the radical nationalist attitude. Following an incremental pattern of struggling for equality, they chose not to intervene in political affairs but to peacefully eradicate unequal regulations imposed by foreigners. In doing so, they 'gained respect and trust from Chinese people and foreigners alike, earned great international fame, and brought security and happiness to the local community'.[48] Meanwhile, the rulers of the IS, practically and flexibly, handled the contradictions and conflicts between Chinese and international residents. For example, they founded the Chinese Company within the SVC in 1907, convened the first conference of the SMC's Chinese advisors in 1921, canceled the Mixed Court in 1926, and allowed the Chinese to be members of the SMC Board. Cautiously and collab-

oratively, the foreigners in power and Chinese urban elites secured the existence of international communities in Shanghai.

Overall, not only was the SVC an organization in which the interests of the Chinese and foreigners were truly interlinked, but it was also a key component in the security structure of modern Shanghai. An academic reexamination of the SVC's Chinese members will definitely help us to explain why Shanghai was able to develop into a modern city in the early twentieth century. Beyond this, studying the SVC reveals how safety was seen as important to urban habitability by Chinese and foreign inhabitants alike.

Notes

1. As early as the 1930s, there were some Corps-themed studies such as Kounin, I. I. (ed.) (1938) *Eighty-Five Years of the Shanghai Volunteer Corps* (The Cosmopolitan Press, Illustrated by A. Yaron and Kuai Shixun (1939); 'Shanghai wanguo shangtuan shilüe' [A historical sketch of the Shanghai Volunteer Corps] in Shanghai Tongshe [Shanghai Association for Local Studies] (ed.), *Shanghai yanjiu ziliao xuji* [A sequel to materials for Shanghai Studies] (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju), pp. 187–204. See also: Xu Tao (13 Jan. 2014) 'Qiaohu wuren: Shanghai wanguo shangtuan chutan' [Expatriate warriors in Shanghai: A preliminary exploration of the history of the Shanghai Volunteer Corps], *Wenhui bao* [Wenhui daily], 11; Li Guang and Xu Tao (2010) 'Shanghai tan shang de 'Dawei wang' zhi xing – Jindai Shanghai wanguo shangtuan youtai fendui yanjiu' [Star of David over Shanghai: The Jewish Company of the Shanghai Volunteer Corps], *Shilin* [Historical Review], 4, 44–51; Zhuang Zhiling (1997) 'Shanghai gonggong zujie zhong de 'duoguo budui' – Wanguo shangtun' [Shanghai Volunteer Corps: The multinational force in the international settlement of Shanghai], *Dang'an chunqiu* [The Archives], 4, 72–4; Zhang Jiayun (1982) *Shanghai wanguo shangtuan zhi yanjiu (1854–1942)* [A study on Shanghai Volunteer Corps, 1854–1942], Master Thesis (Taipei: Chinese Culture University). However, the Chinese Corpsmen have not been researched in depth in those former studies.
2. 'Guangxu sanshiyi nian shiyi yue ershisan ri Hudao Yuan Shuxun zhi Waiwubu gengdian' [Yuan Shuxun's telegraph to the Ministry

of Foreign Affairs on the 23rd day of the 11th month of the 31st year of the Guangxu Reign] (2004) in Wen An (ed.) *Qi'an xiezhen* [Descriptions of mysterious cases] (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe), pp. 165–8.

3. Where the 1905 Case of Madam Li-Huang was concerned, abundant studies can be found. See: Chu Xiaoqi (2006) 'Yuan Shuxun yu danao huishen gongtang an' [Yuan Shuxun, the Tao-tai of Shanghai, and the 1905 Case of Madam Li-Huang], *Shilin*, 6, 31–9; Ma Changlin (1988) 'Danao huishen gongtang an' [The 1905 Case of Madam Li-Huang], *Shanghai dang'an* [Shanghai Archives], 5, 46–8; Peng Xiaoliang (2006) 'Guan Jiongzhi yu Shanghai huishen gongxie' [Guan Jiongzhi and the Shanghai Mixed Court], *Shilin*, 4, 41–50; Zhang Yuliang (2008) 'Shenbao yu danao huishen gongtang an' [Shenbao and the 1905 Case of Madame Li-Huang], *Guangdong shehui kexue* [Journal of Social Sciences in Guangdong], 1, 127–33.
4. 'Yuan Shuxun shang Jiangdu jielue, Wen An zhubian' [Sketch of Yuan Shuxun's memorial to the Governor-General of Jiangnan and Jiangxi Provinces] in Wen An, *Qi'an xiezhen*, pp. 170–6.
5. 'Proposed Enrolment of a Chinese Merchant Volunteer Force', (31 July 1899) *The North-China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette*.
6. 'A Chinese Volunteer Company for Shanghai', (11 July and 1 August 1900) *The North-China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette*.
7. At the time Yu Qiaqing was a comprador of the Russo-Chinese Bank. Before he worked for the Russian bank, Yu was an employee of Reutur Brockelmann & Co. In less than 2 years, he left the Russo-Chinese Bank and joined ABN AMRO. See: Zhao Jinqing (1997) 'Dui Yu Qiaqing de yisheng de buzheng' [Supplements to and corrections of The Life of Yu Qiaqing], in Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference's Literature & History Committee (ed.) *Wenshi zliliao xuanji* [Collected literary and historical materials] (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe), 10: 31, 301.
8. See: Kuai Shixun (18 May 1906) *Shanghai wanguo shangtuan shilüe*, pp. 187–204; 'Shanghai Huashang Tichaohui zhangcheng' [Regulations of Chinese Physical Recreation Association], *Shenbao*.

9. Yu Qiaqing (1926) 'Shanghai wanguo shangtuan Zhonghua dui zhi ershi nian xu' [*Preface to The Chinese Company of Shanghai Volunteer Corps in Two Decades*], in Shanghai Volunteer Corps Chinese Company Association (ed.) *Shanghai wanguo shangtuan Zhonghua dui zhi ershi nian* [The Chinese Company of Shanghai Volunteer Corps in two Decades] (Shanghai: Chinese Company Association), p. 1.
10. Fang Jiaobo (1926) 'Shanghai wanguo shangtuan Zhonghua dui zhi ershi nian xu' [*Preface to The Chinese Company of Shanghai Volunteer Corps in Two Decades*], in Shanghai Volunteer Corps Chinese Company Association (ed.) *Shanghai wanguo shangtuan Zhonghua dui zhi ershi nian*, p. 3.
11. Zhang Jiayun, *Shanghai wanguo shangtuan zhi yanjiu*, p. 14.
12. Kuai Shixun, *Shanghai wanguo shangtuan shilüe*, pp. 187–204.
13. Jiangsu Academy of Social Sciences (ed.) (1986) *Yun Yiqun wenji* [Collected Works of Yun Yiqun] (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe), p. 191.
14. 'Brief History', in *Shangtuan Zhonghua dui zhi ershi nian*, p. 3.
15. Li Dajia (1994) 'Shanghai shangren de zhengzhiyishi he zhengzhicanyu' [Political consciousness and participation among Shanghai merchants, 1905–1911], in *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo jikan* [Bulletin of the Institute of Modern History Academia Sinica], 22: 1, 191.
16. Yu Qiaqing (1936) 'Shanghai wanguo shangtuan Zhonghua gonghui zhi sanshi nian xu' [*Preface to The Chinese Company of Shanghai Volunteer Corps in Three Decades*], in Shanghai Volunteer Corps Chinese Company Association (ed.) *Shanghai wanguo shangtuan Zhonghua gonghui zhi sanshi nian* [The Chinese Company of Shanghai Volunteer Corps in three decades] (Shanghai: Chinese Company Association), p. 1.
17. On 17 October 1906, the Board of Directors of the SMC received Yu Qiaqing and Yuan Hengzhi's formal application letter and discussed it in the meeting. See: The Shanghai Archives (ed.) (2001) *Gongbuju dongshihui huiyilu* [Minutes of meetings of SMC's Board of Directors] (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe), 16, 665.
18. 'Brief History' in *Shangtuan Zhonghua dui zhi ershi nian*, p. 3.

19. 'Shanghai Huashang Ticaohui yuanyu xishang tuanlian lianhe' (23 November 1906) [the Chinese Physical Recreation Association would like to join the Shanghai Volunteer Corps], *Shenbao*.
20. 'The Chinese Volunteers' (25 January 1907), *The North-China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette*.
21. 'The Chinese Volunteers' (25 January 1907), *The North-China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette*.
22. Pan Mingxin (1982) 'Shanghai wanguo shangtuan jiqi Zhonghua dui' [The Shanghai Volunteer Corps and its Chinese Company], in Shanghai Municipal People's Political Consultative Conference's Literature & History Committee (ed.) *Wenshi ziliao xuanji* [Collected literary and historical materials] (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe), p. 31.
23. Yu Qiaqing, *Shanghai wanguo shangtuan Zhonghua gonghui zhi sanshi nian xu*, p. 1.
24. 'Shanghai gonggong zujie gongbuju zongbanchu guanyu huashang tuanlian lianhe yiyongdui pejiaolian deng wenjian' [Documents about the Secretariat of Shanghai Municipal Council appointed officers for the Chinese company of the Shanghai Volunteer Corps], Shanghai Municipal Archives, U1-2-304.
25. 'Brief History', in *Shangtuan Zhonghua gonghui zhi sanshi nian*, p. 3.
26. Jiangsu Academy of Social Sciences, *Yun Yiqun wenji*, p. 191.
27. Pan Mingxin, *Shanghai wanguo shangtuan jiqi zhonghuadui*, p. 31.
28. W.M. Watson led the SVC for 5 years (1903–1908). In late 1902, the SMC asked the British Empire's War Office to send a military officer, who would be the commander of the SVC. W.M. Watson, an army major, was consequently the first British army officer in the SVC. For details, see Kounin, *Eighty-Five Years of the Shanghai Volunteer Corps*, pp. 55–9.
29. 'Brief History', in *Shanghai wanguo shangtuan zhonghua gonghui zhi sanshi nian*, p. 4.
30. 'The Chinese Volunteers', (27 July 1907) *The North-China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette*.
31. 'The Chinese Volunteers' (25 January 1907) *The North-China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette*.
32. 'Fuji Sangyi zhi Rongyao' (5 May 1907) [The Report of the grand funeral ceremony], *Shenzhou ribao* [China Daily Newspaper];

'Yiyongdui paizhang Huang Xunbo binyi zhisheng' (5 May 1907) [The splendid funeral of Huang Xunbo, a team leader of the Chinese Company of the Shanghai Volunteer Corps], *Shenbao*; 'A Chinese Military Funeral', (10 May 1907) *The North-China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette*.

33. The Novices Cup was sponsored by Messrs Kuhn and Komor. It was one of the inter-company shooting contests at the time. See: Arnold Wright (1908) *Twentieth Century Impression of Hongkong, Shanghai and Other Treaty Ports of China* (London: Lloyd's Greater Britain Pub. Co.), pp. 424–5.
34. 'Brief History', in *Shangahi wanguo shangtuan Zhonghua dui zhi ershi nian*, p. 6.
35. 'Brief History', in *Shangahi wanguo shangtuan Zhonghua dui zhi ershi nian*, pp. 6, 12–4, 20–1, 23, 27, 36, 47.
36. 'Wanguo shangtuan huadui zhaomu yubeiyuan zhi yuanqi', (3 January 1925) [The origin of the SVC Chinese Company's recruitment of the reserve force], *Shenbao*.
37. T.E Trueman, 'Preface', in *Shanghai wanguo shangtuan Zhonghua dui zhi ershi nian*, p. 1.
38. See, for example, Kounin, *Eighty-Five Years of the Shanghai Volunteer Corps*.
39. 'Brief History', in *Shanghai wanguo shangtuan gonghui zhi sanshi nian*, p. 4.
40. Yu Qiaqing, *Shanghai wanguo shangtuan Zhonghua gonghui zhi sanshi nian xu*, pp. 1–2.
41. It referred to the Company's actions in the 1911 Chinese Revolution, the 1913 Second Revolution, the 1915 Rickshaw Coolie Riot, the 1918 Rickshaw Coolie Riot, the 1918 Hawkers Riot, the 1918 Anti-Japanese Riot, the 1924 Jiangsu-Zhejiang War, the 1925 Zhejiang-Fengtian War, the May Thirtieth Movement in 1925, and the 1927 Northern Expedition.
42. N.W.B.B. Thoms, who was a colonel of the British army and had been awarded medals such as O.B.E., D.S.O., and M.C., served as the commandant of the Corps from 1931 to 1934. See: Kounin, *Eighty-Five Years of the Shanghai Volunteer Corps*, p. 6.
43. 'Brief History', in *Shanghai wanguo shangtuan Zhonghua gonghui zhi sanshi nian*, p. 59.
44. 'Brief History', in *Shanghai wanguo shangtuan Zhonghua gonghui zhi sanshi nian*, p. 66.

45. Kounin, *Eighty-Five Years of the Shanghai Volunteer Corps*, p. 189.
46. 'Brief History', in *Shanghai wanguo shangtuan Zhonghua gonghui zhi sanshi nian*, p. 70.
47. 'Wanguo shangtuan cong chengli dao jiesan jianshi, yiji wanguo shangtuan jiesan hou fangwu, zhuangbei deng wuzi chuli de laiwang hanjian' [A brief history of Shanghai Volunteer Corps: From creation to disbandment, and correspondences in regard to the handling of the SVC's properties and equipments after disbandment], Shanghai Municipal Archives U1-14-865.
48. Yu Qiaqing, *Shanghai wanguo shangtuan Zhonghua ui zhi ershi nian xu*, p. 1.

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CHAPTER 3

Kunming Dreaming: Hope, Change, and War in the Autobiographies of Youth in China's Southwest

Aaron William Moore

At the end of the 1940s, dozens of young people in the Wuhua Academy 五華學院 (Wuhua Xueyuan) composed autobiographies 自傳 (*zizhuan*), some with the hope that they might get transferred to Kunming University. The Wuhua Academy was founded in Kunming in 1946, directly following China's victory in the war against Japan, as an experiment in preparatory education, and was supported by both national and local figures, intellectuals, and military government authorities.[1] The students came from various socioeconomic class backgrounds, adopted widely diverging prose styles, included both girls and boys, and could be aged anywhere from 16 to 22. As they drifted in from around the country into the city of Kunming, Japanese bombing and the threat of occupation heightened their sense of 'national emergency'. In one of China's most dynamic and unique wartime urban environments, these young students used their autobiographies to come to grips with the complex intersections of class, social conventions, education, and urban space at the end of the Chinese Nationalist (KMT) government's tenure on the mainland.

Throughout the war years, Wuhua's home, the provincial capital of Yunnan, was in many respects an idiosyncratic place. First, despite histori-

A.W. Moore (✉)
University of Manchester, Manchester, UK

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cal violence due to the presence of impertinent foreign traders, Kunming was never occupied by any external power and was widely seen by Chinese people from other areas as a safe haven.[2] It was not free from the war, however: from late Qing times to the early Republic, the integration of Yunnan and its tempestuous border with Sichuan into 'China' was interrupted by bouts of widespread violence.[3] Yunnan was the site of factional struggles, invasions by warlords, and, during the War of Resistance, Kunming was bombed by the Japanese first in 1938 and then throughout the 1940s, suffering just a few thousand civilian casualties from enemy action.[4] At the same time, Kunming was not a 'national' Chinese center in the same way that Chongqing was, and so escaped that city's aerial punishments.[5] Despite its geographical distance from centers of the national economy and Han culture, by the Republican Era it was certainly not an isolated backwater: Due to Kunming's trade with British Burma and French Indochina, as well as neighboring provinces like Sichuan, it developed silk, tin, and coal industries (as well as a lucrative opium trade). As Ishijima Noriyuki put it, even though the late Qing 'New Government' 新政 (*xinzheng*) policies had their impact, 'the early Republican years had brought even greater changes to the political and economic situation in Yunnan'.[6] The local government's independence was based on the province's resilient economy, which was only slightly affected by the Great Depression due to its greater reliance on war-friendly tin and cheap tung oil rather than collapsing luxuries like silk.[7] The province's revenues included taxes on items like tin, tobacco, and alcohol, which funded military forces, a French-influenced medical infrastructure, and a school system that were all well developed for a distant province.[8] The arrival of KMT and US forces during World War II, and the investment in transport infrastructure to Sichuan, only accelerated provincial development. Thus, while surrounded by violence, Kunming itself felt like a fairly well-provisioned ship afloat on a stormy sea.

Republican Kunming was also an ethnically, culturally, and geographically diverse place, where locals dined on pineapple rice, grass carp and vermicelli noodles, *guoqiaomian*, tropical fruit, and black kohlrabi—foods that would have been foreign to residents of major cities elsewhere, although it also catered to Han Chinese consumer demands as well.[9] Kunming was a Janus-faced urban space: On the one hand, it was a quiet and leafy city of French villas, teahouses, exotic ethnic groups, and seemingly ever-blooming osmanthus trees, enjoying the enticing sobriquet 'the city of eternal spring' 春城 (*chuncheng*), and the promise of profit among Western observers; on the other hand, Kunming was the

capital city of powerful 'warlords' like Cai E 蔡鍔 and, during the war years (1937–1945), the Yi military general and provincial governor Long Yun 龍雲.[10] Cai and Long were among the most famous regional military leaders in the Republican Era for defending provincial autonomy against central(izing) authorities in both Beijing[11] and Nanjing; where Sichuanese warlords like Liu Xiang enjoyed only a precarious independence from the Nationalist central government, Long Yun had succeeded in fending off a 1931 officers' revolt, redirecting the economy away from opium, and making peace with Chiang Kai-shek through most of the war years.[12] Further, Cai, Long, and many of the officers under their command were not part of the Baoding graduates' northern cliques, CCP affiliates, or Chiang Kai-shek's Huangpu (Whampoa) devotees, but declared their *bona fides* for the ideals of Sun Yat-sen's Republic of China.[13] Third, because of Yunnan's reputation for relative political inclusiveness, Kunming was the only city after the October 1938 fall of Wuhan in which, for a time, members of opposing factions and cliques could coexist side-by-side in the same urban space.[14] Consequently, intellectuals and exiled educators flocked there with their students at the end of the 1930s, despite the city's reputation for using police and military power to solve all of its internal problems.[15] The Kunming urban setting produced a curious mixture of remote regionalism, domineering militarism, and intellectual vibrancy in the 1940s, where one could be comparatively safe from bombing, encounter professors from China's best universities, and hear anti-Japanese operas in a regional theatrical style 滇劇 (*dian ju*).[16]

As I and others have mentioned elsewhere, the educational environment in Republican China was changing rapidly, culminating in, as Robert Culp put it, a successful campaign to 'equat[e] the personal pursuit of higher learning with patriotism'.[17] Kunming schools were no different, imbibing elements of the inchoate mass of modern Chinese pedagogical texts throughout the twentieth century, including translations from, primarily, Japanese. Judging by the documents remaining in the Yunnan Provincial Library, Kunming educators had access to works in developmental psychological and pedagogical research published in Chinese throughout the 1920s and 1930s, from Yang Shuda's 楊樹達 translation of Ōkawa Yoshiyuki's (大川義行) *Research on the Personalities of Children* (Jp. 児童個性の研究, Jidō kosei no kenkyū, 1909; Ch. 兒童個性之研究, ertong gexing zhi yanjiu 1920) to developmental psychology doyen Zhu Zhixian's 朱智賢 *The Problem of Truancy and Attendance among Primary School Students* 小學學生出席與缺席問題, 1935 (*Xiaoxuesheng chuxi yu quexi wenti*).[18] In addition to this, the students of Wuhua were ensconced within a culture of 'life-

writing' that included enduring traditions that were already powerful by the early modern era,[19] and the Yunnan Provincial Library has preserved dozens of diaries, letter collections, and memoirs published during the Republican period, from Liang Shijie's 梁士杰 *A Girl's Diary* 女孩子的日記, 1933 (*Nühazide riji*) to Cao Yunpeng's 曹云鵬 *Correspondence for Kids* 兒童書信法, 1935 (*Ertong shu xinfa*)—many of which were didactic or samples of exemplary writing.[20] Chinese visitors to Kunming, like Xie Bin 謝彬, remarked in contemporary notebooks 筆記 (*biji*) on the vibrant education system that emerged in the 1920s, with rapidly rising levels of literacy and interest in political affairs.[21] In contrast to its provincial geography, then, Kunming had become a dynamic urban environment for the development of a Chinese juvenile subjectivity, and this could not be reduced to nearby 'Western' influences from France or Britain. Kunming was a space to have national discussions regarding education, childhood, and youth that were comparatively free from the burdens of imperialist hegemonies emanating from Hanoi or Hong Kong, even if the nationalist ontologies coming from Beiping and Nanjing were still very strong. Political cadres from Beijing, Nanjing, or Chongqing did not pull the puppet strings in Kunming, even if the discourse from these capital cities was influential due to their comparative wealth, international connections, military power, itinerant activists, and ever-expanding state apparatus.

Kunming residents were at the very least exposed to the importance of young people's life-writing genres before 1937, and thought about them simultaneous to the spread of national politics there. Education documents from Kunming thus evade the facile dichotomy of national resistance and stubborn provincialism, arguably giving us as full a picture of the war years as any other Chinese city. It was certainly true in this borderland province that, as Marianne Bastide observed in her seminal study of educational reform, 'the creation of modern schools aroused the anger of the people'.[22] Nevertheless, a brief glance at Yunnan's Provincial Education Department 省立教育廳 (*Shengli jiaoyu ting*) archives from the Republican period demonstrates that it was tightly integrated into social and political organizations at the national level such as the Three Isms Youth Corps 三民主義青年團 (Sanminzhuyi qingniantuan), Chinese Scouts 童子軍 (Tongzijun), and the various peripatetic patriotic youth theater groups that emerged out of the 'culture plays' 文明戲 (*wenminxi*) tradition. Thus, despite the province's effective independence, the KMT's Northern Expedition had a significant impact on

notions of childhood and youth, even if the Nanjing government did not directly control Kunming. For example, in the 1938 diary by Principle Zhang Pichang for Cheli's Provincial Primary School 車里下學校長張丕昌 (Cheli xia xuexiaozhang Zhang Pichang), whose pupils were primarily from non-Han ethnic groups, it is revealed that the school's budget included 127 purchases from Shanghai and Beiping publishers of educational materials: 83 from Zhonghua shuju and 44 from Shangwu yinshuguan.[23] Principle Zhang's account illuminates the highly contested educational environment at the Chinese urban periphery, with city officials combating the parents of rural children over compulsory education, accusations of severe corruption, incompetence, and graft, as well as outright ethnic revolts against Han Chinese headmasters while the same minority leaders celebrated the importance of modern education. Yi parents complained that Zhang was a 'cruel demon teaching falsehoods', while Zhang claimed that the 'borderland Yi already have a typically weak concept of our nation' and that the war, plus farm work, meant that the vast majority of Yunnanese children turned up to class too exhausted to study.[24] Indeed, we should not romanticize wartime Kunming: Documents in the provincial archives, as well as the National Archives in Taiwan, make sporadic references to officials' assaults on students, discuss widespread poverty, and reveal certain provincial characteristics that frustrated many young people.[25] In Yunnan, national education and war mobilization collided with pre-existing intersections of ethnic, class, and gender power relations, which was reflective of many conflicts occurring across China.

Thus, while illiteracy and a lack of political awareness were problems for wartime Yunnan, the autobiographies of Wuhua's students reveal a much more complex portrait of an urban space in which rural children, Kunming natives, and refugees from far-off provinces merged to produce a microcosm of wartime China. We should also be careful not to force visions from postwar peasantism or Cold War era anti-imperialist sympathies onto the diverse personal histories and views of Kunming's youth; now that the archives in mainland China have produced many social historical documents in manuscript form, we must continue to reevaluate how we narrate the Republican past. The war was transformative, but its legacy is most clearly seen not in the vestiges of and continuities from the late Qing, but in the shifting experiences and changing awareness of the young people who grew up in the Republican era.

Living the Liminal: Young People Think About Family, Society, and Nation at China's Periphery

In the early twentieth century, there were precious few border patrols or visa checkpoints; furthermore, Chinese citizens had a freedom of movement within the country which, from the perspective of the post-1949 household registry system 戶籍 (*huji*), would seem hazardously chaotic. When examining the autobiographies of Yunnan students, we can see that Kunming was a crucible for new political and social values, a center for new pedagogy, a destination for urban refugees, and a space in which war experience forged new juvenile subjectivities.

First, it is clear that social change, (noncommunist) revolutionary values, and 'modern' attitudes had been percolating in the local communities for an entire generation, but the Nationalist period appears to have been a turning point for Yunnan. Certainly, as Education Ministry Investigator Zhang Jun 張俊 discovered in eastern Hubei, in Yunnan as well there were still many 'backwards places where education has not spread', and illiteracy and ignorance of (inter-)national affairs were common.[26] That being said, assumptions about the widespread persistence of, for example, early modern social and cultural traditions in rural or borderland contexts can be tendentious. In fact, students writing in a style heavily influenced by classical Chinese, like Zhou Baoxi 周宝璽, who discussed a 'five generation household' that embraced conservative family politics, were decidedly in the minority.[27] Most students were interested in national or international affairs, wrote in modern Chinese, and described family structures, social practices, and cultural influences that would have been almost totally unrecognizable to earlier Chinese communities until the very end of the Qing Dynasty. Despite the power of native place associations and early modern educational ideals, Kunming was also a space for those who grew up at the geographical limits of China to engage with a new national education network. Li Shucai 李書才, who grew up in a border village, noted the shocking force with which country kids were pulled into a new disciplinary apparatus:

> Since I had grown up playing with children next door all day, I didn't know what it meant to go to school. Anyway, I didn't want to go, so in the end I was crying without end, and my paternal grandfather had to take me there. I can still remember how strange it was and I didn't understand why.…After a long time, many weeks, I finally got used to it.

The disciplinary apparatus of Republican borderland schools was thus not significantly different from its exemplars in Jiangnan, Huabei, coastal Guangdong, and other more developed regions. Even in the absence of Western imperialism, Chinese urban cores developed a compulsory educational infrastructure that abetted the Nationalist state's 'modernisation' project. Even children of shopkeepers demonstrated a global awareness and professional ambitions that were both products of the Republican years. Zhou Jiazhen 周嘉桢, whose family was 'just barely getting by' on his father's income as part-owner of a tobacco shop, wrote of his interest in traveling abroad, going to university, becoming a teacher, and 'fulfilling myself as an individual' 充實我自己 (*chongshi wo ziji*). Still, despite his dreams of travel and self-actualization, the war put severe limits on him—or, as he described it: 'our family is running the risk of economic collapse', and so 'I don't have any big hopes. I just want to get our finances in order'.[28] Kunming's kids were not just by-products of China's so-called '100 years of national humiliation': while threats from France and Japan had come and gone, Kunming was never seriously threatened by occupation, and the numbers of foreigners were smaller than major coastal cities like Shanghai (with the exception of Vietnamese laborers).

The twentieth-century education of young people in Yunnan thus presents a number of problems for scholars who wish to see Westernization as the primary driver of change in China, but more so for those who wish to see this border region as a repository of premodern institutions and values. Certainly, Chinese children and youth were taught in a variety of contexts, including private and public institutions and, as Marianne Bastid demonstrated, early ambitions were quickly abandoned for more realistic goals. Still, student protests were common in the early twentieth century, and 'civic training did indeed increase patriotism among youth', with moral education, including nationalism, leaving 'deeper traces on the students than is generally believed'.[29] This was strengthened by the fact that young people educated in new schools were a captive audience. Borderland Chinese children who went to modern schools were basically boarders: They brought with them oil, salt, rice, vegetables, and meat to last for one week, and they were forcibly carried between school and home by non-laboring members of the family such as grandparents.[30] Rural families were sending children to schools in greater numbers, and the extended family enforced the value of modern education by hand, if necessary, fusing familial and modern scholastic authority; this mirrored developments in Meiji and Taishō Japan, confounding assumptions about persistent Chinese backwardness and

dynamic Japanese modernity. On top of this, in Yunnan's border towns, many family authorities felt strongly that girls should be educated, sending their daughters to Kunming. Although the Republican government lately came to support women's education by directly financing their tuition in the postwar period, some families in Kunming were already committed to this end.[31] For the most part, girls at Wuhua reported great familial support for women's education, including those who grew up in military families. In sum, arguments regarding regional Republican youth's educational experience must now be supported by evidence rather than assumptions based on knowledge of late Qing precedents, and we must not presume that borderland communities were uniformly 'backwards' in comparison with families in central Chinese provinces like Jiangsu and Hebei.

The other facet of wartime life revealed by the personal documents of Kunming youth is that Chinese populations were extremely mobile, particularly as heavily populated urban areas were attacked by bombardment from land, sea, and air.[32] Military campaigns in Southeast Asia also moved through Kunming, with many China Expeditionary Army 遠征軍 (Yuanzhengjun) student recruits spending time there. The autobiographies of Wuhua's students reveal that Kunming residents during the war came from far and wide, in many cases contradicting the supposed determinacy of native place association and visions of a sessile and uninformed rural population. To begin with, as mentioned above, Yunnan had become a unique intellectual environment during the war years. Famously, exiled university lecturers and articulate students flooded Kunming, some bringing with them radical or simply anti-Chiang Kai-shek political views. Chinese army officers, in their diaries from the 1940s, discuss dispersing organizations throughout the province loosely allied with the CCP or simply anti-Chiang political parties.[33] KMT officials and military officers like Zhang Zhizhong 張治中 pilloried these students and staff in internal Education Ministry documents, particularly because they encouraged their peers to leave the ranks of the national army.[34] Nevertheless, while these rebels against Chongqing authorities were famous then (and now), they were decidedly a vocal minority; educated refugees included military training instructors for Yunnan schools, pro-KMT propagandists, reporters (outside of the left-wing reportage tradition), and other sundry Republican bureaucrats.[35] Conflating educational achievement with progressive politics is erroneous, as any young person in wartime Kunming would have known. For the Wuhua students, Kunming was a point of convergence for the whole country, reflecting a mobility that, while secondary to Chongqing in numbers, was for a time politically more inclusive.

Kunming youth were therefore in a position to discuss mobility in a way that was unique throughout modern China (excepting, perhaps, Chongqing), and its inevitable social impact. One student described how his father went to Chongqing during the war, on business, and brought home a Sichuanese bride who was a few years older than her husband. Despite the unusual arrangement, the student noted: 'My parents had sincere feelings 篤愛 (*du'ai*) for one another, and in over ten years never had a single argument. Family like this is truly blessed.'[36] Class barriers were eroded by mobility, as well: refugees were not simply well-connected people of means, but came from diverse backgrounds. Zhang Jirong 張紀榮, who came with his family from Nanjing, was self-described as 'poor', but mixed with elite local students in school. This mobility could tear families apart, as well. His older brother and sister-in-law were his sole source of support, but the brother disappeared with the KMT army when the War of Resistance began. The family fled to Kunming, and through a hometown connection (but not a native place association), Jirong and his (biological) sister withdrew from school in order to work at a factory. This was necessary for the family's survival, but both children suffered abuse from their mother. 'When my brother eventually found out', Jirong wrote, 'he was overcome by emotion, but he had no way to resolve our financial situation, and after a year came home to seek study, testing into the county's middle school'. The middle school was too far away, however, for the elder brother to alleviate the situation at home.[37] Geographic mobility enabled class mobility, and vice versa. Another student recalled a prewar early childhood spent in Shanghai, where his father traveled regularly to Hankou to work in an iron foundry. After suffering several illnesses, which nearly bankrupted the family, eventually the father decided to take everyone away from Shanghai and decamp to remote Yunnan. The student's friends all excitedly asked for famous Yunnanese foods (cabbage, roast pork, etc.), and then he tried to capture the new labor mobility of China's modern cities:

> It was already 12 o'clock. The next day, at 5, the boat departed, and we left Shanghai. It went down the Huangpu, and then into the Pacific Ocean, traveling along the Chinese coast. At certain coastal towns, the boat had to stop and let the travelers get off to enjoy themselves. At all of these towns, like Xiantou 汕頭, Chaozhou 潮州, and Guangzhou 廣州, my father took me with him to have fun, and told me what kind of famous things there were, and all kinds of stories. When we reached our stop on the shore, we boarded the Dian-Yue[38] railroad and took a train to Kunming. When we left the station I saw a new and strange place. People came to meet us at the exit of the station.[39]

Rather than the traditional patterns of native place associations organizing mass migrations or simply family networks, Wuhua student autobiographies reveal a more dynamic scene in Kunming; while it included old migration strategies, it also showed movement that was a direct consequence of modern institutions, views, or war displacement: Families came to Yunnan through the labor market, marriages to strangers in other provinces, military service organized by the state, or simply published and oral rumors of a safe harbor. To force early modern migration history onto this period ignores decades of economic, social, political, and cultural change.

It would be misleading, however, to represent Yunnan as a city built by massive external migration, as many students at Wuhua were from areas inside the province. Li Jiuzhi 李久知, who came from a (formerly) prosperous family in Baoshan, was forced into Kunming due to a Japanese aerial bombardment. The flight of refugees from secondary provincial towns, regardless of their class status, meant that Kunming was inundated with desperate people throughout the war years, and they felt intense anxiety about what the future would bring. As Jiuzhi described it, the war had disrupted the continuity he had come to expect from his education, and he wrote that '[i]f a person's heart is not at peace because of a lack of resources, the student's academic level will fall. This is a problem for all studies … [and] it will also affect students from border regions coming to the city to matriculate to higher education'.[40] Refugees to Kunming from within Yunnan Province included people from almost every imaginable class background. Wu Siqi 吳斯琦, who grew up in a military officer's household, only saw his father once in 12 years: 'Through an introduction from my grandfather', he wrote stoically, 'I came to know my own dad'. Siqi described an emotionally distant father who nevertheless saw his son's future in the provincial capital: It was his father who, seeing the extreme 'backwardness' of the county middle school, agreed to send his son to Kunming.[41] Others were from, broadly speaking, middle class or petit bourgeoisie class backgrounds. Zhang Shuyi 張淑一, who described himself as an 'ordinary young man', wrote enthusiastically about following his wandering father around Yunnan on sundry business trips. Shuyi enthusiastically embraced this new mobility for Yunnan's petty merchants, and wrote: 'I absolutely despise staying in one place for too long.'[42] Many Wuhua students describe fathers engaged in work such as running small shops, buying and selling goods, or engaging in small-scale shipping. The wartime Kunming student community also included local children from fairly deprived backgrounds. Despite their poverty, farmers could place a

high value on literacy, encouraging children like Zhang Jinghua 張靜華, whose family was largely illiterate and did not even know which province their ancestors hailed from, to engage with the world outside the village. Jinghua described how her grandfather encouraged her studies, in particular, and how Japanese air raids dispersed much of the Yunnanese population into 'inconvenient villages' throughout the 1940s. Nevertheless, the patriarchs in Jinghua's family invested heavily in the girl's education, and took great pride in it; her grandfather declared that she would 'be better than any boy'.[43] The autobiographies of young people therefore reflect not only the highly stratified social and economic system that existed in southwest China at this time, they also challenge our views about the people who occupied them.

When actual fighting came to Yunnan, it could be shocking to a community that was largely accustomed to speaking of conflict in far-off places. Judging from the documents, few people in Wuhua, Kunming, or the local communities from which the students hailed, were living in ignorance regarding the War of Resistance, even if at first it did not seem to affect their daily lives. In the 1940s, many young people were disturbed by how quickly their families could be laid low by a single bombing raid; as Li Jiuzhi put it: 'After my family went through this sort of experience, we ended up becoming impoverished and unable to move forward, so it was impossible for me to continue my education.'[44] The specter of occupation was even more terrifying, however, as it could bring a more sustained and widespread suffering into the local community. Yu Zhenglian 余正蓮 recalled how the Japanese advance into the province very nearly arrived at his family's front door:

> My higher middle school education was poor, because that was the time of the War of Resistance, when the rear area's safest place, Baoshan 保山, became the front line. This happened mainly due to the fact that the Japanese devils were attacking Myanmar, and then advanced to the Nujiang about 500 meters from Baoshan. At that time, General Dai Anlan's 戴安瀾 28th Division was able to hold the bridge there, and only then was Baoshan safe. That was 4 May 1942. The enemy planes came constantly to bomb us. For a whole year, oh my, we were ~~running scared~~ dispersed.[45]

One student whose family left farming for a life in Kunming, aided by her father's post in the Budget Office (see below), was ironically more exposed to Japanese attacks in the city than she would have been carrying on a life of rural labor.

> When the fires of the Marco Polo Bridge made their way to the Southwest, and penetrated this mountain city's peaceful atmosphere, we once again had to leave the warm voices of our home, and went to the leafy shade of Lake Kunming, to a town called Haiyan 海燕, to continue our studies. Every day we watched the enemy planes circle, and heard the thunderous sounds of bombing. From a far, far off shore, the sounds came. We were furious, and our hearts swelled with pain and a desire for revenge like the waves on Lake Kunming. While I studied in middle school, the air raid sirens would call out, but school would go on and moved back to Kunming.[46]

As one would expect in autobiographies written for school, the students emphasized how the war disrupted their educational prospects. Some students focused on the terrors of the war, but a few imbibed and recapitulated the language of KMT propaganda.

> During the four calm years of my primary education, the great war to defend our people began. In Kunming, which the enemy was always eyeing hungrily, I completed my life at primary school with the sounds of air raid sirens in the air. The times became more and more tense and, in this peaceful city of Kunming, many, many enemy planes came bearing the blood-red sun on their wings. My family moved away from the city, and I tested into Yunnan University's Middle School, and it seemed like I could go to class as normal. The enemy did not crush our spirit, and we redoubled our efforts in study in order to enrich our lives. At this time I came to know how invaluable time is—I know it well.[47]

City life, then, held the dual possibility of being part of a larger, more exciting community, and being exposed to the worst forms of violence that the War of Resistance offered. Because of this exposure, however, rural youth who came to Kunming thought more deeply about international affairs, government policies, and the fate of 'China'. One student who had joined the Youth Army 青年軍 in 1945 was disappointed that, once he had his political awakening, the war quickly ended:

> When the Japanese dwarf pirates invaded Guiliu 桂柳[48] the national situation was dire so I answered the call from our great leader[49] to enlist. The [political leadership] encouraged us vigorously to leave school and join the army. When I joined, I wanted to receive some short term training in mechanization so I could raise my head high 揚眉吐氣 (*yangmei tuqi*) and decidedly defeat those dwarf pirates … But soon the international situation

> witnessed massive changes and the Japanese quickly surrendered, so I was unable to fulfil my desire. I returned home ashamed.[50]

Youth who signed up for the armed forces, provided volunteer work, or participated in mobilization campaigns included locals and refugees from other areas. As it turns out, they brought these views back into the countryside whenever they returned home. Consequently, the wartime Southwest was not a sleepy place where everyone went on blissfully unaware of the massive armed conflict only a short distance away.

Kunming was also not merely a space in which transient people flowed in and out, as the autobiographies show that the city could also be transformative; these thick descriptions of social and economic life in urban Yunnan show us how dangerous applying assumptions based on class and occupation can be for this period. One student, writing in 1946, recalled the 'small valley surrounded by three mountains' in which she grew up; their village had been attacked by 'bandits' during the war, so the family fled to Kunming. Her education was greatly supported by her father and grandfather, the latter of which was a soldier who 'wanted his children all to serve society'. She developed a strong relationship with her grandfather, who chided her for not wanting to practice writing:

> At that time, I felt terrible about 'writing characters', because my small hands had to grip that big bamboo brush, and it took so much energy to wrap my fingers around it, so I couldn't do it for very long. Whenever I came home from school, my dad wanted me to write for him, but instead I begged to just read to grandfather, or do maths—not write. My grandfather then said, 'My child, you can recognize a lot of characters, and read a lot of books, but when you want to tell a far away person something, when you get older, will you just open your mouth and speak? If you can write, you can take all of the things you want to say, and send them to him.'[51]

This student's family revealed how families moved up and down the class ladder, as well as along the cardinal points of the compass geographically. Following a rift between her father and grandfather, the latter moved back to the village to continue farming and the father landed a salaried job in the government Budget Office 財政廳 (caizhengting). This newfound wealth enabled her to 'refuse' to follow her father on his business trips, remain in Kunming, and matriculate into middle school with the help of a nanny.[52] Mobility and global political consciousness enabled by urban

life sometimes brought a new set of values and expectations back into the countryside. Students who went to school in Kunming began calling the people in their home towns 'ignorant and backward', demanding the rest of rural society join them on their path to modernity. A student who had to be sent away from his village to attend a better school elsewhere complained about the poor state of affairs in China in general:

> The villagers often looked at me with envy, and encouraged me directly and indirectly. I remember, at that time, the villagers would say to me, 'If you get educated, you can become an official and make money, because, inside of books, there is a treasure chamber'. Thinking back on this, I feel that the Chinese government of today is no good, society is in decline, and poverty is growing. I think that this is because ordinary people think that 'education makes you an official, and you can make money', which is a poisonous idea. We must find a way to change the course of the prevailing winds and customs in order to progress and change this depressed society, and I think that only the spread of education will do it. In the course of a long term education, we must at least have people understand that 'the meaning of life is to serve people, not abuse them for personal gain.'…This has been and will be the course of my efforts and labors, and why my teachers and fellow students are attempting to become cultured and educated individuals.[53]

Indeed, looking at this period from the perspective of Kunming, it is characterized by a constant ebb and flow of all elements of the Yunnanese population into and out of the urban core, rather than mobile, worldly city elites and sessile, ignorant peasants; the city's borders were permeable, but the expansion of business and the state due to war mobilization allowed class permeability as well. Zhang Jinhua's grandfather, who had encouraged her to be 'better than any boy', was formerly a professional soldier in the Revolutionary Army before returning to farming. Digging beyond superficial categories, we see a peasant who was once a revolutionary and supported girls' modern education, a putatively well-connected bureaucrat who was just one year free from the farm, or a beggar who was once a landlord in another province.

Above all, young people in 'free' cities like Kunming were searching for an important political and social role for themselves, and this urban space was an ideal place for Chinese youth to articulate itself. The results were mixed: Wuhua students were not uniformly May Fourth intellectuals, Communist activists, or hard right wing 'Confucian fascists'.[54] When, as a consequence of the Japanese Ichigō Campaign in late 1944, the

KMT called for students to enroll in the armed forces as a Youth Army, many answered the call. Filtering through regional cities like Kunming and Guilin, they trained with the National Army in India and marched through Burma with the China Expeditionary Army. Some students were enraged by the shabby treatment they received as soldiers:

> I went full of passion to sacrifice myself with patriotic fervour … answering the government's call to be a soldier, and when I enlisted I was prepared to suffer and spill blood. I wouldn't dare say I went with any intellectual credentials, but to be a real man 做人的資格 (*zuoren de zige*). I went to be a man but what I got was being treated like a beast of burden … The lessons I got … were all just an education in death.[55]

While this student railed against the 'feudalistic' structures of the army, the vast majority never embraced a leftist view of the KMT armed forces, despite serving in an organization that suffered from ill-repute at the end of the war and, to a large extent, in postwar scholarship up to the present day. Most students, when resigning their commission, cited personal reasons, the first and foremost of which was a desire to return to education and 'be of greater use to the nation', or 'greater help the world, reform the [KMT], and aid the nation'.[56] Following a 1946 general demobilization, the Republican state showered them for a time with free education, jobs, and other benefits, and these young people largely supported the KMT during the Civil War. If Southwestern cities like Kunming were sleepy towns with a strongly provincial character before 1937, at the very least the war gave birth to a generation of youth who put that history behind them.

Crossroads Kunming: Education, Youth, and the City at the End of the Nanjing Government

As the students revealed in their letters and autobiographies, and Education Ministry documents also elucidated, peace added a further layer to the already chaotic wartime experience of being young in Republican Chinese cities like Kunming. In the final academic year of the war (1944–1945), the Education Ministry compiled lists of 'exceptional students in poverty' 清寒優秀學生 (*qinghan youxiu xuesheng*), issuing them scholarships of 60 to 100 yuan each (depending on the location of their school, fees, and

other variable costs), in addition to specifically supporting young veterans demobilizing. As inflation accelerated in the early postwar period, these amounts expanded until they reached an eye-watering level of 50,000 yuan at the end of KMT rule in mainland China.[57] This was not purely a problem of KMT mismanagement of the public purse. Ministry officials estimated that nearly 200 million yuan worth of damage had been done to the Chinese education system during the years of Japanese rule, and students who had fled the eastern seaboard were suddenly being thrown back 'home' to, in many cases, devastated and impoverished counties. Simultaneously, provincial government education bureaus were bombarded with letters and requests from students to be placed in urban schools. A state of great confusion persisted right up until the period of CCP victory, with thorny issues such as re-training students enrolled in 'puppet schools', determining the qualifications of those whose educations were interrupted by the war, providing support to a plethora of deserving categories of students (veterans, women, parents of small children, and the poor), applying national regulations to private institutions, and simply finding teaching staff and facilities for the countless youth leaving 'free China' cities like Kunming.[58] By the autumn of 1948, ministry officials were receiving correspondence from southern provincial capitals that students' educations were being disrupted by 'bandit activity' (here, the CCP push south), but the government in Nanjing, incredibly, tried to find funds to assist them in finishing their education.

In any case, the principle preoccupation among these young people was of course the safety, health, and security of their families; secondary to this, but occupying a large space in their written accounts, was the desire for access to education, which the Japanese invasion and failed policies of the Republican government exacerbated to no small degree. This may at first glance appear to be an unexceptional by-product of archival selectivity: Education records such as those used in this study, stored in education archives, will naturally feature a greater number of documents pertaining to young people's scholastic aspirations. Nevertheless, matriculation was not the writers' first concern: Worries about family were more thoroughly articulated than those for education. In addition to this, students expressed a desire for economic stability and a wish that they could make some contribution to China's future. A number of lessons can thus be learned about the environment Kunming provided to youth in wartime: first, exposure to war heightened young people's awareness of national issues like never before, but they were never complicated by the diffi-

cult decisions necessitated by foreign occupation; second, the influx of refugees, teachers, intellectuals, military figures, and other external persons and organizations de-provincialized Yunnan and abetted the rise of a national consciousness among Kunming's educated youth; third, the city created a space in which young people and their families could change their socioeconomic position very rapidly through modern institutions such as schools, barracks, and industry. For those who seek to find continuity from the late Qing to the Republican Era, a closer, more careful examination of personal documents by wartime youth, particularly as they lived in, or passed through, these regional cities, will be disappointing; for those of us who are seeking explanations for historical change in the modern era, they have much to teach.

Notes

1. Dang Ting-jun (2013) 'Minguo sili daxue banxue huodong de ge'an yanjiu: Yunnan "Wuhua xueyuan" xingwang qishilu' [Case studies of Republican preparatory colleges: revelations of the rise and fall of Yunnan's "Wuhua Academy"], *Hebei keji daxue xuebao (Shehui kexue ban)* [Hebei Science and Technology University Journal (Social Science edition)] 13: 2, 94–100; Sha Wenshou (2014) '"Wuhua" yuekan shuping' [Review of the 'Wuhua' monthly newsletter], *Xi'nan guji yanjiu* [Studies ancient texts of the Southwest], 0, 364–70.
2. From the late Qing, tin and coal miners contributed to anti-foreign violence: Michael H. Metzgar (Feb., 1976), 'The Crisis of 1900 in Yunnan: Late Ch'ing Militancy in Transition', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 35: 2, 185–201; Takeuchi Fusashi (2003) 'Kindai Yunnan suzu-gyō no tenkai to Indoshina' [The birth of modern tin mining in Yunnan and French Indochina], *Tōyō bunka no kenkyū* [Studies in Tokyo Culture] 5: 20, 1–32; Shellen Wu (2015) *Empires of Coal: Fueling China's Entry into the Modern World Order, 1860–1920* (Stanford: Stanford University Press).
3. Joseph Lawson (2015) 'Mining, Bridges, Opium, and Guns: Chinese Investment and State Power in a Late Qing Frontier', *Frontier History of China*, 10: 3, 372–94. Also see the situation in Guangxi in Diana Lary (2008) 'A Zone of Nebulous Menace: The Guangxi/Indochina Border in the Republican Period', in Lary

(ed.) *The Chinese State at the Borders* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press), pp. 181–97.
4. Xie Jiewu (1997) 'Kangzhan shiqi diji xi-Kun shangwang jianji' [Casualty figures for Japanese air raids on Kunming during the War of Resistance], in Kunmingshi zhengxie wenshi ziliao he xuexi weiyuanhui [Kunming city consultative conference committee historical and cultural materials study committee] (ed.) *Fengyu yi dangnian: Kunmingshi zhengxie wenshi ziliao jicui*, vol. 1 [Reflections on the trials and hardships of that year: Kunming city consultative conference committee historical and cultural materials collection] (Kunming: Yunnan meishu chubanshe).
5. Edna Tow (2011) 'The Great Bombing of Chongqing and the Anti-Japanese War, 1937–1945', in Mark Peattie, Edward Drea, and Hans van de Ven (eds.) *The Battle for China: Essays on the Military history of the Sino-Japanese War of 1937–1945* (Stanford: Stanford University Press), pp. 256–82; Chang Jui-te (2011) 'Bombs Don't Discriminate? Class, Gender, and Ethnicity in the Air Raid Shelter Experiences of the Wartime Chongqing Population', in James Flath and Norman Smith (eds.) *Beyond Suffering: Recounting War in Modern China* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press), pp. 59–79.
6. Ishijima Noriyuki (2004) *Yunnan to kindai Chūgoku: 'Shūhen' no shiten kara* [Yunnan and modern China: From the perspective of the 'periphery'] (Tokyo: Aoki shoten), pp. 29–32, 57–62; Gong Zizhi (1982) 'Fadiguozhuyi liyong Dian-Yue tielu qinlue Yunnan 30-nian' [30 years of French imperialism's use of the Sino-Vietnamese Railway for invasion of Yunnan], *Yunnan wenshi ziliao xuanji* [Collection of Yunnan cultural and historical materials] 2, 100–5.
7. Tim Wright (July 2000) 'Distant Thunder: The Regional Economies of Southwest China and the Impact of the Great Depression', *Modern Asian Studies*, 34: 3, 697–738.
8. Zhang Yan (2007) 'Lun Kangzhan shiqi Yunnan de shehui jiaoyu' (On social education in Yunnan during the War of Resistance), *Yunnan minzu daxue xuebao* [Yunnan University for nationalities journal] 2, 120–5; Florence Bretelle-Establet (April 1999) 'Resistance and Receptivity: French Colonial Medicine in Southwest China, 1898–1930', *Modern China,* 25: 2, 171–203.

9. Student Autobiography 5, 1946. Nishikawa Kazutaka (September 2011) 'Shin-matsu Minkoku-ki no Unnan-shō pūaru ni okeru Kanjin imin to chama kaihatsu nit suite: Kanjin no gijutsu iten to shijō kaitaku no shiten kara' [Han Chinese immigrants and the opening of Pu'er tea gardens in Yunnan Province during the late Qing and Republican Periods: technology transfer and the tapping of new markets], *Tōyō gakuhō* [Tokyo Journal] 93: 2, 145–71.
10. Donald S. Sutton (1980) *Provincial Militarism and the Chinese Republic: The Yunnan Army, 1905–25* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press); Warren B. Walsh (May 1943) 'The Yunnan Myth', *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, 2: 3, 272–85.
11. N.B.: this chapter will hereafter largely refer to Beijing as 'Beiping', as it was known from 1928 to 1949.
12. Robert Kapp (1973) *Szechwan and the Chinese Republic: Provincial Militarism and Central Power, 1911–1938* (New Haven: Yale University Press) J.C.S Hall (1976) *The Yunnan Provincial Faction, 1927–1937* (Canberra: Australian National University Press).
13. Long Yun's rejection of Wang Jingwei's entreaties was known in the wartime Western media: Lawrence K. Rosinger (26 January 1942) 'Yunnan: Province of the Burma Road', *Far Eastern Survey*, 11: 2, 19–23.
14. Mary G. Mazur (March 1993) 'Intellectual Activism in China during the 1940s: Wu Han in the United Front and the Democratic League', *The China Quarterly*, 133, 27–55; Stephen R. MacKinnon (2008) *Wuhan, 1938: War, Refugees, and the Making of Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press); Gregor Benton (1999) *New Fourth Army: Communist Resistance along the Yangtze and the Huai, 1938–1941* (Berkeley: University of California Press).
15. John Isreal (1999) *Lianda: A Chinese University in War and Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press); On the use of state power for social management in Kunming, see Elizabeth J. Remick (October 2007) 'Police-Run Brothels in Republican Kunming', *Modern China*, 33: 4, 423–61.
16. Helen Rees (Autumn 1995–Winter 1996) 'The Many Musics of a Chinese County Town: A Case-Study of Co-Existence in Lijiang, Yunnan Province', *Asian Music,* 27: 1, 63–102.

17. Robert Culp (2007) *Articulating Citizenship: Civic Education and Student Politics in Southeastern China, 1912–1940* (Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Asia Center), p. 263; William Aaron Moore (January 2016) 'Growing Up in Nationalist China: Self-Representation in the Personal Documents of Children and Youth, 1927–1949', *Modern China,* 42: 1, 73–110; Xu Lanjun (2016) 'Little Teachers: Children's Drama, Traveling, and Ruptured Childhoods in 1930s and 1940s China', *Twentieth Century China*, 41: 2, forthcoming.
18. E.g., Yang Shuda (1920) *Ertong gexing zhi yanjiu* [Research on the individuality of children] (Beijing: Xin Zhongguo zazhishe). Zhu Zhixian (1935) *Xiaoxuesheng chuxi yu quexi wenti* (Beiping: Langrun shudian). YPL contains dozens of titles on 'children's play', 'children's lives', 'youth psychology', 'youth literature studies', and so on.
19. I have written on personal documents in modern China, in addition to Marjorie Dryburgh and Sarah Dauncey (eds.) (2013) *Writing Lives in China, 1600–2010: Histories of the Elusive Self* (London: Palgrave Macmillan); Henrietta Harrison (2005) *The Man Awakened from Dreams: One Man's Life in a North China Village 1857–1942* (Stanford: Stanford University Press); Wang Lingzhen (2004) *Personal Matters: Women's Autobiographical Practice in Twentieth-century China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press).
20. E.g., Liang Shijie (1933) *Nühaizi de riji* [A girl's diary] (Shanghai: Ertong shuju); Cao Yunpeng (1935) *Ertong shuxin zuofa* [Correspondence for Kids] (Shanghai: Ertong shuju).
21. Zhu Ruiqiang and Xu Yan (2001) 'Yunnan shiliao biji suilu (1)', *Kunming daxue xuebao* [Kunming University Journal] 1, 32–6.
22. Marianne Bastid (1988) *Educational Reform in Early 20th Century China*, trans. Paul Bailey (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press), p. 74.
23. By 1938, most Shanghai and Beiping publishers had moved inland due to the Japanese occupation, primarily to Chongqing.
24. 'Shengli Cheli xiaoxue jingfei baobiao ji xuesheng chengji mingce' [Reports on the expenditures of Cheli provincial primary schools and records of student marks], 1938, YPA 12/4/1091; Zhang Pichang (1938) 'Cheli xiaoxuezhang Zhang Pichang de riji' [The diary of Zhang Pichang, headmaster of the Cheli primary school],

YPA 12/4/1091. Cheli is on the border of China and Myanmar/Burma, and not far from the border of Vietnam.

25. For example, Bai Baojin described the Ministry of Education bureaucracy as ‘aggravating and extremely inconvenient’. Bai Baojin, ‘Geren qing jieze shixiang’ [Individual request to resolve a personal issue], Packet 1, letter dated 4 April 1948, (NA 196/019-1017A). Other documents in these *juan* complained of unequal access, failure of the ministry to deliver funds, and compulsory military service.
26. Zhang Jun (17 April 1939) ‘Zhanshi she-jiao renyuan Hubei gongzuotuan shicha baogao’ [Report on investigations into wartime social education corps’ personnel during wartime], in ‘Ge shengshi ganbu xunlian’ [Cadre training by province and city], NA 194/019-345A.
27. Zhou Baoxi, Autobiography, 1947.
28. Zhou Jiazhen, Autobiography, 1947.
29. Bastid, *Educational Reform* p. 83. Also see Culp, *Articulating Citizenship*, Chapter 3.
30. Li, Autobiography, in ‘Wuhua xueyuan waiyüxi zizhuan’, 1947.
31. ‘Ge shengshi zhanshi gongjiao zinü jiuxue’, 1948–1954. Despite the launch of this policy in the late 1940s, local governments already put up resistance to it by claiming funds were being diverted from (male) ‘poor students of excellence’, and that the current financial situation made financially supporting girls’ education impossible.
32. Toby Lincoln (January 2012) ‘The Rural and Urban at War: Invasion and Reconstruction in China during the Anti-Japanese War of Resistance’, *Journal of Urban History*, 38: 1, 114–32; MacKinnon, *Wuhan*, and Keith R. Schoppa (2011) *In a Sea of Bitterness: Refugees during the Sino-Japanese War* (Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press).
33. KMT officers were conducting punitive campaigns against Chinese Communist forces throughout the country in the 1940s. See Benton, *New Fourth Army*.
34. Zhang Zhizhong (22 August 1945) report, in ‘Xuesheng congjun jiangli’, NA 192/019-099A.
35. For example, many young people writing to the Ministry of Education insisted on their strong desire to serve in the armed forces during the mobilization of students to resist the Ichigō

Campaign, albeit often as a prelude to asking for support. Liu Huanzhang and Zhang Zuojie, 'Xuesheng congjun jiangxuejin' [Scholarships for students who served in the war], letter, 13 February 1946, [NA 192/019-99A. MoE archives contain many examples of young men who signed up for public service. In memoir literature, as well, veterans of the 'Youth Army' in the Southwest reminisce about the personal motivations for joining the ranks, including vengeance for fallen family members: Su Hanwu (2015) 'Wei bao Rijun sha fu chou' [To avenge my father's death at the hands of the Japanese Army], in Yuan Meifang and Lu Mushao (eds.) *Zhongguo Yuanzhengjun: Dian-Mian zhanzheng pintu yu laozhanshi koushu lishi* [The Chinese Expeditionary Army: the puzzle of the war on the Sino-Burmese border, with veterans' interviews] (Hong Kong: Hong chuban), pp. 350–63.

36. Student Autobiography 1, 1946.
37. Zhang Jirong, Autobiography, 1947.
38. This railway linked French Indochina to Yunnan, Guangxi, and Guangdong, including Hong Kong.
39. Student Autobiography 5, 1946.
40. Li Jiuzhi, Autobiography, 1947.
41. Wu Siqi, Autobiography, 1947.
42. Zhang Shuyi, Autobiography, 1947.
43. Zhang Jinghua, Autobiography, 1947.
44. Li Jiuzhi, Autobiography, 1947.
45. Yu Zhenglian, Autobiography, 1947. Deleted text in the original.
46. Student Autobiography 2, 1946.
47. Student Autobiography 55, 1946.
48. Guilin-Liuzhou. This almost certainly refers to the final stage of the Ichigō Campaign, in November 1944, when much of Guangxi was taken, including Nanning. The 'great leader', Chiang Kai-shek, then called for the establishment of a Volunteer Youth Army. See Landdeck, 'Under the Gun'.
49. Emphasis in the original.
50. Student Letter to the Ministry of Education, 26 February 1946.
51. Student Autobiography 2, 1946.
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55. Ibid.
56. 'Xuesheng congjun jiangli', 22 February 1946.
57. 'Qinghan youxiu xuesheng jiangxuejin', 1944–1949.
58. As just one example, peruse documents in 'Canjia shixiang—Xuanchuan' [Activities: propaganda], 1938–1949, (NA 193/019-209A). Also see Joseph K.S. Yick (1995) *Making Urban Revolution in China: The CCP-GMD Struggle for Beiping-Tianjin, 1945–1949* (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe).

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YPA: Yunnan Provincial Archives, Kunming.
YPL: Yunnan Provincial Library, Kunming.
NA: National Archives (Taipei/Xindian).
N.B.: for Ministry of Education materials, I have removed six zeroes (000000) from the call numbers of each document and replaced them with a hyphen (-), for readability.

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CHAPTER 4

Securing the City, Securing the Nation: Militarization and Urban Police Work in Dalian, 1945–1953

Christian A. Hess

Introduction

Throughout 1949, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) took control of a diverse urban landscape stretching from former Japanese colonial cities in Northeast China to the former capitals of Beijing and Nanjing, and on to large treaty port cities like Tianjin, Shanghai, and Guangzhou, each with rich histories of global connectivity, colonial legacies, and vibrant business and culture scenes. While celebratory images of gleeful and orderly Red Army troops entering cities like Beijing became a central feature in the narrative of urban 'liberation', few urbanites knew what exactly this was and what it would mean.

The CCP paid great attention to the takeover of coastal cities, and began to formulate an urban vision in which the colonial and semicolonial legacies of urban centers like Shanghai were cast off as markers of the old society, full of vice, exploitation, and whose economies and material culture exalted individual consumption rather than production. The new state spent considerable energy in the early 1950s trying to eradicate old inequalities and eliminate crime, prostitution, begging, and drug addic-

C.A. Hess (✉)
Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan

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tion—long seen as urban problems. The new narrative would come to emphasize cities as centers of production. A modernized, militarized urban police force would come to play a major role in carrying out this process of urban transformation. However, the history of the origins, training, and early operations of municipal police forces in the early years of the People's Republic of China (PRC) remains underexplored.[1]

This chapter examines the origins, organization, and early operations of one of Communist China's first municipal police forces, established in November 1945 in the port city of Dalian. While some scholarly attention has been paid to the CCP's takeover tactics in coastal cities like Shanghai, Tianjin, and Hangzhou, comparative work from other regions remains limited.[2] At the southernmost tip of China's northeastern provinces, which had been heavily urbanized and industrialized under Japan, Dalian was home to major port and industrial facilities and was occupied by the Soviet Union after 1945. This Soviet occupation provided stability throughout the civil war years and allowed for a stable influx of CCP cadres into the city after 1945. Dalian is an important site through which to view the foundations of the CCP's urban public security forces because it was a large, intact, modernized industrial port city that, under Soviet occupation, represented a stable urban base of operations for the CCP in a time of civil war. The CCP did occupy Kalgan in August 1945, but only for one year. It would not be until late 1946 to early 1947 that they would gain control of the larger cities in the northeast.[3] As one of the earliest major cities to be a relatively secure base of operation, Dalian became a testing and training ground for military, public security, and industrialization efforts, which would become standardized in the early years of the PRC. Finally, due to its geopolitical significance as a heavily militarized, Soviet-controlled base, Dalian's experience in establishing public security and police institutions allows us to see the intersection of local security and larger national and international security concerns. The linkage of militarization and security that can be detected in Dalian's case becomes a key feature of state–society interactions in the PRC.

This military dimension of urban takeover and control, particularly the interrelated processes of militarization and security, modernization, and geopoliticization in reclaiming and cementing certain cities to the new nation has yet to be factored into the narrative of urban experiences in the early years of the PRC.[4] This chapter adds an important local case study that further reveals that the takeover, control, and rebuilding of cities were far from a uniform process in a place as large and diverse as the PRC.

Establishing and Training Communist China's First Urban Police Force

Issues of security loomed large in the years of transition between Japan's defeat and the establishment of the PRC. Dalian had been one of the largest and most important port and industrial cities of Japan's empire in northeast Asia. As the civil war raged in China after 1945, both the CCP and the Nationalist Government hoped to claim Dalian and secure it by linking it to their respective state-building projects. Ultimately it was the CCP, cooperating with Soviet authorities, that secured control of Dalian.

This was a very different narrative of 'liberation' than what would come to characterize the CCP's takeover of other major cities like Beijing, Tianjin, and Shanghai. Like Shanghai, for example, establishing local order in Dalian entailed confronting elements of the imperialist past that might destabilize or challenge the tenuous new order. Just as it would in other cities, the new state had to secure resources, food, and most importantly people in order to bring Dalian's vital industries online for continual total war efforts. What made security work in Dalian slightly different was its geopolitics. Dalian was a strategic geopolitical point on the new map of East Asia where threats to public order were perceived to have national and international implications. Any disorder here, from Soviet misbehavior to military conflict between the Nationalists and the CCP within the Soviet-controlled Naval Base zone established on the Liaodong peninsula after Japan's defeat, might bring the USA into the picture and risk even greater geopolitical conflict in the earliest days of the Cold War.[5] Thus, in Dalian, the CCP's police force would come to be their main source of power in this complex geopolitical environment.

Recent work on the origins of internal security networks reveals that the pervasive system of societal surveillance set up in the early years of the PRC can be characterized as hybrid in nature and multifunctional in serving both to ensure the maintenance of local order (police work) and carry out larger state-initiated ideological/security campaigns.[6] This too would be the case in Dalian, where officers came from diverse backgrounds ranging from rural base areas like Yan'an, to underground operatives from Northeastern cities, and members of the Northeast Resistance Army 东北抗联军 (Dongbei kanglian jun), a Chinese Communist military force whose members spent time in the Soviet Union in the early 1940s.[7] In the initial weeks of Soviet occupation, the CCP gained its first real foothold in Dalian as the Soviet military authorities allowed and encouraged cadres to establish public security branches in the key central districts of the city. At that time, public security was in the hands of rag-tag bands of laborers working for colonial-era elites.[8]

Members of the Northeast Resistance Army who had spent time in the Soviet Union during the war were among the first CCP-affiliated personnel to arrive in Dalian. Because of their close relationship with the Soviet military, a group of seven Chinese officers (with Soviet rank and uniforms) of the Northeast Resistance Army were appointed, in September 1945, to serve as deputy commanders of Soviet garrisons in key districts of central Dalian. From this base of operations, several dozen more CCP officers arrived from CCP-held base areas, including Zhao Jie 赵杰, an Eighth Route Army officer from Shandong. Zhao would oversee the establishment of the Dalian police force.

They would be expected to maintain local order and carry out routine police duties and build a 'new style' police force. At the opening ceremony, held on 7 November 1945, Zhao explained: 'We have established a new style police headquarters. By "new" we mean it is under the control of the Chinese Communist Party, built in accordance with our military ideology and work style, to serve and liberate the people.'[9] Officers would also come to play leading roles in the mobilization of people and resources in support of the CCP's war efforts during the Chinese Civil War and the Korean War. In an environment of militarized mobilization, clandestine operations against domestic and foreign 'spies' also comprised a significant part of public security work in the city.

Handling such a diverse set of operations was a tall order for cadres with little training in urban areas. The need to provide specific training for police recruits quickly became a pressing issue in early 1946 as a diverse group of cadres steadily arrived in Dalian to take up security work, yet most had little experience working in an urban environment. According to memoirs collected in the declassified official history of the Dalian police, one of the most pressing problems in the establishment of the force was the fact that its members were drawn largely from the military, specifically those who had fought in rural base areas during the War of Resistance Against Japan. This led to several issues which spurred the need for organized training programs, including the rural orientation of the police force, an overly militaristic work style (attributed to life in rural base areas during guerilla war), and a desire to return to the front as soldiers, not as urban police.[10]

To address and change these attitudes and create an urban police force, the CCP established one of the first police academies in a city under their control. Up until June of 1946, police training for newly arrived cadres was done on an ad hoc basis. In August 1946, the CCP took over the facilities of a Japanese-era trade school and established a permanent police

academy in Dalian. The first classes began in September with 400 recruits, including local farmers, laborers, and students. Over 800 recruits were part of the second class in 1947. By the end of 1949, more than 5000 officers graduated from the Dalian academy.[11] Several thousand of the graduates were sent to assume security roles in liberated areas throughout China.[12]

Recruits focused on three main subjects at the academy: military training, political indoctrination, and urban police work. Military training followed the regimen established by the PLA's Eighth Route Army. Cadets received an abbreviated version of the basic military training that the PLA did, which included weapons training and battle formations.[13] Political indoctrination also followed the system used by the PLA and included 'speaking bitterness' sessions aimed at stoking an understanding of class oppression and reeducation along revolutionary class lines. Police work was the most extensive subject, and cadets received training in all basic elements of urban police work, ranging from household registration to crime fighting and prevention.[14] From its inception in 1946 to February 1949, officials overseeing police training produced over 41 textbooks whose subject matter included population registration techniques, traffic management, combating spies, and registering and controlling entertainment industries.[15]

Along with their new training, police officers in Dalian experienced an increase in command and control, and bureaucratic management aimed at both smoother operations and also at ensuring that the police force was not easily infiltrated by enemy agents (former colonial-era collaborators or the Nationalists). Stations were expected to report their activities daily, either via telephone or recorded on paper, and this was to be followed by more comprehensive monthly operations reports and plans for further training.[16]

Available Chinese sources make few references to Soviet influence in police training. Michael Schoenhals, in his work on secret agents during the Mao years, notes some evidence of KGB influence in the Central Ministry of Public Security after 1949.[17] It is likely that Soviet agents likely influenced local security operations in Dalian after 1945. Paul Paddock, who headed the American Consulate in Dalian before it closed in 1949, maintains in his memoirs that the Russians had established 'a KGB apparatus that was all-pervasive and to which the Chinese police of the Kwantung Administration were subordinate'.[18]

One area where there was considerable cooperation with the Soviet military was the establishment and operation of a covert training facility for tank and heavy truck operation and maintenance. The PLA had very limited experience with modern weapons like tanks and took advantage of the sta-

bility offered by the Soviet military presence to learn about such technology. Because Soviet military assistance to the CCP would be in violation of the terms set at Yalta and agreed upon in the Treaty of Friendship and Alliance signed with the Nationalist government in 1945, the entire training operation was kept undercover by linking it to the police academy, where it was known as the Fourth Brigade. Most of the military personnel who arrived to receive tank training as part of the Fourth Brigade came from the New Fourth and Eighth Route armies and arrived via Dandong, on the border with Soviet-occupied Korea. Initially, a small group of officers were allowed to train directly with Soviets at their facilities on the peninsula before establishing a more formal operation. By 1949, the school trained nearly 1000 troops for tank and heavy truck operation. Drivers participated in the PLA's advancement into western China, including Lanzhou and Xinjiang.[19]

Militarization

Warfare exerted a great influence on CCP state-building in Dalian, and public security was one set of institutions and practices where militarization was most obvious. Through the late 1940s, the police and military were often one and the same in Dalian. The first wave of CCP-led police in Dalian was in fact comprised of soldiers from rural base areas. Because of the conditions imposed by the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance of 1945, CCP military units were not allowed to enter Dalian or the Soviet base area. The Soviet military authority had to act in accordance with agreements at Yalta that stipulated Dalian remain open as an international port and that Chinese authority should be civilian in nature, not military. Thus the Nationalists, despite being signatories to the Sino-Soviet Friendship Agreement, were not allowed to use Dalian as a staging area for military entry into the Northeast.[20] As a way of circumventing this restriction, CCP military forces, many from the Eighth Route Army, arrived in the city to work as police.[21] In fact, the number of military/police personnel in Dalian grew so large and so rapidly that it was a concern of the Soviet authorities. When a leading CCP cadre asked Soviet military authorities for rifles and guns to equip the growing police force, which totaled over 13,400 men, Soviet authorities were shocked at the size of his request, and replied that for a city this size only a force of several thousand was needed.[22] From 1945 through 1949, the public security apparatus received a larger percentage of city revenues than any other sector of the local administration.[23]

From the late 1940s through the early 1950s, the Dalian municipal police force carried out a number of vital military tasks in support of the CCP's war efforts. Military training was a part of the basic skills imparted to police cadets, and the entire organization of the academy followed the militarized organization used in the CCP's training facilities in Yan'an.[24] Because of constant war stretching from the mid-1940s to the early 1950s, municipal police in Dalian undertook a number of military-related activities, the most important of which were providing frontline and logistical support for both the Civil War and Korean War efforts.

Conscription drives were a significant part of police operations. These efforts began in 1946 and continued well into the 1950s. In 1946 alone, over 10,000 men between the ages of 18 and 30 from Dalian and surrounding areas were conscripted for frontline military service, and another 10,000 were recruited by the end of 1947.[25] The police academy became the central organization in these conscription drives. From 1947 onward, graduates of the academy were sent in increasing numbers into the military. In 1948, for example, an entire academy class of graduates entered military service. By the end of 1948, the Dalian police carried out a total of six conscription drives with over 32,000 men sent to military service.[26]

Beyond training and sending personnel into military service, the police force in Dalian was also responsible for major logistical operations in support of the CCP's war effort during the Civil War. They opened factories producing war supplies, procured weapons from the Japanese and Soviet military, and helped to build a significant medical establishment in the city. This investment in medical work, together with the infrastructure left by the Japanese, which included one of the largest hospitals in Northeast China (the former South Manchuria Railway hospital), made Dalian an important medical center during the Civil and Korean Wars.[27]

Combating Security Threats

Given the nature and speed of political and economic change in China and East Asia after 1945, there were many factors that threatened the delicate local arrangements in geopolitically significant spaces like Dalian. Soviet and CCP authorities in Dalian perceived and acted upon three main geopolitically charged security threats through 1949: the large Japanese population in the city, the Nationalist Government and its claims to Dalian, and internal threats from 'spies' and sectarian religious groups like the 一贯道 *(yiguandao)* and 九贯道 *(jiuguandao)*.

Dalian had been one of the main Japanese colonial cities in Manchuria, and after 1945, over 200,000 Japanese still lived in the city.[28] The majority of these people were not repatriated until late 1946, some not until 1949 or later, and it was up to the Soviets and the CCP to keep them safe, sheltered, and fed until repatriation got under way. Mishandling this massive operation could threaten the agreements at Yalta which gave the Soviets their foothold on the Liaodong peninsula. Thus, Soviet and CCP authorities in Dalian were very careful in their operations involving Japanese civilians.[29]

One case in particular reveals the extent of Soviet and CCP fears that mistreatment of Japanese nationals might threaten security in the city. On the afternoon of 25 January 1946, Wang Guobing 王国屏, a covert operative working for the Nationalists, working with an accomplice, entered the home of Mr. Ōta 太田, a Japanese printing press owner. Holding Ōta at gunpoint, they identified themselves as police and as members of the Nationalist military and demanded that he pay a 2000 yuan fee so that he could keep his job. Feeling extorted, Ōta reported what had happened to the district police in his neighborhood. The incident touched a raw nerve for the CCP's nascent police force as it involved both threats against Japanese and was perpetrated by Nationalist underground agents. The CCP's police force swiftly launched an investigation that would ultimately uncover the agents and their network.[30]

Ōta was one of thousands of managers and technicians who kept working in the city after 1945. The majority of the Japanese population in Dalian was peaceful. However, there were notable large-scale incidents of violence involving Japanese who were unwilling to surrender and who took up arms against the city's new authorities. Violent action by Japanese troops and officers unwilling to surrender after August 1945 stretched well into 1946. One of the most dramatic incidents occurred in March 1946, when a major gun battle raged between Japanese gendarmes and Chinese and Soviet police, resulting in the deaths of six Chinese police, four Soviet soldiers, and several Japanese bystanders.[31] The case involved a former military police officer named Tanaka, who along with several colleagues carried out a clandestine operation to attack the city's new authorities. After recovering a stash of hidden weapons, they robbed and killed both Chinese and Japanese alike in a series of violent home invasion robberies until their plot was discovered. In the early morning hours of 10 March 1946, Tanaka and his cohort were surrounded by plainclothesmen from Dalian's nascent CCP-controlled police force in an abandoned building in Ōsaka chō 逢坂, a neighborhood in colonial Dalian's red light

district. A major battle ensued as Chinese police made numerous attempts to storm the building only to be turned away by gunshots from Tanaka and his men. Pinned down by gunfire, they even forced a Japanese man to try and break open the iron gate to the building using an ax. That man was gunned down, but a second Japanese man who was forced to break through the gate was successful.[32]

Soviet gendarmes arrived on the scene only after hours of heavy gunfire and pleas from Chinese police for help. Moreover, they promptly accused the Chinese of cowardice. A Soviet team then attempted to storm the building only to retreat after an officer was struck by a bullet in the forearm. Desperate for a plan of action, police summoned an elderly Japanese man who happened to be passing by on his way to market. He was ordered to enter the building to try and see where Tanaka and his men were hiding. The man entered the building armed only with a gourd he had been carrying! After a few tense moments of silence, a shot rang out. The gourd-bearing old man had been shot in the head. Finally, by late afternoon, the standoff came to a close as Tanaka's men set fire to the building to cover their escape. It is not known how many died in the fire, but Tanaka managed to flee to Wafangdian 瓦房店, a town at the northeastern border of Soviet-controlled territory. After several clandestine trips back to Dalian, Tanaka was finally caught in May 1946.[33] News of the battle and death of CCP policemen was highly publicized and politicized. Local papers praised the heroism of the police, along with their spirit of 'serving the people' along with their willingness to keep up the fight to capture the 'Japanese fascist gang'.[34]

The second major threat was from the Nationalist government. According to the provision of the first Sino-Soviet Friendship treaty, which stipulated that the Soviet base on the Liaodong peninsula was to be a joint-use environment, the Nationalist Government, who signed the agreement, had every right to expect that their personnel would be able to operate as the legitimate Chinese authority in this area, and to expect that their military would be able to land here and give them a strategic advantage in controlling Manchuria. The Soviets kept them out via their interpretation of the agreement, arguing that so long as a state of war existed with Japan, they would not permit any Chinese military force on the peninsula.

The Nationalist Government grew increasingly frustrated at their inability to have any major presence in Dalian or anywhere in the Soviet-controlled base. The USA paid great diplomatic attention to this issue, and

there was considerable coverage in the US news media. The Nationalists mobilized the press within China to vent their frustrations and stoke anti-Soviet nationalism. Press reports and books published in Shanghai and Nanjing put Dalian on the Nationalist's map of China as a pivotal battle ground against communism and 'red imperialism'. In 1946, the Nationalists even managed to mobilize students in Dalian to organize a large, anti-Soviet demonstration. The ability to stoke the fires of nationalism like this by calling into question the sovereignty claims over the Liaodong peninsula and painting the Soviets as imperialist occupiers was a significant political threat to the CCP.[35]

These types of protest activities, coupled with covert action including spying and sabotage, were the main Nationalist-backed strategies to try and destabilize the delicate political and economic situation in Dalian. The targeting of Nationalist operatives and their covert networks occurred in many cities in China after 1949, and such operations were a major part of the CCP's establishment of local control.[36] In Dalian, such operations had a particular urgency due to the geopolitical situation on the Liaodong peninsula. The Nationalist Government had signed agreements with the Soviet Union for joint military use of facilities on the peninsula and expected to play a leading role in the civilian governance of Dalian. Ultimately, the Soviets allowed the CCP in and aided in keeping the Nationalists out, but the situation was in flux through 1947, and from the CCP's perspective, there was a real threat that the Nationalists might win control of Dalian, or at the least threaten to destabilize the delicate Sino-Soviet political order there.[37] The incident involving Mr. Ōta, the Japanese printing factory owner, for example, revealed that through 1946 Dalian's public security apparatus was very much in flux, and it was not difficult for Nationalist operatives to establish themselves as police officers. For the Nationalists, Dalian was a potential source for gaining valuable counter-intelligence on Soviet and CCP military operations. Throughout the late 1940s, and even into the 1950s, Nationalist operatives infiltrated local government and military organizations to try and gain this information.

Industrial sabotage was another area in which the CCP felt vulnerable to underground Nationalist agents. Causing damage and slowdowns at important industries was a tactic used by underground CCP operatives against the Japanese in the 1940s, and became a serious issue again during the production drives in support of the Korean War. In 1950 and 1951, there were a combined total of 637 cases of sabotage at factories in Dalian that were reported and investigated by public security.[38] It is

difficult to assess who was responsible for each case, and what their motivations may have been, but official sources do point out that Nationalist agents were involved in some cases of sabotage. In the Dalian Locomotive Factory, an underground team of Nationalist operatives carried out six separate cases of serious sabotage, which included damaging an electric furnace, a smelter, and a press, which brought the factory's operations to a standstill.[39]

The final security threat came from dozens of redemptive religious societies operating in Dalian during the colonial period and during the years of Soviet occupation. The largest was the *yiguandao*, which claimed up to 60,000 members in greater Dalian during the late 1940s.[40] Efforts to break up these organizations would become a major feature of work among the masses in later-liberated cities like Beijing, Tianjin, and Hangzhou.[41] In these cities, the emphasis would be on rooting out political enemies and eliminating what the CCP saw as superstitious beliefs and practices that were exploitative and detrimental to their new vision of urban society. In Dalian, these groups played up fears that geopolitical shifts were immanent. They openly resisted CCP-led production drives during 1948, and spread anti-CCP, anti-Soviet propaganda.[42] *Yiguandao* leaders in particular were very skillful in spreading rumors of immanent Nationalist military takeover, and by the time of the Korean War sent out frightening messages of an imminent third world war.

The CCP's effort to break up the *yiguandao* in Dalian began as early as 1946, and reached its peak in 1949. This was a campaign that would rely heavily on the city's new police force and included both propaganda work aimed at the masses combined with undercover investigative operations. This was one of the first major campaigns in which the CCP's police force openly led a mass campaign. Throughout the summer of 1949, the police organized anti-*yiguandao* propaganda displays and live performances from cultural troupes. They had also been working since 1946 to infiltrate the inner ranks of the *yiguandao*, which involved undercover operations.[43]

Securing People and Resources

Despite the heavy fortifications and heavy troop presence, Dalian and the surrounding base area was subjected to various security threats brought upon by the unique stacking of geopoliticized issues ranging from decolonization and reoccupation, to civil war. Trying to uncover how people experienced these shifts is difficult due to source access restrictions. One

thing that structured much of urban life was constant warfare stretching from the 1930s to the mid-1950s. Residents of Dalian did not share in experiencing the horrors that destructive war brought upon urban society. Rather, Dalian had been and continued to function as a heavily guarded production base serving the state's (be it Japanese, Soviet, or Chinese Communist) total war efforts.[44] Ensuring stable resource flows into vital war industries and keeping people on the job in those industries thus became a central goal of the state. This aspect of militarization has been underexplored in recent histories of the formation of the PRC. One feature of this system was an extremely large police force needed to address both the larger external threats discussed in the previous section and to aid the war effort in securing resources and labor.

The CCP used this large police force in carrying out much of its economic and social reforms. For example, police played major roles in the housing campaigns, helping ensure a safe, orderly moving process. Following the moves, they were also responsible for setting up ward and neighborhood defense associations comprised of residents working with local branches of the growing public security apparatus. They were also highly involved in efforts to recover Japanese goods, in establishing household registrations 户口 (*hukou*), and enforcing travel restrictions. As mentioned briefly in Chap. 4, those cadres in charge of establishing the police force, upon arriving in Dalian, quickly shifted much of their emphasis from security operations and toward the recovery of Japanese buildings and property, where they searched for hidden stashes of weapons, food, cloth, and machinery. Often this was in direct competition with Soviet forces, who likewise hoped to find whatever of value they could and ship it back to the Soviet Union. The CCP's police force also opened its own factories, using hundreds of sewing machines seized from Japanese buildings to operate a small-scale clothing factory to supply winter uniforms for CCP forces.[45]

Household registration and travel restrictions resumed in 1947, on orders from Soviet military authorities. For locals, such interventions were nothing new, since just a few years earlier the Japanese enforced a strict residency system in the final years of the war. Moreover, the logic used to justify the restrictions was similar. Fear of spies and underground operatives of the Nationalist army entering the Soviet Base was one of the reasons for the restriction. Acts of sabotage against key infrastructure in Dalian, particularly train derailments, and murders of Soviet gendarmes in nighttime attacks continued well into 1948.[46] However, the greater fear was that the available labor force might shrink as people fled the area. In

a classified summary of public security work from 1947 through 1949, restrictions on the movement of people were justified as much in order to stop the potential loss of 'productive elements' 对生产有力者 (*dui shengchan youli zhe*) as much as blocking spies from entering the territory. Due to the strict enforcement of policies that limited free travel, by 1949, only 46,000 people left Dalian, a 50 percent decrease from 1948.[47]

Compared with cities like Beijing and Shanghai, Dalian was, at the time of the founding of the PRC in 1949, a stable and secure city. The Soviet military presence had ensured that the city and the peninsula remained safe from the battles of the Civil War. Though not a battleground, the city and its residents did experience a significant and prolonged military mobilization. Dalian's war industries played a critical role in aiding the CCP's victory in the Civil War.[48] The ongoing processes of geopoliticization and militarization continued to impact the city even after 1949. With the outbreak of the Korean War, the Liaodong peninsula became an important staging area for sending troops and supplies to the front lines, and, in the ramp up for war, the role of the police would continue to expand.

Dalian and the Korean War: Localizing National Security

By the time of the Korean War, there existed in Dalian a sizable urban police force with several years of experience operating on a war footing in a geopolitically delicate part of East Asia. The outbreak of the Korean War put the city and its people near the frontlines of a massive international conflict. The local impact of the Korean War remains an underexplored topic. Existing work reveals that total war mobilization worked to reframe nationalism toward legitimizing the CCP, a process that was felt as far away as Guizhou province in China's remote southwest.[49] Studies of Tianjin and Hangzhou during the early years of the PRC provide a local picture of how mobilization for the Korean War impacted city life. These cases reveal that the conflict provided an environment in which to intensify mass campaigns via militarized mobilization. The political and social movements of the early 1950s aimed at targeting, labeling, and in some cases eliminating certain social groups and individuals that might prove a threat to the new state were all undertaken during the war. City dwellers also experienced ceaseless production campaigns, programs for volunteering of labor and resources in support of the war along with more invasive security programs like the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries.[50]

In Dalian, the heightened war footing experienced throughout all of China during the Korean War was in fact business as usual. State-led militarized development and social mobilization for total war began in the 1930s, and continued with Soviet occupation and Civil War. In Dalian, the police force was established by military personnel to build social and political control for the CCP during a time of war. With the founding of the PRC and its immediate involvement in war in Korea, this main objective did not change. With Soviet protection, Dalian became a major staging ground for troops and supplies headed to the frontlines in Korea.

As a frontline city on a war footing, security concerns reached levels of near paranoia. A recently published history of Dalian's Korean War effort notes that the city's security establishment tracked and engaged at least 11 American-backed spy rings, together with five involving Nationalist agents.[51] As James Gao notes in his work on the CCP's takeover of Hangzhou, the Korean War provided the new state a major opportunity to conduct security operations in the name of revolutionary change and under a slogan that linked defense of the nation to defense of the home.[52] As one of the most militarized regions in China (with both Soviet and PLA forces nearby), and so close to the action in Korea, this slogan was doubly true in Dalian.

The police had been breaking up spy rings and uncovering secret weapons caches since the late 1940s. Between 1948 and 1950, over 3500 people were convicted of counterrevolutionary crimes, 29 were executed, 500 weapons and tens of thousands of rounds of ammunition seized, and 12 radio broadcast sets had been confiscated. During the Korean War, local police dealt with an uptick in property crimes and sabotage. Theft and destruction of telephone lines and power cables throughout the peninsula were reported.[53]

To combat these activities, the police played a leading role in carrying out the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries. This was a nationwide sweep of society which would involve a heavy police penetration of daily life. In Dalian, the police organized over 2500 police officers, organized into 400 small work teams to investigate and arrest people that would come to be labeled counterrevolutionaries. The police were inundated with nearly 8000 letters from people reporting on their neighbors and family members. In June of 1951, massive public rallies were organized to denounce those unlucky enough to be captured and convicted of counterrevolutionary crimes.[54] The well-organized, militarized municipal police, created and honed during a prolonged period of total war, played a leading role in carrying out this new form of state penetration of society.

Conclusion

The history of the establishment and early operations of the CCP's municipal police force in Dalian reveals several important themes that relate to the nature of state–society relations in the early years of the PRC. While the 'liberation' of cities such as Dalian, Shanghai, Tianjin, and Hangzhou was relatively peaceful, it was carried out by the CCP during a state of war. Securing these cities and their resources was an urgent task. Dalian was one of the first stable cities to build and train an urban police force under the CCP's control. Its officers would go on to military and police roles throughout China. They brought with them a militarized organization with military style tactics and worked to establish local security within the context of a larger war effort.

Dalian's case also factors geopolitics into the picture in a way that is not yet fully understood at local level during the early years of the PRC. Much of the security work in Dalian was shaped by larger geopolitical concerns that included balancing Soviet and CCP concerns to keep Nationalist and US forces at bay. As part of a Soviet-controlled military base zone through the early 1950s, Dalian was in some sense secure compared with much of China. Yet as we have seen, this geopolitical situation made the city a target for various groups that wished to disrupt this order. With the Korean conflict fresh in mind, it did not take much to remind people of the potential threat of American/Nationalist attempts to invade or attack China. The groundwork for this intersection of local security, national security, and framework of larger Cold War conflicts had been set up in the months and years after 1945, when the Liaodong peninsula and its main city were linked not to the nation but to a Soviet military base.

What is interesting is that despite all of this, the CCP was able to spin a narrative about Dalian that highlighted its very modern, very habitable features. Colonial-era streets, parks, buildings, and homes featured largely in this presentation of the city as a cutting edge production metropolis.[55] As industries recovered, people had jobs. The process of making this possible, of rebuilding a modern, habitable city involved the interrelated processes of militarized modernization and geopoliticization at both the structural and ideological levels, spanning multiple total war conflicts during which the city was not a direct target but nevertheless experienced threats and an emphasis on security often experienced in heavily militarized spaces.

This is an urban experience likely shared in other Chinese cities as well as cities in Russia, Europe, and the USA, as they became embroiled in

the Cold War and their own versions of runaway military industrial complexes. Today of course, China has changed immensely. Dalian, once a base city, rebranded itself in the 1980s and 1990s as an open place for foreign companies to set up shop. As the mayor of Dalian in the early 1990s, the infamous Bo Xilai, now removed from power and in prison, left a significant imprint on the city as he remade parts of the city center and removed obvious elements of the city's past. Dalian, like most Chinese cities, has grown dramatically since the reforms of the 1980s, when the curious blend of socialism and capitalism took China on a new growth trajectory. The kind of militarization that people experienced in the 1940s and 1950s has disappeared, but the all-out emphasis on social order at the cost of civil liberties, carried out via a heavily militarized police presence, remains a feature of life in the PRC.

Notes

1. See Frederick Wakeman Jr (2007) '"Cleanup": The New Order in Shanghai', in Jeremy Brown and Paul Pickowicz (ed.) *Dilemmas of Victory: The Early Years of the People's Republic of China* (Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press), pp. 21–58. Michael Schoenhals recent book examines the origins of secret informants and public security work in the early PRC: Michael Schoenhals (2013) *Spying for the People: Mao's Secret Agents, 1949–1967* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
2. For Shanghai see Wakeman, *Cleanup*, for Hangzhou see James Z. Gao (2004) *The Communist Takeover of Hanghzou: The Transformation of City and Cadre, 1949–1954* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press), and for Tianjin see Kenneth G. Lieberthal (1980) *Revolution and Tradition in Tientsin, 1949–1952* (Stanford: Stanford University Press).
3. Suzanne Pepper (1999) *Civil War in China: The Political Struggle* Second Edition (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield), p. 332.
4. Michael Szonyi's groundbreaking work on Quemoy focuses on the processes of militarization and geopoliticization as related to the Nationalist Government. Michael Szonyi (2008) *Cold War Island: Quemoy on the Front Line* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
5. Christian A. Hess (2007) 'Big Brother is Watching: Local Sino-Soviet Relations and the Building of New Dalian, 1945–1955', in

Jeremy Brown and Paul Pickowicz (ed.) *Dilemmas of Victory: The Early Years of the People's Republic of China* (Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press), pp. 160–83.

6. Shoenhals, *Spying for the People.*
7. Dalian shi gong'anju shizhi yanjiushi bian (ed.) (1986) *Dalian gong'anshi xuanbian* [The collected history of the Dalian police force, vol. 2] (Dalian: Dalian beihai yinshua gongsi), p. 32.
8. Dalian shi gong'anju shizhi yanjiushi bian (ed.) (1985) *Dalian gong'anshi xuanbian* [The collected history of the Dalian police force, vol. 1] (Dalian: Dalian beihai yinshua gongsi), pp. 5–10.
9. Ibid., pp. 24–7.
10. Ibid., pp. 88–9.
11. Dalian shi gong'anju shizhi yanjiushi bian, *Dalian gong'anshi xuanbian*, vol. 2, pp. 32–7.
12. Dalian shi gong'anju shizhi yanjiushi bian, *Dalian gong'anshi xuanbian*, vol. 1, pp. 88–9.
13. Zhang Dianxuan (ed.) (1987) *Dalian gong'an lishi changbian* [Historical chronicles of the Dalian police] (Dalian: Dalian yinshua gongye zongchang yinshua), p. 325.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid., pp. 329.
16. Dalian shi gong'anju shizhi yanjiushi bian, *Dalian gong'anshi xuanbian*, vol. 1, pp. 88–9.
17. Schoenhals, *Spying for the People*, pp. 25–6.
18. Paul Paddock (1977) *China Diary: Crisis Diplomacy in Dairen* (Iowa State University Press), pp. 76–7.
19. Dalian shi gong'anju shizhi yanjiushi bian, *Dalian gong'anshi xuanbian*, vol. 2, pp. 46–50.
20. Christian A. Hess (December 2011) 'From Colonial Port to Socialist Metropolis: War, Imperialism and the Making of New Dalian', *Urban History*, 38: 3, pp. 373–90.
21. Dalian shi gong'anju shizhi yanjiushi bian, *Dalian gong'anshi xuanbian*, vol. 1, pp. 20–6.
22. Han Guang (1995) 'Lüda ba nian' [Lüda Eight Years], in Dalianshi shizhi bangongshi (ed.) *Sulian hongjun zai Lüda* [The Soviet Red Army in Lüshun and Dalian] (Dongbei caijing daxue chubanshe), p. 43.
23. Dalian shi caizheng ju (ed.) *Dalian caizheng zhi* [Dalian Financial Gazetteer] (no publication data), pp. 207–11.

24. Zhang, *Dalian gong'an lishi changbian*, p. 329.
25. Ibid., pp. 255–7.
26. Ibid., p. 257.
27. Ibid., pp. 362–7.
28. Statistics for 1944 list 202,807 Japanese residents in the city of Dalian. Lüda gaishu bianji weiyuan hui (ed.) (1949) *Lüda gaishu* [A brief account of Lüda] (Lüda: Lüda gaishu bianji weiyuan hui yinxing), p. 11.
29. Hess, *Big Brother is Watching*, pp. 160–83.
30. Zhang, *Dalian gong'an lishi changbian*, pp. 50–1.
31. Ishidō Kiyomoto (1997) *Dairen no Nihonjin hikiage no kiroku* [A record of the repatriation of Japanese from Dairen] (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten), pp. 80–1.
32. Dalian shi gong'anju shizhi yanjiushi bian, *Dalian gong'anshi xuanbian*, vol. 1, p. 234.
33. Zhang, *Dalian gong'an lishi changbian*, p. 63.
34. *Renmin hushengbao,* 17 March 1946.
35. Hess, *Big Brother is Watching*, pp. 160–83.
36. See Wakeman, *Cleanup*, and Lieberthal, *Revolution and Tradition,* pp. 53–77.
37. Hess, *From Colonial Port to Socialist Metropolis*, pp. 373–90.
38. Zhonggong Dalianshiwei dangshiyanjiushi (ed.) (2011) *Dalian kangmei yuanchao yundong jishi* [A record of the Resist America Aid Korea campaign in Dalian] (Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi chubanshe), p. 79.
39. Ibid., pp. 79–80.
40. Dalian shi gong'anju shizhi yanjiushi bian, *Dalian gong'anshi xuanbian*, vol. 2, pp. 153–4.
41. See Lieberthal, *Revolution and Tradition in Tientsin*, pp. 108–18, and Gao, *The Communist Takeover of Hangzhou,* pp. 141–3.
42. Dalian shi gong'anju shizhi yanjiushi bian, *Dalian gong'anshi xuanbian*, vol. 1, p. 158.
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CHAPTER 5

To See and Be Seen: Horse Racing in Shanghai, 1848–1945

Ning Jennifer Chang

Early modern China was characterized by rapid urbanization. In addition to administrative units such as provincial capitals, prefectural seats, and county towns, as well as the trade-intensive cities and towns of Jiangnan, in the second half of the nineteenth century, there also emerged 77 trading ports, the majority along the coast.[1]

The increase in the scale of cities, as well as the improvements made to the fabric of the city, prompted more and more people to congregate there. When analyzing this historical progression, one cannot help but ask what it was that drew large numbers of people to abandon their land and gather in a narrow city space. In other words, what kind of opportunities and lifestyles did cities represent for people of that time? The answers to these questions naturally vary, due to the differences in sizes of cities and their geographical conditions. But generally speaking, for a city to be habitable, it has to provide certain living conditions: Firstly, it needs to have an established supply system, allowing its residents to obtain basic food, drinking water, and shelter; secondly, it must have plenty of employment opportunities so as to enable those residents who leave the land to support their families; and finally, whether a walled city or a market town without walls, it should have a force to protect its inhabitants. However, these merely constitute basic urban facilities which are common requirements for a city

N.J. Chang (✉)
Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan

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of any era or region. For a city to be considered a greatly advanced modern metropolis, it has to satisfy yet another requirement: It must provide its inhabitants with various amusements to enjoy in their leisure time. This enables cities to flourish, making them even more attractive and entertaining, while increasing the number of 'things' which can be consumed. These 'things' can include goods and places which can only be accessed through payment, such as shops, restaurants, brothels, and gambling houses, and also sights that can be enjoyed free of charge. Chen Hsi-yuan's research on late Qing Shanghai and the annual processions for the City God to make his tour of inspection, which were held at each of the three Spirit Festivals (Tombsweeping Festival, Ghost Festival in the seventh month, and the Later Ghost Festival in the tenth month),[2] together with He Qiliang's research on the early years of the Republic and the great funeral procession after Sheng Xuanhai's death, which was the sensation of the day, indicate that both these events drew crowds of thousands of people gathering to watch.[3]

In addition to these religious festivals and funeral processions, there was also another notable spectacle in the treaty port cities of modern China: the biannual spring and autumn race meetings. The number of spectators at the races ranged from thousands to several tens of thousands. Every year, the event provided city residents with regular entertainment as well as a topic of conversation. What makes these race meetings distinctive is that the history of British horse racing in China covers the same period as the history of treaty ports in China—from the signing of the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842 to 1943. The distribution of the racecourses also corresponds to the locations of the treaty port cities. Regardless of the size or scale of these cities, wherever there were foreigners taking up residence, there was always the obligatory racecourse nearby. It could be described as a tangible representation of treaty port culture. Since horse racing was a leisure activity imported from outside China, it was not possible to dissociate it from the foreign concessions and colonial society. Combining as it did the dual elements of sport and gambling, this created a constant tension with traditional Confucian values. At the same time, it is also an extremely good case study for understanding the cultural translation process, and observing how a foreign activity from a different culture was indigenized through a new interpretation.

This chapter explores the relationship between horse racing and the treaty port cities, with the central focus being trendsetting Shanghai, with the other treaty port cities as a secondary focus. It identifies horse racing as a defining element in the shaping of consumption in early modern Chinese cities. Because of its high profile, horse racing was both the most

distinct feature of the treaty port cities and the driving force behind the transformation of urban culture. During different periods, horse racing served respectively as a spectacle which could be enjoyed free of charge and as paid-for entertainment. Over time, most notably at the dawn of the twentieth century, it became the main force in promoting the popularization of recreation.

This chapter also argues that the most important characteristic of horse racing and urban culture is the concept of 'seeing and being seen'. It shows that the pleasure of watching was not only the reason for the emergence of such urban spectacles, but also formed the basis and motivation for urban consumption. In order to explain this concept, this chapter is divided into five sections. Section one explores the channels through which British-style horse racing was imported into China, as well as examining why the sport was embraced whole-heartedly in colonial society; section two explains the importance of seeing and being seen for Western spectators, taking as a case study the ladies attending and watching races. Section three analyzes the reasons why Chinese people living in treaty port cities toward the end of the nineteenth century showed such enthusiasm for watching horse races, while also examining the importance of the pleasure of spectating within the context of urban culture and life. Sections four and five illustrate the move toward popularization of leisure activities in treaty port cities at the beginning of the twentieth century, and identify the role horse racing played in this process.

Pillar of the Foreign Community

The introduction of British-style horse racing into China can be traced back to the time of the East India Company. According to Austin Coates, the first race meeting in China took place in Macau sometime in 1798 or 1799. At the time, trade was confined to the Thirteen Factories area of Canton for both staff employed by the East India Company and private merchants. Not only were conditions in the area cramped, traders did not have the company of their families. As soon as the low season arrived, they would retire to Macau for a break, where they would organize horse races for entertainment. Since these races were a rare embellishment in an otherwise monotonous life, the foreign community would attend in their finest clothes.[4] In the mid-nineteenth century, after the signing of the Treaty of Nanjing, traders were allowed to move north to other newly opened treaty ports. The social life of the foreign community had also become positively English by this time, owing to Britain's long dominance in trade

and the number of British troops and traders in China. Thus, it was that horse racing became a major annual event that brought the community together.[5] The foreign community in each port looked for an adequate site and held races there as soon as they had solved the basic issues of settlement. In the autumn of 1842, British troops began racing horses on the island of Gulangyu 鼓浪屿 in Amoy. Subsequently, in the spring of 1848, Shanghai held its first race meeting, and horse racing spread to many other treaty ports over the next two decades.[6]

Most of the earliest race meetings in the treaty port cities were simple and economical due to lack of funds. Rather than an official competition, they resembled a 'local picnic on an extended scale'.[7] But after the first race meetings, the foreign community in each treaty port rallied together and formulated a plan to ensure the races could continue to be held. Since speed was the main element of British-style horse racing, the racecourse had to be wide, curved, and oval-shaped in order to facilitate viewing. As space was limited in the concession, the land for the racecourse had to be outside the concessions, and the foreign community in each port made great efforts in securing and preparing it. Next, they took great pains to establish stables and stands, collect funds, and set up race clubs to organize race meetings. However, increasing land prices and damage caused by floods and sandstorms meant that racecourses repeatedly had to be moved to new venues until they found permanent locations.[8] The persistent efforts of the foreign community and their deep commitment to organizing races were due to several factors.

Firstly, it was their way of imitating the lifestyles of the metropole. In addition, horse racing played an important role in redirecting the attention of the younger members of the foreign communities in the treaty ports, thereby maintaining order in the newly established colonial society. Foreign communities in China were small with a gender imbalance of men over women. Consequently, life could be best described as dull and lonely. The mix of nationalities was also a problem. For instance, in Shanghai, half of the foreigners were British, and the rest were, in descending order, American, German, French, Dutch, and other. In order to prevent the 2000 young men, who were herded into the narrow space of the concessions and, moreover, were of different nationalities, from fighting, drinking, gambling, or becoming infatuated with local girls, the elders of the concessions encouraged them to take part in sports so as to exhaust their energy and redirect their attention, thus maintaining the wellbeing of body and mind.[9]

The heads of the trading houses and the elders of the community not only encouraged the youngsters to ride and race but often joined in and assisted them in such diversions.[10] Many owned big stables and even acted as jockeys in the races, and thus competed with each other in both trade and on the racecourse. The intense rivalry between the Jardine and the Dent families, for example, dominated the racing scene in Shanghai between 1857 and 1867.[11] Horse racing thus became one of the pillars of the foreign communities along with churches, clubs, freemasonry, national societies, militias, and other sporting activities.

To See and Be Seen

Horse racing also possessed its own entertainment value. From the point of view of the audiences, the pleasure mostly came from 'seeing and being seen'. As each season's races came round every spring and autumn, even more important than seeing the races was seeing the rich attire of the ladies who had come to watch. Examining *The North China Herald*'s reporting on the races, the first topic to be addressed was that of the weather, which not only affected the performance of the horses, but also the number of ladies who would turn out to watch the races. For instance, on the first day of the autumn races in Shanghai in 1873, the weather was unusual: Although the sun did make an appearance, there was a bone-chilling wind. Thus on the side of the stand that was in the sun, it seemed like summer, but on the side that was in the shade it was like a winter's day. Naturally, the ladies present were all at the sunny end. *The North China Herald*, noting that these ladies had been invited by the members of the Race Club, did not neglect to add the line 'it was the sunnier for their presence' to their report.[12] In 1878 on the first day of the Shanghai spring races, the weather was warm. To everyone's surprise, the number of ladies attending exceeded the usual number of a dozen or so. The arrival of the ladies was described as 'an assemblage of the fairer portion of humanity that at once imparted colour to the meeting and relieved it from that feeling of dullness that has so often prevailed'.[13] Generally speaking, regardless of which treaty port they were held in, all the race meetings were graced with the presence of ladies. The presence of women was considered so important that *The North China Herald* opined that three things were necessary for a race meeting: 'fair faces, bright sunshine, good sport', and that the first listed, the presence of ladies, was the most important.[14]

That ladies were willing to brave the sandstorms to attend the races undeniably raised the morale of the jockeys and horse owners. Naturally, the ladies had their own motivations as well—they did not attend simply to see, but to be seen. The biannual spring and autumn race meetings were such grand gatherings for the foreign community that they provided perfect occasions for the ladies to show off the latest fashions. Seeking the spotlight on these rare social occasions, they would have stylish new clothes tailored in advance and would prepare plenty of outfits, which good weather would enable them to showcase.[15] In comparison with the autumn race meetings, the spring meetings provided an especially good opportunity to showcase their new clothes, as the ladies were able to rid themselves of their thick winter coats and reveal their well-cut spring styles and matching fashionable shoes and hats. For instance, on the first day of the 1895 Tianjin spring race meeting, it was pleasantly warm and so, braving the hardships of travel, the ladies chose to bless the races with their presence. There was a fairly large assembly of ladies, 'gay in smart frocks and elegant with divine millinery', as a former Consul said, 'whose presence indefinitely enhanced the general interest'.[16] At the 1899 Tianjin spring race meeting, 'many ladies graced the proceedings, and there was the usual aesthetic display of dainty dresses and lovely ducklings of bonnets'.[17]

An Exotic Fun Spectacle

Foreigners raced horses in order to encourage community cohesion, but these occasions also proved an amusement for the Chinese population of the treaty ports. When the racing season arrived, the spectators would brave the journey to the racecourse outside the city, and transform that originally desolate land temporarily 'with a bustling atmosphere'.[18] The phenomenon of Chinese attendance at the races was like that of the ladies: The degree of enthusiasm was directly proportional to the pleasantness of the weather. Taking Shanghai as an example, in 1878, the peak number of Chinese in attendance reached 20,000.[19] In a city which then had a population of 200,000 on the basis of these figures, around 10 percent of the Chinese population in Shanghai would turn out to watch the races.[20] However, except for the local Daotai, the county magistrate, and the magistrate of the Mixed Court who could get invitations to sit on the Grand Stand, after 1898 the majority of Chinese were unable to get in the venue[21] and were merely able to stand outside the racecourse, peering over

the trenches that separated them from the track. *Shenbao* 申报 described the crowds who gathered on the north and east sides of the Shanghai racetrack in the following terms: 'There were those wearing the short tunic of the craftsman, others in long scholar's gowns, as well as sons of wealthy families in silk cloth and white-haired elders. Still further, there were old women and young ladies, all treading on each other's toes and stretching their necks to attend and striving for a glimpse [of the action]'.[22]

Most of *Shenbao*'s journalists were not conversant with Western languages and when reporting on the outcome of the race were either unable to give details or often relied on hearsay. Hence, they would distinguish the horses and jockeys by means of color, for example 'the victor was the black horse, its rider in red and wearing a black vest',[23] or else 'there were many competitors, and it is said that the winner was the American firm Russell & Co., but it is still not yet properly known'.[24] With journalists such as this, one can well imagine the level of knowledge available to ordinary spectators. However, this did not hinder the crowd's delight in sightseeing. Sometimes, the weather was bad and the visibility was not good, and thus anything of value that had been seen was questionable. For example, in 1880, one spectator described it thus: 'Our quality of vision was poor due to the distance, and in a flash they had passed us by, the riders like ants and the horses like beans. I was just about to watch but the gale struck me in the face, the dust blinding the eyes so I could not bear it.'[25] The far distance and insufficient information added to the fact of the weather meant that the phenomenon of watching horse races in the nineteenth century was undoubtedly about watching the bustle and the crowds. However, it was precisely because these Chinese crowds were outsiders looking in who did not mind about winning or losing that the stimulating atmosphere of excitement was so pure.[26]

Horse racing was not the only thing worth watching. During the two seasonal meetings held each year, the area around the edge of the racecourse became a temporary leisure space, and for those few days, it would be like a Chinese festival or a Western holiday. For the Westerners, for the few days of the race meeting, the consulates, customs office, and the Mixed Court would suspend work for the afternoon, while foreign firms, banks, and factories would also close down for the half day. All taboos were off. The Shanghai Municipal Police usually adopted a stern approach toward gambling, but were relatively relaxed during the races. Any foreigners setting up gambling counters outside the racetrack were not prevented from doing so, and thus the area around would be filled with gambling stands

and wine stalls.[27] As for the Chinese, as the foreign institutions closed, any enterprises which had doings with foreigners would also be quiet. Many businesses which did not have direct dealings with foreigners also felt the pull of novelty in the horse races and came out to spectate. Aside from the literati, young men from wealthy families, rich merchants, high officials, craftsmen, and peddlers, the attendees also included famous courtesans, young daughters of rich families, and pretty daughters of more humble homes. Even Shanghai's silk-spinning factory women and those who ran their own stores would call their aunts and sisters to take advantage of the horse racing holidays to make merry.[28]

Within this space, the most attractive aspect was that men were allowed to watch women without restrictions regardless of whether they were decent women or courtesans from Shanghai's brothels.[29] For the many 'hungry men' who normally did not have the opportunity to enter theaters or restaurants to gaze upon the grace of the courtesans nor the opportunity to meet the ladies of rich families, this time was tantamount to a godsend. At the outer circle of the racecourse, they would so busy themselves with running back and forth and looking around that they 'saw no person on horseback, but sighted only the beauties in carriages'.[30]

While men used the opportunity provided by the race meetings to watch people, Shanghai's high-ranking prostitutes would seize the golden opportunity to be seen. By this time, they were often discussed in local tabloid newspapers, and the subject of gossip in Shanghai society. Stars require both stage and audience, and the biannual race meetings were the best stage of all. From the 1870s, the highest-ranking prostitutes, known as 'changsan'長三 and 'yao'er' 么二, began to see the races as an excellent opportunity to display new clothing and makeup. When the date of the race meeting approached, the courtesans would all purchase outfits, hire a good carriage, and prepare to set forth with their clients to see the race. The carriages were also carefully chosen, the best being the four-wheeled coach with glass windows. Described as 'glass on four sides [of the coach], a line of carriages with charming and beautiful women [inside]', passersby could see within at a glance.[31] Sometimes if they had no client to cover the costs, wealthy courtesans would foot the bill themselves and set out hand in hand with their female friends.[32]

The temporary leisure space which formed around the racecourse was not only a platform for courtesans to display themselves, but also an opportunity for others who liked to be in the limelight. In the early twentieth century, such usage of the horse races to seek the spotlight

extended to society's fashionable men and women.[33] At the same time, adverts began to appear in newspapers for 'up-to-the-minute dress materials for watching the horseraces', marketing 'newly arrived silver-ribbed brocades in many colours from abroad' and 'new multi-coloured coat fabrics woven with golden threads'.[34] Thus watching the races and watching those watching the races became unified, and together became one of the city sights of late Qing Shanghai.

From Outsider to Insider

The custom of watching the biannual races from the sides of the track persisted until the end of the 1910s when it was gradually supplanted by entering the track to bet on the horses. There are several factors that caused this change. Firstly, a number of the treaty ports experienced substantial growth during the early twentieth century.[35] The rapid increase in the population of these cities caused occupational and class differentiation. Between the two extremes of the rising bourgeoisie and the underclass of laborers who struggled for food and shelter, there was also a middle class. Broadly speaking, this included company managers, store owners, factory girls, office staff, ordinary workers, school teachers, and even the new professionals, such as lawyers, journalists, writers, doctors, and accountants. Some of these were well-off, others were not, but they had similar requirements for entertainment to fill their time outside work or the office. Aside from the traditional pleasures of smoking, gambling, and prostitutes, they desired new, modern entertainment appropriate to the times but which could be afforded by the masses. As flourishing, modern cities, the treaty ports (or that is to say the quick-thinking businessmen within the treaty ports) sensed this need and issued two responses. The first was to combine many forms of entertainment into one, creating a new style of leisure; and the second was to mass-orientate the pleasures previously reserved for the elite, allowing ordinary people to enjoy them for a comparatively low price.

In the 1910s, Shanghai's amusement parks emerged in light of this first response. They took the activities which had previously been conducted separately in teahouses, theaters, and fairs and housed them together in a single building, creating something like a department store for leisure activities.[36] Provided one had an entrance ticket, people could spend an entire day within enjoying Chinese operas, theater, storytelling, films, riddle-guessing, magic shows, distorting mirrors, and even boxing

matches. Such entertainment, in addition to the popularity of films with sound and the rise of department stores, made the trend of increasingly mass-orientated leisure in the treaty ports very clear, and thus the Race Clubs also had no way of persisting in their former aloof attitude and insisting that horse racing continue to be a leisure activity for foreigners.

Aside from the impetus to the popularization of leisure provided by the city's development, the second spur to the Race Clubs of each treaty port to change their tune was provided by the establishment of international race clubs by Chinese merchants. Following a half century of observing and imitating, at the beginning of the twentieth century, a group of Chinese 'sportsmen' had emerged. These were the newly risen metropolitan elite, who had intimate connections with foreign firms, maritime customs, or missionary schools, either personally or through their families. Having grasped the know-how of British-style horseracing, they wanted to enter the Western-run Race Clubs and be treated the same as the foreign horse owners. However, the Western-run Race Clubs were closed groups, from which Chinese were excluded. Following this setback, together with a few Westerners sympathetic to their plight, these Chinese people established their own race clubs in Shanghai, Tianjin, Hankou, and Qingdao. They then used the clubs as an opportunity for social interaction between Chinese and foreigners and to expand their interpersonal networks, thereby consolidating their newly acquired social and economic statuses within the concessions.

Of the many Chinese race clubs that were established, Shanghai's International Recreation Club (IRC) was undoubtedly the pioneer. It was established in 1908 and presented a challenge to the Shanghai Race Club (SRC). Aside from the rise of Chinese owners and jockeys, a more serious issue was the admission of the Chinese to the racecourse. In the early years of horseracing, Chinese people had watched alongside Westerners without any discrimination. However after 1898, in order to maintain order, Chinese had been forbidden from entering the racecourse.[37] Contrary to SRC's practice, IRC adopted a policy of gate money. All spectators, whether foreign or Chinese, were permitted entry to the racecourse to watch the races so long they bought tickets. The ticket prices started at two yuan for a first class ticket, and one yuan for second class,[38] although later this was reduced to one yuan for all tickets.[39] That the IRC admitted Chinese spectators made conspicuous the unfairness of the SRC regulations and public opinion began to turn against them. The news coverage in the Chinese newspapers gradually moved from praising the importance

Westerners attached to military preparations to satirizing SRC policy, describing the racecourse as a 'Pleasure Place for the Arrogance of the White Race' that Chinese were not permitted to set foot in.[40]

Aside from the challenge presented by the IRC, the SRC itself was facing a crisis of transformation in the early twentieth century. In the early period, foreigners numbered only a few thousand. In general, most people knew each other and so holding the races was rather like holding a large-scale picnic. However in 1905, the population of foreigners in the International Settlement passed 10,000 and moreover non-British and non-American nationalities such as Russians and Japanese continued to flood in. When holding races, it became normal for foreigners meeting not to know each other, and the races thus lost their original function of promoting social cohesion and strengthening of community consciousness. Under such circumstances, the SRC was forced to reconsider its policies and position. After almost ten years of resistance and public pressure, the SRC finally changed its tune in 1919. With the spring races of that year imminent, the SRC began to advertise in all the major Chinese newspapers for the first time, inviting Chinese to enter the racecourse. The ticket price was six yuan for all four days, or three yuan for a single day. Women were given preferential treatment, and so a four-day ticket was three yuan and a day ticket was two yuan for them.[41]

The SRC not only admitted Chinese spectators to the enclosure of the racecourse, but it also followed in the footsteps of the IRC and greatly increased the number of races held. When the IRC had first begun to hold races in 1911, as they knew well that they could not compete with the time-honored spring and autumn race meetings, so they adopted a 'small and delicate' policy. Aside from the formal meeting held over two days, they began to hold regular afternoon events. To encourage city residents to attend, when these were not held on weekend days when all were off, they were held on Chinese festivals such as Dragon Boat Festival and Mid-Autumn Festival; later national holidays such as National Day and Republic Day were added to the roster as well.[42] This schedule was clearly well-suited to the requirements of city residents and from 1919 onward, the SRC began to imitate their practices. In addition to the large race meetings held in spring and autumn, they also began to hold single day one-off events on Saturday afternoons.[43] Thus all at once, Shanghai came to have more than 30 races in a year. Aside from July and August when the weather was too hot to race, each month had at least one or as many as six days on which horse racing could be watched.[44] In 1926, Shanghai's

second Chinese organization was established, the Chinese Jockey Club,[45] and thus the number of race days increased to 68.[46] Thus, horse racing had now been entirely popularized. It was no longer an occasional event, a holiday, or festival anticipated by all, but was an everyday consumer activity for the city's middle classes. The content and meaning of watching horse racing had thus changed completely.

Betting and Watching

In horse racing, betting and watching were two sides of the same coin. Betting made the races more exciting, while watching the races sharpened the success or loss that came with betting. In the beginning, the size of bets was quite limited, but as the numbers of foreigners increased, the bets also increased in size. In 1894, the SRC introduced totalizators to help punters understand the size and distribution of bets.[47] It was at this time that betting became an important part of Shanghai's horse racing scene. In the early years, although Chinese spectators had heard about betting, as they were unable to enter the course they could not participate. However as the IRC and the SRC successively opened up to them, the Shanghainese were quick to discover that not only had they moved from distant viewing to close spectating, but that they had discovered a whole new form of gambling.

Betting on horseraces can be divided into two main forms: pari-mutuel and cash sweeps. In the first form, after a set commission has been deducted from the pool of all the bets, the remainder is divided between the winners. In this style of bet, the banker merely plays a managerial role and does not participate in the betting. The betting is between the punters themselves. The advantage of this style of betting is that provided one bets on the favorite, the probability of winning is high. Under the winners-divide-all rule, winning money is relatively easy. However, the share of the prize money is also likely to be limited. It is common for a bet of one yuan to win a return of only one yuan and two jiao. It is only when a rare upset occurs that it is possible to come away with a substantial pot.[48]

Cash sweeps were divided into 'lottery tickets' and 'championship tickets'. The former were in play at every race, while the latter were only available at the final race of each season. Horse tickets were issued in advance, and the day before the races ticket numbers would be drawn and then the numbers of the horses competing in the races. If that horse came first in the competition, then the person holding that ticket would also claim first

prize. The prize money was the total made from sale of tickets minus commission. Of the remainder, seven tenths was allocated to the first prize, two tenths to the second, and a tenth to third place. The distinguishing characteristic of such cash sweeps was the highly concentrated prize money, especially in the championship stakes. A win in these was a true windfall, but the winning rate was extremely low.[49]

Of these two betting methods, the cash sweeps system was extremely close to the late Qing game of 'pakapoo; 白鴿票' (literally 'white dove tickets', a particular form of prize lottery from Luzon in the Philippines) and so it was not unfamiliar to the Chinese. However, pari-mutuel betting was something fresh that had not been seen before by the Shanghainese. At the time, Shanghai already had many types of gambling. However, in all these games, there was normally only one winner, whereas in pari-mutuel, it was possible for many people at the racecourse to win at the same time, making it highly entertaining. Moreover, the traditional gambling games were not large in scale and only limited numbers of people could participate. The pari-mutuel system could allow hundreds or thousands of punters to bet at the same time. Thus, as soon as the SRC opened the racecourse to Chinese clientele, people crowed in 'like water running down a ravine'.[50] Spectators frequently numbered 7000 to 8000 people per race.[51]

After the opening-up of the racecourses, the Chinese were no longer merely outsiders watching the fun. To assist the city dwellers in attaining a greater understanding of horse racing, from the autumn of 1922 onward, *Shenbao* engaged SRC staff member Fang Bofen 方伯奮 to write comprehensive race reports. From this point onward, the colors were no longer the sole distinguishing characteristic in descriptions of the competition, as in 'the second race, of fifteen horses, the black horse with the rider in yellow with a white hat belonging to a British company won'.[52] Now, the reports clearly gave the correct names of the race, the participating horses, their jockeys, and the weights each horse carried as well as the prize money for each win and place. They even listed the names of those who had not won, making the races clear and comprehensible to all.[53] Aside from reporting on the race results, before the races Fang Bofen would also provide readers with information on the horses' recent trials and the form of the jockeys,[54] and on the day of the races he would publish his predictions.[55] In 1923, horse racing veteran Qiu Rushan 邱如山, in order to assist the race-goers, went a step further and published a pocket-size form book, entitled *Saima Zhinan* 賽馬指南 (A guide to horse racing).

This guide listed the performance of each horse for the year and noted whether the horses in question preferred soft or hard going, making it easy for punters to decide.[56]

Under such intensive publicity and educational efforts, city residents gradually grasped the techniques and methods of betting. Simultaneously, their spectating habits began to change. The former hectic dashes to watch the excitement that had characterized Chinese viewers were replaced by spectators who sat in a fixed place gazing with rapt attention at the races. The visual interaction between seeing and being seen in the racecourse naturally persisted. For instance, Chinese and Western ladies continued to use the opportunity provided to display their costumes,[57] and those who went solely to watch people still felt that watching the faces of those who had won money was more interesting than the races themselves.[58] However, as the majority of spectators now worried about gains and losses, the focus shifted from watching people to watching the galloping horses and their jockeys.

With the gaze of the spectators concentrated on the outcome of the races, the preparations for and self-consciousness of 'being seen' shifted to the winning owners and jockeys. After victory had been determined, the owners of the first three finishers had the privilege of walking through the front of the grand stand along with the winning horses and receiving the applause of the spectators. This was the moment of glory for owner and jockey, but also the focus for being seen.[59] Following the spread of photography, their moment in the gaze of the crowd could further be made eternal, incarnated in photographic form and published in a newspaper or magazine for yet more people to see. Or otherwise the image could be enlarged, placed in a frame, and hung on the wall for passersby to see again and think back, and discuss once again the events of the day. Or else it was simply kept in an album and treasured by the owner so that henceforth no matter how life changed, the image traveled with him as proof to later sons and grandsons of that instant.[60]

Conclusion

The history of horse racing in China not only shows the development of the treaty ports, but also presents in microcosm the changes experienced by the modern Chinese city. Across China during this period, the cities were changing, with some older urban centers declining, while new ones developed. One of the problems of development was how to cope

with an increase in the city's population. Some of the other chapters in this volume have emphasized safety and environment, but this chapter has emphasized urban consumption and especially recreation. It proposes that what attracted people to the city was the 'good life'. However, what precisely is living the good life? Aside from eating and drinking well and having money to spend, a factor that cannot be neglected is the abundance of dazzling, unprecedented new entertainments, including horse races, amusement parks, taxi dancing, cinemas, and department stores. These are all leisure activities that can only be provided by the city. Among all these, the horse races were a rare spectacle from which different nationalities and social groups drew different things according to their needs. They thus fully embodied the Chinese-Western mix of the treaty port city. When horse racing first entered China, it was used by the leaders of the foreign community to promote social cohesion and to exhaust the energy of their youth. Meanwhile, the Chinese population used the gray area on the outer circle of the racecourse as a space for wild display and spectating. As the population of the treaty ports increased, the race clubs responded to the demands of city residents and opened the racecourses to the Chinese. The gambling-loving population was thus able to come and enjoy the excitement of betting, while the sport-loving Chinese elite were able to become jockeys and horse owners alongside the foreigners.

Leisure entertainment embodies all forms of sensory experience. Among them, to watch and to listen are paramount, hence the phrases 'to feast the eyes' and 'to delight the ears'. Thus, these 'to see and be seen' activities have always existed, but in horse racing, the element of viewing was especially intense and the scale was also much larger than is conventional. Whether within or outside the racecourse, or as an insider or an outsider of the game, actions were repeatedly taken to see and be seen. There were those watching people, those watching horses, men watching women, women watching men, members of the same sex sizing each other up, judging by appearance, dressing, physique, and manner, and all watching for the outcome. It can be said that without the element of spectating, there would be no such thing as horse racing. To prioritize and greatly expand the visual is one characteristic of the modern entertainment industry. From cinema and television to the recent development of the internet and smartphones, all have advanced step by step toward the absolute domination of the visual, and horse racing was truly the vanguard of this movement. From another perspective, to see and be seen also touches upon the essence of consumption. Whether consuming an item or a loca-

tion, the act of consumption itself and the results of consumption both require to be seen before enjoyment can be fully achieved. Again, in this regard, horse racing was a pioneer of consumer culture.

Notes

1. Fei Chengkang (1991) *Zhongguo zujieshi* [History of the concessions and settlements in China] (Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexueyuan chubanshe), appendices 1 and 2, pp. 427–36.
2. Chen Hsi-yuan (2009) 'Wangfan yu miao tan zhijian: cong Shanghai sanxunhui kan guanfang sidian yu minjian xinyang de jiaojie yu hudong' [Travelling between the altar and the temple: observing the connection and interaction between state cults and popular beliefs in Late Qing Shanghai by the case of the three spirit festivals], Paper presented to international conference on 'City splendor: the urban living for 1500 years in East Asia', Fudan University, Shanghai, 26–29 March 2009.
3. He Qiliang (2016) 'Spectacular Death: Sheng Xuanhuai's Funeral Procession in 1917', *Twentieth-Century China*, 41:2, 136–158.
4. Austin Coates (1994) *China Races* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press), pp. 4, 10–11.
5. Coates, *China Races*, p. 13.
6. Coates, *China Races*, pp. 14, 27, 38, 49, 54, 58, 62, 80, 86.
7. George Lanning (1921) *The History of Shanghai* (Shanghai: Kelly & Walsh Limited), p. 431.
8. This was particularly the case in Tianjin and Shanghai. The racecourse in Tianjin shifted from place to place owing to dust storms and floods. It was not until 1887 that the race club acquired its permanent course with the help of Gustav Detring, the Commissioner of Tianjin Customs. The racecourse in Shanghai also moved twice due to increases in land value. See Coates, *China Races*, pp. 47–8, 91–3; Xu Baorun (1990) 'Paomating lueduo guoren tudi jilue' [A rough record of how the racecourse plundered Chinese people's land] in *Jiu Shanghai de fangdichan jingying* [The real estate industry in old Shanghai] (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe), pp. 169–78.
9. For more on the role of sports in colonial society, see Chang Ning (2000) 'Zai Hua Yingren jian de wenhua chongtu: Shanghai "yundongjia" duikang "niaolei tuhaizhe", 1890–1920', [Cultural con-

flicts in the British community in China: Shanghai 'sportsmen' vs. the 'bird slaughterer', 1890–1920], *Bulletin of the Institute of Modern History Academia Sinica*, 34, 89–144.
10. Hornby, *Sir Edmund Hornby*, p. 263.
11. Coates, *China Races*, pp. 36–7, 39.
12. 'Shanghai Races', (6 Nov. 1873) *North China Herald* (hereafter *NCH*), 393.
13. 'Shanghai Spring Races', (4 May 1878) *NCH*, 457.
14. 'Tientsin Races', (20 May 1887) *NCH*, 552.
15. 'Tientsin Spring Race Meeting', (25 May 1894) *NCH*, 814.
16. 'Tientsin Spring Race Meeting', (31 May 1895) *NCH*, 826.
17. 'Tientsin Spring Race Meeting', (29 May 1899) *NCH*, 974.
18. 'Ji Xiren saimashi' [Notes on Westerners' race meetings], (3 November 1873), *Shenbao*, 2.
19. 'Shanghai Spring Races', (4 May 1878) *NCH*, 460.
20. According to the *Shanghai County Gazette*, the population in Shanghai in the 1860s was around 540,000. This however included both people in the city and in the surrounding rural area. Based on the percentage of people living in the city and rural areas, it was estimated the city population should be around 200,000. Here, the author thanks Professor Wu Renshu for his advice and assistance. See Ying Baoshi and Yu Yue (1975) *Shanghai xianzhi* [Shanghai County Gazetteer] vol. 5 (Taipei: Chengwen Reprint), pp. 378–9.
21. 'Qingkan da paoma' [Ad.: Please see the grand horse racing], (30 April 1899), *Shenbao,* 4.
22. 'Paoma jingxiang' [Scenes at the race meeting], (3 November 1874) *Shenbao*, 2.
23. 'Zaiji paoma' [Second report on the race meeting], (5 November 1877) *Shenbao*, 3.
24. 'Saima xushu' [Further report on the race meeting], (2 May 1877) *Shenbao*, 2–3.
25. 'Lun paoma' [Discussing the race meeting], (3 November 1880) *Shenbao*, 1.
26. 'Yue benbao chunsai jishishu hou' [Thoughts after reading the spring race meeting report by this newspaper], (8 May 1896) *Shenbao*, 1.
27. 'Dutu jiaokuai' [The cunning gamblers], (1 May 1895) *Shenbao*, 3; 'Shanghai Autumn Races Meeting', (7 November 1879) *NCH*, 455.

28. Bao Tianxiao (20 March 1930) 'Xinshang wenxin' [Warm at heart], *Shenbao*, 11.
29. 'Chunsai sanzhi' [Notes on the third day of the spring races], (5 May 1892) *Shenbao*, 2.
30. *Lun paoma*, p. 1.
31. *Ji Xiren saimashi*, p. 2.
32. *Lun paoma*, p. 1.
33. Zui Chisheng (15 November 1929) 'Ershi nian qian zhi pao-maxun' [Recollections of the racing heat twenty years ago], *Shenbao*, 19.
34. 'Kan paoma jishi yiliao' [Ad.: Up-to-the-minute dress materials for watching the horse races], (4 November 1900) *Youxi bao* [Entertainment], 3.
35. See Liu Shiji (2012) 'Cong zhucheng dao chaicheng: jinshi Zhongguo kouan chengshi chengzhang de moshi' [From building cities to demolishing cities: the model of constructing and expanding modern Chinese treaty port cities] in Liu Shiji and Wang Yijun (eds.) *Haiyang lishi wenhua yu bianjie zhengzhi* [Maritime history and culture and the politics of the borderlands] (Kaohsiung: Center for Humanities at National Sun Yat-sen University), pp. 55–83.
36. Frederic Wakeman Jr. (1995) 'Licensing Leisure: The Chinese Nationalists' Attempt to Regulate Shanghai, 1927–49', *Journal of Asian Studies*, 54: 1, 19 and 26.
37. Qiong Lu, 'Paoma' [Horse racing], (7 May 1914), *Shenbao*, 14.
38. 'Wanguo tiyuhui diyi qi youxi saima guangao' [Notice on the first Gymkhana meeting of the International Recreation Club], (4 March 1911), *Shenbao*, 2.
39. 'Wanguo tiyuhui saima guangao' [Notice on the race meeting of the International Recreation Club], (2 Jun. 1911) *Shenbao*, 1.
40. Qiong, *Paoma*, p. 14.
41. 'Shanghai chunji da paoma' [Ad.: The grand spring race meeting in Shanghai], (1 May 1919) *Shenbao*, 2.
42. Ye Mengying (2 October 1925) 'Shuo saima' [Discussion on horse racing], *Shenbao*, 17.
43. 'Xishang saima ji' [Report on the race meeting by Western merchants], (30 March 1919) *Shenbao*, 11.
44. 'Minguo shi'er nian zhi saima riqi biao' [Racing program for the year 1913], (29 December 1922) *Shenbao*, 14.

45. 'Zhongguo saima hui chengli' [The establishment of the Chinese Jockey Club], (9 March 1926) *Shenbao*, 15.
46. 'Minguo shiqi nian saima riqi biao' [Racing program for the year 1928], (17 December 1927) *Shenbao*, 16.
47. 'The Shanghai Race Club', (27 April 1894) *NCH*, 646–7.
48. Liu Lun (1943) 'Shanghai de dubo jiguan yu suo yinqi de shehui wenti' [Gambling organizations and the social problems they caused], B.A. thesis of the Department of Social Science, University of Shanghai, pp. 20–1.
49. Ibid.
50. Wu Yunmeng, 'Tebie saima huaxu lu' [Highlights of the extra meeting of the Shanghai Race Club], (24 March 1928) *Shenbao*, 17.
51. '*Saima Zhinan* fashou yuyue' [*A Guide to Horse Racing* available for purchase and subscription], (11 Aug. 1923) *Shenbao*, 17.
52. 'Chunsai chuzhi' [First report of the spring race meeting], (4 May 1910) *Shenbao*, 19.
53. 'Shanghai disi ci tebie saima ji' [Report on the fourth extra meeting of the Shanghai Race Club], (8 October 1922) *Shenbao*, 14.
54. Bo Fe, 'Shanghai qiusai xiaoxi ji shima zhi chengji' [Information on the autumn race meeting of the Shanghai Race Club], (20 October 1922) *Shenbao*, 14; Bo Fen, 'Shanghai xingqi er san zhi shima chengji' [The trial results of last Tuesday and Wednesday in Shanghai racecourse], (2 November 1922) *Shenbao*, 14.
55. Bo Fen, 'Jinri saima zhi yuce' [Forecast of today's race meeting], (7 November 1922) *Shenbao*, p. 14.
56. Saima Zhinan fashou yuyue, p.17.
57. 'Champions Day Brought out a Disposition for Warmer Garb', (8 November 1924) *NCH*, 241.
58. Liu Na'ou (2001) 'Liangge shijian de buganzhengzhe' [Two men out of tune with time] in Li Oufan (ed.) *Shanghai de hubuwu: xin ganjue pai xiaoshuo xuan* [Foxtrot in Shanghai: selected short stories of new sensationism] (Taipei: Yunchen wenhua), p. 327.
59. Zhang Xu'e (2009) *Luanshi fenghua: ershi shiji sishi niandai Shanghai shenghuo yu yule de huiyi* [Glamor in turbulent years: recollections of the life and entertainment of Shanghai in the 1940s] (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe), pp. 164–5.
60. For instance, Zhang Xu'e and his elder brothers were leading horse owners in Shanghai. Their Chang Brothers stable won many

important races in the 1940s and thus had quite a few walking-through-the-front-of-grandstand photos. The family so treasured those images that they left Shanghai with them after 1949. See photos in Zhang, *Luanshi fenghua*, pp.164, 166, 172, 181, 185, 188, 189, 190, and 196.

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CHAPTER 6

Second-Class Workers: Gender, Industry, and Locality in Workers' Welfare Provision in Revolutionary China

Robert Cliver

Introduction

In the past 20 years, historical research on the Chinese revolution of 1949 and the early period of the People's Republic has expanded dramatically as archival resources have become more available to Chinese and foreign scholars. Archival research and local case studies in this seminal period have resulted in a much more complex and comprehensive understanding of the processes of state-building and revolutionary transformation in the 1950s. Recent historical scholarship has revealed much greater diversity and complexity in the Chinese revolution than was recognized in the more unitary and politically burdened scholarship produced both in China and the West during the Cold War. Focused case studies and comparisons of different localities have brought to light the divergent outcomes of revolutionary initiatives for different social groups and localities and raise new questions concerning state–society relations and the reach and effectiveness of the Chinese party-state in the 1950s.

This chapter embraces the complexity of Chinese society in the mid-twentieth century and looks to this diversity as a way of explaining the varied (and often unintended) outcomes of the Chinese revolution. The

R. Cliver (✉)
Humboldt State University, Arcata, CA, USA

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diverse experiences of ordinary men and women in specific localities are the focus of this study rather than Communist Party leaders and policy formation. Comparing and contrasting the experiences of two different but related groups of workers in two cities reveals the many complex factors, including industrial sector, gender, and locality, which affected the outcomes of policy implementation for urban residents, especially those policies designed to make the urban environment, especially the industrial workplace, more habitable. Similar to the other chapters in this volume, this one adopts a comparative perspective. Just as the chapter by Aaron Moore examines the differences between urban and rural experiences, and Isabella Jackson's chapter compares habitability and public good provision in the treaty ports of Shanghai and Tianjin, this chapter explains the divergent experiences of urban workers in China's Communist-led revolution by comparing two groups of industrial silk workers in two Yangzi Delta silk cities—Shanghai and Wuxi. This comparison shows how factors such as recent history, factory regime, gender, and the capacities of municipal governments and union organizations affected the implementation of urban policies, including factory reform and welfare provision in the early 1950s.

Previous scholarship on Chinese workers has frequently noted the great diversity and even conflict within China's working class. Demographic differences among workers such as age, gender, place of origin, dialect, industrial sector, and employment status strongly influenced the tactics, political allegiances, conflicts with other groups, and opportunities for advancing collective interests of each group of workers.[1] But most of this research does not extend into the People's Republic of China (PRC) period, and few studies of workers after 1949 highlight gender differences.[2] Studies of Chinese workers in the 1970s and 1980s by sociologists and political scientists brought to light some very interesting aspects of industrial life and welfare provision, and this kind of research has expanded following China's reforms at the end of the twentieth century.[3] Even contemporary research that focuses on urban life and industrial workers, however, provides little information concerning either historical experiences or differences in welfare provision among urban industrial workers.[4]

The current chapter seeks partially to fill these lacunae through historical research on two different groups of silk workers in two Yangzi Delta cities, utilizing municipal and factory archives as well as newspapers from the period. Broadly speaking, the comparison is as follows: Silk weavers in the city of Shanghai were mostly men who enjoyed a privileged political and economic position in the twentieth century, receiving the highest wages among textile workers and participating in relatively powerful and

well-connected union organizations. These characteristics brought great benefits to Shanghai silk weavers following the 1949 revolution, as did their locality in the industrial metropolis of Shanghai, which possessed material and political resources greater than any other city in China.

In contrast, workers in silk thread mills (called filatures) in Shanghai and smaller Yangzi Delta cities like Wuxi were mostly young women and were among the lowest-paid textile workers in China. These workers suffered under terrible working conditions and a brutal patriarchal factory regime that relied upon older male supervisors to control workers through violence and intimidation. Filature workers, among the most disadvantaged in China, generally did not organize unions and were not courted by political parties, but relied on spontaneous action to defend their interests, which they did with some success in the years of civil war preceding the Communist seizure of power. The very different characteristics and histories of these two groups of workers resulted in experiences of the 1949 revolution that were as different as the cities of Wuxi and Shanghai.

The archival sources relating to the Yangzi Delta silk industry are numerous and fascinating and provide a wealth of information on workers' experiences after 1949. Based on documents from the municipal archives of Shanghai and Wuxi, this chapter analyzes the very different revolutionary experiences of filature workers and silk weavers in the early 1950s according to three main axes.

Industry These two related industries, which faced the same material devastation and market collapse during and after the Japanese occupation had very different histories, and the factory environments were also very different.[5] Silk filatures tended to be large-scale, employing hundreds, sometimes thousands of workers, while even the largest silk-weaving factories in Shanghai (such as the Meiya 美亚 factories) rarely exceeded a thousand workers, and most employed less than 50. The two industries' relationships with the postwar Guomindang government and the Communist party-state were also quite different in that silk filatures often had a much closer relationship with the pre-1949 state than did silk-weaving factories, a relationship that carried over into the Communist era. Furthermore, the workforces and factory regime in place were also very different in silk filatures than in weaving factories.

Gender Although men and women worked in both silk reeling and weaving factories, the Yangzi Delta filature industry mainly employed girls and young women between the ages of 8 and 25 (average age 17), while industrial silk weavers were mostly mature men. Although about half of

the silk-weaving workforce was female, women mainly worked in lower-paying auxiliary jobs and only a minority of weavers were women. Despite the rhetoric of liberation in China's Communist-led revolution, women workers' interests were frequently ignored or misunderstood, especially in industries with a mainly female workforce but male-dominated management such as silk reeling and cotton textiles.

Locality The outcomes of Communist policy implementation varied widely from place to place. In Shanghai, there were only three large silk filatures left that survived to 1949, but the city possessed hundreds of small weaving workshops. In contrast, Wuxi was a major silk reeling center and thousands of the city's textile workers were employed in filatures. The two cities differed in many other important respects and locality strongly affected the outcomes of party policy during the early PRC period. In particular, Shanghai and Wuxi possessed different capacities in terms of material, financial, and political resources to devote to industrial workers' welfare. Wuxi was especially limited in the number of experienced and local party cadres who could support women workers' interests effectively, but also in terms of factory doctors and clinics, and childcare and housing facilities for working-class families. After 1949, these were touted as important goals or benefits for urban workers, but proletarians in different industries and cities experienced widely varying access to these fruits of the Communist revolution.

The differing histories of the silk reeling and weaving industries in the twentieth century, the characteristics of their work forces and factory regimes, and in which city a given factory was located all affected the results of the party's policies in the early 1950s. Shanghai silk weavers, and the many women who worked in the silk industry in Shanghai (including filatures) benefitted greatly from the Communist seizure of power and won reforms such as democratic management and labor insurance. In contrast, for almost three years after the Communist takeover little changed for women in the silk filatures of Wuxi, including the abusive, patriarchal factory regime, poor working conditions, and difficulties in material life and social welfare. These differences arose from the social, historical, and economic landscape of twentieth-century China, and these fault lines of the revolution allow historians to account for the diverse experiences of different groups of workers in the early years of the PRC. The rest of this chapter first introduces the general background of the Wuxi filature industry and its workforce, as well as these workers' experiences in the first years of the PRC. The second section then examines how Shanghai silk weavers

fared during and after the revolution. Subsequent sections then describe the intense conflict in Wuxi filatures and the 'Democratic Reform' of 1951, followed by a comparison of welfare benefits that workers were able to access in the two cities of Wuxi and Shanghai by the mid-1950s.

The Revolution in the Wuxi Silk Filatures

Working life in the silk filatures of the Yangzi Delta was very difficult and the existing factory regime and gender politics severely limited these women's access to the benefits of the revolution after 1949. Working conditions in silk reeling mills were awful. The atmosphere was hot and damp, and filature workers often suffered from respiratory illnesses. In older filatures, the cocoons were boiled in open basins and beaten to separate the filaments. This work was done by girls as young as eight or nine years old and the water scalded their hands for 12 hours a day. The workers who operated the reeling machines had to pay careful attention to the filaments to maintain constant tension and evenness and to repair breaks as soon as they occurred in order to produce the highest-quality thread. Silk filatures employed hundreds of workers 90 percent of whom were female, mostly young, uneducated women who earned very low wages and were frequently unemployed.[6]

In labor disputes, filature workers historically relied on spontaneous action such as wildcat strikes and walkouts rather than permanent union organizations, which were easily co-opted by criminal gangs or employers when first attempted in the 1920s.[7] These tactics were effective during the postwar inflationary crisis, when filature workers' walkouts sparked city-wide general strikes in Hangzhou, Huzhou, and Wuxi in 1947 and 1948, and inspired other industrial workers to strike in protest against inflation and the Nationalist Government's policies.[8]

Most important, the factory regime in silk filatures was based not on scientific management or Fordism, but on violent patriarchal authority: Male supervisors, hired more than anything for their willingness and ability to use physical punishment to manage the young women employed in silk mills, carried wooden staves in the workshops and did not hesitate to beat workers whose attention wandered or whose attitude seemed resistant or rebellious. To keep filature workers under control, male shopfloor supervisors used intimidation and manipulation (divide and conquer tactics) and the threat of wage reductions and unemployment, as well as physical beatings and a culture of male supremacy that justified even sexual exploitation and rape.[9]

The Communists generally referred to such oppressive factory regimes as 'feudal' management, but upon seizing power in 1949, the revolutionary authorities did little or nothing to ameliorate this most egregious violation of filature workers' rights and human dignity and little changed in this regard over the next two years or more. In the context of the revolution, conflicts over the relative roles and rights of men and women complicated labor disputes in Wuxi silk filatures and brought these conflicts to another level of struggle and resistance beyond the more visible class conflict. In other words, gender conflict and oppression exacerbated class conflict in Wuxi silk filatures. At the same time, the Communists' insistence that labor relations under 'New Democracy' should be based on cooperation rather than conflict often prevented many groups of workers from pursuing legitimate interests and grievances in favor of economic recovery and class cooperation.[10]

The lack of strong union organizations with ties to political parties preserved filature workers' autonomy and inclined them toward direct and spontaneous action before 1949. But after 1949, this proved to be a disadvantage. Following immediately on the seizure of power, all Chinese workers were organized under at least nominally Communist-led unions.[11] While the Shanghai Silk Workers Union became more powerful with the Communist takeover, filature workers found their earlier tactics discouraged and the new unions established under Communist auspices in fact controlled by filature management, including abusive shopfloor supervisors and other forces hostile to the projects of women's and workers' liberation.[12]

In Wuxi, the management-controlled filature unions served the 'New Democratic' goals of labor–capital cooperation and economic restoration well, but did not serve the interests of filature workers or the goal of liberation. For example, according to the laws of the PRC, privately owned factories should all establish labor–capital consultative conferences (LCCC) 劳资协商会议 (laozi xieshang huiyi) to bring workers into management and to restrict the power of capitalists. While these bodies were nominally established in some Wuxi filatures, none of them actually functioned as intended.[13] It is hard even to imagine the young women workers and male supervisors in the Wuxi filatures sitting down to discuss production plans and reach compromises for mutual benefit as was the case in other cities and industries such as Shanghai silk weaving. There was simply too much hostility and animosity between these groups of men and women for 'democratic management' 民主管理 (*minzhu guanli*) to be a possibility.[14] Nor were efforts to reform the filatures' arbitrary and exploitative wage system or to provide labor insurance for Wuxi's filature workers any more

successful under these conditions. There was simply too much at stake for these male supervisors for them to allow the women workers under their supervision to liberate themselves. For their part, the Communist Party cadres in Wuxi, most of whom came from the north with the revolutionary armies and knew little about the local situation, were blind to the patriarchal dimension of the filature factory regime and its gendered violence and did nothing to reform the situation.[15]

Not only did managerial control of the unions prevent most efforts to improve the working conditions of filature workers, male supervisors were also frequently able to manipulate Communist Party policies and propaganda to strengthen their control over the female workforce. Silk was a particularly important export product during the Korean War (1950–1953), and the wartime patriotic production campaigns sought to mobilize workers and employers to improve productivity to contribute to the war effort. Silk workers heard slogans like 'sweat a bit more to help the Volunteer Army bleed a little less' or 'a loom is equal to a cannon; a shuttle is equal to a gun'.[16]

By January 1951, the Huachang filature, which had been operated by government administrators since 1945 and taken over by Communist authorities in 1949, reported producing AAAA grade filature silk of almost perfect quality, something that had not been accomplished since before the Japanese invasion in 1937. In the following weeks, other silk mills in Wuxi repeated this feat. The Huachang Filature received letters of congratulations from top party leaders including Liu Shaoqi 刘少奇 and Zhu De 朱德, and these accomplishments were reported in the national press.[17] However, whereas the newspapers attributed these accomplishments to the revolution that had 'liberated the enthusiasm of the working class', there is little indication that these workers had been 'liberated' in any meaningful sense or that any substantial changes in their working conditions had been effected. The same abusive male supervisors used the same brutal methods to manage the workforce, but by the 1950s, they dominated an ostensibly communist union organization that gave them even greater authority. The impressive accomplishments in thread production were more likely the result of improved raw materials supplies and financing under the same 'feudal' management system rather than enhanced proletarian consciousness. Indeed, it was later reported that the arbitrary system of bonuses and fines at the Huachang Filature 'suppressed the masses' creativity and activism, and because of this, the achievement of producing AAAA grade silk could not be consolidated or surpassed'.[18]

The lack of meaningful reform in the Wuxi filatures is especially puzzling because silk filatures had a much closer relationship with state agencies even before the 'socialist transformation' in the mid-1950s made these private firms into 'joint state-private enterprises' 公私合营企业 (*gongsi heying qiye*). In the late 1940s, silk thread was a very valuable product that the Guomindang state exploited in an attempt to resolve its financial difficulties. In the devastation of postwar China and its inflationary economy, silk filatures struggled to meet costs, obtain fuel and raw materials, and manage an increasingly active and volatile workforce. The Nationalist government attempted to support the silk reeling industry through loans, direct supply, and state-contracted production, but with little success. After 1949, the Communists continued and expanded the same system of state-contracted production 加工订货 (*jiagong dinghuo*) and achieved greater success in stabilizing production costs, wages, and supplies. But despite very early direct involvement in Yangzi Delta silk filatures, including a few like Huachang and the Wuxi Number Five Filature that were managed directly by party cadres, thread mill workers experienced little in the way of 'liberation' in these early years.

By the spring of 1951, China's filature workers had witnessed a two-year revolution that left the same employers in charge and the same brutal management system in place, even in the handful of filatures taken over by the new government. At the same time, these workers' traditional means of protest were discredited and disallowed under the 'New Democratic' policy of labor–capital cooperation, while the new union organizations were controlled by capitalists and abusive managers. Clearly, if the term 'liberation' was going to have any meaning for this group of women workers, then this situation would have to change. In the summer of 1951, as silk production revived and the war in Korea ground on indecisively, the Communists' insistence that under 'New Democracy' labor relations were supposed to be cooperative and harmonious, not hostile and brutal, blinded them to the gendered dimensions of conflict under the Wuxi filatures' brutal factory regime.

The Revolution in Shanghai's Silk-Weaving Factories

The other major part of the silk production process is weaving. This is painstaking work, but does not necessarily require more skill, attention, or experience than silk reeling. Nonetheless, industrial silk weavers were

among the most highly paid of all textile workers in Shanghai. They were also mostly male and were historically well-organized and active in pursuing their interests. By the 1920s, silk-weaving factories in Yangzi Delta cities like Hangzhou and Shanghai used electric-powered looms and included synthetic fibers in many varieties of cloth. Shanghai silk weavers were often politically active and well-organized, and a higher proportion were literate than among almost any other group of urban workers. In contrast with silk filatures, most silk-weaving factories were small scale, with only one or two dozen looms, and even the largest factories rarely exceeded a couple of hundred looms or a thousand employees. By the 1950s, about half of Shanghai's silk-weaving workforce was female, but women were mainly employed in less well-paid auxiliary tasks such as warp preparation, spooling, and re-reeling.[19]

Many silk weavers were communists with ties to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), and in the early 1950s, the pro-communist leaders of the Shanghai Silk Workers Union maintained a relatively high degree of autonomy to pursue their members' interests. Shanghai silk weavers also enjoyed relatively equal (if not always harmonious) relations with their employers. Most factory owners were silk weavers who had accumulated sufficient capital to purchase some looms, hire other weavers, and open their own small factories and workshops. In contrast with Wuxi filature workers, Shanghai silk weavers and their employers came from the same social groups. They were mostly from towns in northern Zhejiang, shared native-place ties and dialect, as well as the same set of technical skills, and they were mostly men and shared in a common culture of Chinese masculinity. These characteristics (privilege, organization, political ties, and masculinity) gave Shanghai silk weavers a tremendous advantage in dealing with both employers and the Chinese Communist Party after 1949.

As a result, Shanghai silk weavers won immediate benefits from Communist Party policies in Shanghai. For example, silk workers and their employers established an industry-wide LCCC and production committees in dozens of individual factories in response to the aerial bombing of Shanghai's main power plant on 6 February 1950—a potential disaster for Shanghai's electric-powered silk-weaving industry. The Shanghai Silk Industry LCCC was the first of its kind in the People's Republic, and it was fairly successful considering the circumstances of rampant inflation and unemployment, shrinking markets, and the shortage of electric power in the aftermath of the bombing. Despite the desperate conditions, the crisis forced union leaders and employers to recognize their linked destinies

and to cooperate in protecting their mutual interests. This was hailed as a model example of labor–capital cooperation under 'New Democracy'.[20]

During the spring and summer of 1950, through the silk industry's worst crisis since the Japanese invasion in 1937, the Industry Association (the owners' organization) and the Silk Workers Union attempted to secure state production contracts to maintain employment, while the Silk Industry LCCC prevented silk factories from going under and laying off their workers and made arrangements to help workers weather the crisis. For those factories that could not realistically continue production on any scale, the LCCC worked out rules for temporary layoffs or 'dispersals' 疏散 (*shusan*) for a period of four months with compensation, which went a long way toward reducing the threat of worker impoverishment and social unrest. Under the agreements worked out in the LCCC, silk factories agreed to restore production and rehire workers when conditions improved. The agreements also restricted capitalists' ability to dispose of factory assets and protected the employer from any additional demands.[21]

The Shanghai Silk Workers Union, cooperating with factory owners through the LCCC, achieved a great many things in the early 1950s. The accomplishments of the Silk Industry LCCC included reforms in the organization of production and management systems. The union was also able to extend the provision of labor insurance beyond factories employing more than 100 workers as required by law. Union organizations in individual factories were also able to increase the number of rest days for silk workers and established cooperative shops for members. By 1953, Shanghai silk workers had a collective contract that was the envy of Chinese workers everywhere and provided excellent benefits even for workers employed in smaller private factories. At the same time, state purchases of silk factories' product provided the economic basis for these reforms.[22]

Despite the many successes of this 'New Democratic' institution, however, there were also some problems, such as factory owners who refused to abide by agreements worked out in the LCCC to preserve enterprises and livelihood during the post-bombing crisis in 1950. Such employers claimed all kinds of difficulties in order to get out of restoring production or re-hiring workers at original wages. One Shanghai silk capitalist suggested that he be permitted to disperse his workers temporarily 'until Taiwan is liberated'.[23] Even more problematic, it would seem that women workers were vulnerable to being laid off permanently as part of an arrangement to save the jobs of male workers, and situations like this

produced some of the most intractable disputes in Shanghai's silk-weaving industry in 1950 and 1951.[24]

This is not to say, however, that the Shanghai Silk Workers Union did not seek to protect the interests of its female constituents. On the contrary, the union leadership was committed to advancing the interests of women workers in Shanghai's silk industries and pushed forward policies such as extended maternity leave and equal wages for men and women in the same jobs. This effort brought the union leadership into conflict with male weavers, who resisted equalizing women's wages on the grounds that women weavers did not possess the skills necessary to prepare the complex pattern-making device atop a power loom, which Chinese weavers called the 'dragon head'. When it was pointed out that many male workers who did not possess these skills were nonetheless paid men's wages, the men continued to object, claiming that women weavers who climbed atop the loom might be menstruating and thus 'touch their period' 触霉头 (*chumeitou*) to the 'dragon head', spiritually polluting the loom.[25] This is a good example of the kind of misogyny and male chauvinism that women workers continued to experience even after 'liberation'.

Despite the fact that the union leadership was overwhelmingly male, however, they were also ideologically committed to the communist goal of women's liberation, and they dismissed these men's arguments as 'superstitious remnants of the old society'. Many silk-weaving factories in Shanghai (such as the Meiya Factory) established the principle of equal wages for men and women, although wage disparities continued in many contexts even through the 'socialist transformation' of 1956. In this light, conclusions about the very different experiences of filature workers and silk weavers cannot be as simple as 'male workers benefitted from the revolution and women did not'. Access to benefits of revolution such as gender equality or labor insurance benefits resulted as much from the political and organizational leadership and economic resources of the city in which workers lived as from whether a given industry's workforce was mostly male or female.

Regardless of whether the industrial silk workers represented by the Shanghai Silk Weavers Union were men or women, all of them benefitted from living in China's greatest industrial city—Shanghai. The former colonial metropolis received some of the most capable political cadres the Chinese Communist Party had to offer. Because of this, even women workers in the silk-weaving industry, and even women filature workers in Shanghai, accessed many of the same benefits as privileged, male silk weav-

ers, because they were able to benefit from capable and experienced union leadership with strong ties to the revolutionary regime. Shanghai furthermore possessed far greater material resources to provide welfare benefits for industrial workers than almost any other city in China. Resources such as capable and representative union organizations, adept and dedicated political cadres, buildings useful for various purposes including housing, financing, medical expertise and supplies, and crèches and childcare facilities for working-class families were far more available in Shanghai than in the smaller cities of the Yangzi Delta or the rest of China's provinces.[26] Filature workers in Wuxi did not possess similar material, financial, political, or organizational resources, an important locality-based difference that further restricted these workers' access to party policies meant to benefit them.

Labor Relations, Gender Conflict, and 'Democratic Reform' in the Wuxi Filatures

Despite the broadly similar market and policy context, the experience of 'liberation' in the Wuxi filatures was quite different from that in the silk-weaving factories of Shanghai. Filature workers' traditional tactics of spontaneous (and sometimes violent) action were discouraged under the policies of New Democracy, and the newly established union organizations were dominated by employers and managers. A quote in an archival document from a Wuxi filature owner is indicative. Harkening back to pre-revolutionary days, one silk capitalist was recorded as stating that '[c]ontrolling the union is like controlling the county magistrate – one can accomplish anything'.[27] This situation was due at least in part to the inexperience and ignorance of the few CCP cadres sent to govern Wuxi, and their tendency to depend on capitalists and managers to pursue the party's most important goal at the time—restoring production and expanding employment.

These were much more immediate goals than liberating workers or women, and party cadres in Wuxi generally neglected the needs of women workers in the city's filatures during their first two years there. This resulted in employer-controlled unions that enthusiastically met the party's call to suppress workers' 'exaggerated leftism' under 'New Democracy', and consequently there was no effort to improve wages, welfare, or working conditions in Wuxi's filatures before 1952. Controlled by men hostile to women workers' liberation, Wuxi's Silk Reeling Industry Union did not

adequately represent workers' interests. This situation contrasts sharply with the situation in Shanghai silk-weaving factories, as does the lack of 'democratic management' in Wuxi's private filatures in the early 1950s.

According to early PRC law, LCCCs were to be established in all privately owned factories.[28] In the Wuxi filature industry, LCCCs were nominally established, but did not perform their intended role and were simply a dead letter. There was too much resistance on the part of male managers, too much at stake in their dominant position, for them to allow the women workers under their supervision to establish even a moderate form of worker control. The fact that the CCP cadres in charge in Wuxi, most of whom were male southbound cadres, were blind to or even complicit in this situation made it almost impossible for Wuxi filature workers to achieve the same benefits as their counterparts in the Shanghai silk-weaving industry.

Despite the rhetoric of revolution and liberation, by the summer of 1951, filature workers had seen little change or improvement in their situation. The same employers managed the filatures using the same brutal methods. Filature workers' unions were dominated by individuals antagonistic to their interests and desperate to maintain their dominant position in the face of revolutionary change. The filatures were better supplied and operating more smoothly than previously, but these workers had taken a pay cut and were working harder than ever under the vaunted 'patriotic production campaigns' of the Korean War. At the same time, the policy of labor–capital cooperation in pursuit of economic recovery left little room for these workers' earlier means of protest and spontaneous action. As a result of these conditions, especially the neglect of these issues by party cadres, meaningful reforms in Wuxi's filatures were slow in coming.

The process of 'Democratic Reform' 民主改革 (*minzhu gaige*) in the Wuxi filature unions began in the fall of 1951. This movement was part of a national campaign to eliminate the influence of employers, labor gang bosses, 'counter-revolutionaries', secret societies, and criminal gangs in labor unions throughout China.[29] In the Wuxi silk reeling industry, the campaign was launched in response to the death of a woman worker named Shen Gendi 申跟弟 at the China Sericulture Company's Number Five Filature—a state-run factory—on 27 August 1951. Shen died in hospital after a vicious beating by the filature's general supervisor. The *Sunan ribao* reported the incident, which produced widespread anger among filature workers throughout the region.[30] In this instance, the party co-opted an incident that, in the past, would have led to spontaneous action and prob-

ably violence. Instead, the labor authorities in Wuxi managed the campaign, and the results reflect the goals of the Communist Party authorities much more than the goals and interests of these women workers.

The most complete record of Democratic Reform in a Wuxi filature comes from the Huachang Filature, which had received such acclaim for its accomplishments in January 1951 (see above). Huachang had been taken over and administered by the Nationalist Government in 1945, and, like the Number Five Filature where Shen Gendi was killed, Huachang was taken over by Communist administration in 1949. There were almost no changes made to the system of management, however, until the autumn of 1951 in response to Shen's brutal death.

The process of 'Democratic Reform' was typical of the Communist Party's campaigns and was initiated and directed by the city's labor officials. These cadres first went into the silk filatures in early September to canvass workers' opinions in small groups and to identify both reliable activists and targets for criticism. The targets of the campaign in Wuxi's filatures were generally the most abusive supervisors and known counter-revolutionaries such as Nationalist agents, criminals, and suspected saboteurs—all of them male shopfloor supervisors. Factory owners and capitalists were not targeted in this campaign.

Once the preparatory work was completed, the cadres organized a 'mass struggle meeting' to publicly denounce selected targets. This was a highly emotional process with public accusations, passionate and emotional testimony, and ultimately public decisions concerning punishments and removals from work and union posts.[31] Despite filature workers' heightened expectations that 'liberation' had finally come to their factories after two years of managerial resistance, the results of the 'Democratic Reform' were somewhat disappointing. At Huachang, the campaign brought an end to the beatings and other abusive management practices and resulted in the firing of two known 'counter-revolutionaries' (one a former Nationalist agent suspected of sabotage, and another suspected of association with the Nationalists who was infamous for abusing women workers at Huachang). All of the shopfloor supervisors targeted in the campaign were removed from their positions in the union organization. But most of those criticized (five out of seven) kept their jobs and were back at work the next day. The other two lost their jobs but continued to live in the factory dormitory and eat in the cafeteria, which most workers thought was clearly too good for them. Workers' dissatisfaction with these outcomes produced complaints, but these were to no avail. The

implementation of labor and health insurance (which was supposed to have been done months earlier) may have helped to assuage workers' disappointment.[32]

New elections for the union were held, and the removed supervisors were replaced by women workers who had demonstrated their political reliability and activism during the preceding campaign. The Democratic Reform Campaign in the filatures of Wuxi thus did more to enhance the Communist Party's ability to exercise leadership over the union organizations, to mobilize workers for production, and to monitor the factory owner than it did to enable workers to advance their interests and to participate in running the factory in any meaningful way. The successes claimed for union work in the Wuxi filatures in a 1953 report included such boilerplate as 'raising political consciousness', 'unifying national and individual interests', and (of course) improving production. But the report also admitted to continuing shortcomings in union work, including the admission that no new management systems had been established, and, in some filatures, the abusive management practices of the past continued![33] If there was no significant change in the organization of production or management systems, it is difficult to see how either the factory or the union had been 'democratized' in any way. While 'class enemies' (and one might say gender enemies) were removed from the union organizations, this did not necessarily make these bodies any more responsive to women workers' needs, nor did it make the filature workplace any more 'liberated'.

This is not to say, however, that women did not benefit from China's Communist-led revolution, or even that this specific group of workers—young women in the thread mills of the Yangzi Delta—did not benefit. On the contrary, it is reasonable to argue that improving the rights, status, and treatment of women has been one of the greatest accomplishments of the Chinese Communist Party.[34] Women workers in Shanghai filatures gained benefits along with other silk workers in that city, and even for Wuxi's filature workers, there were undeniable improvements in working conditions and welfare benefits during the 1950s. Access to medical treatment and childcare, overcoming illiteracy, and providing unheard of opportunities for young working-class women to advance their interests, in some cases even going to university, are all impressive accomplishments.[35] Nonetheless, the reality of working-class women's lives continued to fall short of the party's rhetoric and promises, and many inequalities remained. One of the most important of these inequalities was in what city one happened to be employed.

Location: Welfare Benefits for Workers in Shanghai and Wuxi

The process of improving workers' living and working conditions took much longer and ultimately provided far more limited benefits for Wuxi's workers than for their more privileged comrades downriver in Shanghai. Workers in Shanghai's silk industry, whether male or female, or employed in thread filatures or weaving workshops, benefitted from the Communist takeover under effective union leadership that possessed considerable resources (including political connections) that enabled them to improve workers' material conditions. For much the same reasons, Wuxi silk workers experienced the opposite results. Filature unions in Wuxi were dominated by capitalist management and antagonistic male supervisors and were unsurprisingly ineffective at advancing workers' interests. The local party leadership was inexperienced, from outside the area, and few in number. Eventually, Wuxi's filature workers also benefitted from the state's efforts to improve workers' lives after the reforms of 1952, when many silk filatures were refitted to improve working conditions, especially by reducing heat and improving ventilation. But the reforms implemented and benefits achieved were pursued on the initiative of Wuxi labor officials, not worker-controlled unions or organs of democratic management as had been the case in Shanghai's silk industry. It is likely that these women workers might have prioritized other goals—like basic human decency and respect, or shorter working hours and a living wage—if they controlled their own organizations to a greater extent.

Even more problematic, Wuxi workers did not have the resources to draw upon that Shanghai workers enjoyed—experienced and reliable union cadres, doctors and medicines, and funds and facilities. Wuxi fell short in all respects in this comparison. One example of this is access to childcare facilities for working-class families. In the early 1950s, many of the nurseries of the old Shanghai elite began to serve cadre and working-class families. Because this is an issue especially important for women workers' success in their jobs, it bears close examination when comparing the lives of women silk workers in Wuxi and Shanghai in the 1950s.

The expansion of childcare facilities was one of the most lauded improvements in welfare benefits for working-class families in Shanghai. The union organizations in Shanghai improved and expanded existing facilities, in most cases making them available to working-class families for the first time. Retraining existing nursery staff and training new childcare

workers was the top priority, and was conducted jointly by the Women's Federation and the unions. By 1952, more than 85 percent of caretakers had received specialized training, with 515 new nursery staff trained, and almost 500 existing staff receiving political education and literacy training as well.[36]

By May 1950, the number of nurseries operated by factories in Shanghai (mostly state-run industry) had increased from 36 to 58, with a capacity of 4353 children, and the number of nursery staff had increased from 204 to 488.[37] By the fall of 1950, factories throughout the People's Republic of China had established 1830 nurseries capable of providing care for 8917 children,[38] indicating that Shanghai's nurseries comprised almost half of the factory childcare capacity in the whole country. Shanghai's factory nurseries were also among the nation's largest, and given the resources available in that city, probably provided the highest-quality childcare.

By October 1952, Shanghai had 147 nurseries with places for 10,370 children, and the quality of these facilities had also improved dramatically, especially with regard to the children's health and nutrition. One report claimed that 'these nurseries now at least allow mothers to work peacefully, which has increased production', and provided several examples of happy working mothers from Shanghai's cotton textiles factories.[39] Another stated that provision of superior childcare facilities 'has also created a healthy foundation for the next generation of builders of socialism'.[40]

The attempt to provide working-class families in Wuxi with daycare facilities for their children lagged far behind the expansion of nurseries in Shanghai. By September 1950, the joint state-private Huachang filature and the China Sericulture Number Two Filature in Wuxi had both set up nurseries for workers' children.[41] The Yongtai Filature established a health clinic and nursery in 1951.[42] By 1952, there were 17 nurseries in Wuxi filatures with 136 caretakers capable of providing care for 580 children.[43] A June 1952 report on the China Sericulture Number Two Filature's nursery in the *Sunan ribao* described the nursery's five rooms as 'brightly painted in white, with fifty little brown cribs'.[44] The nursery had only six staff, however, which would have limited the number of places for children to less than 60.

A 1953 work report stated that there were a total of 25 nurseries in the city,[45] which may have increased Wuxi's total childcare capacity to more than 800 children. This still fell far short of the needs of the city's workers, but was a great improvement nonetheless. Children in factory nurseries also received medical care according to the Labor Insurance Provisions.

Many filatures also created spaces for breastfeeding rooms, and allowed sufficient time for mothers to tend to newborn children.[46] Nonetheless, these developments still fell far short of what was needed and pale in comparison to Shanghai. Lack of funds was the main constraint, while the limited establishment of women workers' departments 女工部 in basic-level unions also impeded the expansion of childcare provision and other forms of welfare in Wuxi in the early 1950s.[47]

Despite these improvements, widely reported in state media, provision of childcare facilities for working-class families in the Yangzi Delta was still far from sufficient to meet demand.[48] Although providing facilities for 10,000 children in Shanghai by 1952 entailed a significant increase, even this could not meet the needs of Shanghai's tens of thousands of working-class families. Personnel problems plagued factory nurseries throughout the 1950s. Factories often reassigned trained and professional nursery staff to other work, substituting them with untrained workers from the factory floor. Nursery staff generally worked at least one hour longer than factory workers, often working 13 hour days, and there was no standardized pay scale for nursery workers until 1954.[49] There remained a pressing need not only for more nurseries for infants, but also for boarding schools and neighborhood nurseries for preschool-age children. Without these, the Leninist goal of liberating women through paid industrial employment would remain unrealized.[50]

Conclusion

Shanghai silk weavers joined strong, independent union organizations staffed by confident, capable representatives, who were considered trustworthy by workers, employers, and the Communist authorities. Both union leadership and the workforce was mostly male, and they shared a common background, dialect, skill set, and gender with employers and party officials that facilitated cooperation and access to resources. These experienced, Communist union leaders were able to achieve most of the cherished goals of the labor movement by 1952 (including job security, labor insurance, democratic management, and even controversial policies such as equal pay for men and women) and were able to establish the institutional basis for labor–capital cooperation in the form of the LCCCs, and the provision of material benefits to workers exceeded similar efforts in other Chinese cities. The history, labor relations, and characteristics of this group of Chinese workers enabled the successful pursuit of their goals, as

did residence in the well-endowed coastal treaty port of Shanghai, which received tremendous support in terms of personnel and policies from the Communist Party.

In contrast, Wuxi filature workers found their historical tactics of spontaneous action discredited and disallowed in the context of labor–capital cooperation and party mobilization in the New Democratic period of the People's Republic. The newly established unions were controlled by managers or, after the Democratic Reform Campaign, the party, and the ongoing violence and suppression of women filature workers by male supervisors created too much hostility and mistrust to achieve the same kind of dialogue, compromise, and cooperation seen in the Shanghai silk-weaving industry. In the Wuxi filatures after 1949, male supervisors were able to control the course of the revolution and preserve their power and status for two years or more. Even when these men were targeted as political enemies of communism under Democratic Reform, filature workers did not gain the same advantages as male Shanghai weavers. It is disappointing, but perhaps unsurprising, that we find 'agency' in this context among the powerful in society—in this case male shopfloor supervisors—not where we would hope to find it based on our sympathies. For most women filature workers, the revolution and liberation were mere rhetoric, with little basis in their own reality.

Contributing greatly to this situation after 1949, Wuxi's communist administrators (who were mostly inexperienced rural military cadres from North China) tended to rely heavily on capitalist factory owners for their knowledge of the industry, and seem to have understood almost nothing of the gendered dimension of labor relations in silk filatures. This is somewhat puzzling considering how much emphasis the central party leadership placed on women's liberation. But it must be remembered that these cadres faced conflicting incentives, and it is clear that economic recovery was more important than the revolution's more liberationist goals. The situation was especially complex in the Wuxi filatures, where class conflict involved more than capitalist exploitation but extended into the realm of patriarchy and gender relations, which proved quite resilient even under the pressures of communist revolution. The result for these women workers was disappointment and disillusionment.

That disappointment continued into the material fruits of the revolution in terms of improved working conditions, a better livelihood, and the social welfare support to enable them to succeed simultaneously as full-time, long-term workers and as wives and mothers. Access to services

such as clinics and nurseries was extremely limited, and most workers had to depend on traditional support such as mothers and mothers-in-law, siblings, or other women in their neighborhood to look after small children while they went to the mill. Recalcitrant employers and managers was only one part of this problem. Living in a smaller city that possessed fewer resources and drew less attention from the revolutionary state contributed to the difficulties these women workers faced in pursuing their interests in the early 1950s.

Based on this comparison, we can draw some broader conclusions regarding the diversity of outcomes in the Chinese revolution despite the presence of a strong and centralized party-state. First, there was not just one revolution but many, and the Communist Party's policies toward urban industrial workers could have very different results depending on factors such as industry, labor relations, and locality. Some workers—silk weavers, steel workers, machinists, printers, and many other groups of workers in the large metropolises of Shanghai and Tianjin—benefitted greatly from the 1949 revolution and accomplished many goals that they had been striving toward for decades. Other workers—silk reelers, textile workers in cities other than Shanghai and Tianjin, construction and transportation workers, coal miners, and workers in the collective and private sectors generally—found that the revolution produced different results than they had been led to expect, or did not touch them at all until after the more open and underdetermined period of New Democracy had transformed into the campaign society of the Korean War era.

Second, historians need to pay attention to the tremendous diversity of China's working classes. While industrial sector, markets, and the industry's relationship to the state were important factors, one of the most salient axes of comparison among working class people is gender. Privileged proletarians like Shanghai's male silk weavers enjoyed many advantages and won immediate gains while female filature workers faced both capitalist and patriarchal resistance to policies intended to liberate and empower workers, and received little support or recognition from the party-state until one of their number had been beaten to death at the hands of a male supervisor in a state-run filature. While class was obviously important in Chinese Communist ideology, gender conflict complicated class relations in ways that party cadres found difficult to understand. Gender conflict exacerbated labor conflict and constituted a second, hidden front of social and political conflict that Communist Party officials were often unable to recognize despite the party center's strongly pro-woman policies.[51]

A third axis of comparison that is similarly important in understanding the divergent outcomes of Communist Party policies in the early 1950s is locality. Access to competent union leadership, political support from the ruling party, and financial and material resources varied greatly among different Chinese cities. Cities like Shanghai and Tianjin received a great deal of attention from the party-state due to their size and importance, as did steel foundries and oil fields. Large cities also possessed greater resources that could be devoted to worker welfare and factory reform. But smaller cities like Wuxi, and industrial sectors that were not a top priority for China's communist leaders and did not possess the same resources in terms of cadres, financing, and structural resources such as housing and clinics.

In the early 1950s, it was essential for the Chinese communists, their political power based in a rural party-army, to make good on their promises to improve the lives of China's workers and women in order to garner support among China's relatively small urban proletariat. On the one hand, the Communist Party achieved some great successes in restoring economic order, establishing their administration, and improving the lives of both farmers and workers throughout China. But these developments were uneven and, despite constant warning from Communist leaders not to expect too much all at once, many Chinese workers became frustrated and disappointed with the results of the revolution, just as many workers (such as Shanghai silk weavers) came to support the Chinese Communist Party because they had already experienced the best the communists had to offer. These divergent outcomes and diverse experiences with China's communist-led revolution can be accounted for only by comparing the experiences of many different groups in Chinese cities, with careful attention to the wide variation in conditions that strongly affected the outcomes the Chinese communists hoped to achieve.

Notes

1. For some of the most important research on Chinese workers before 1949, see Jean Chesneaux (1968) *The Chinese Labor Movement, 1919–1927* (Stanford: Stanford University Press); Gail Hershatter (1993) *The Workers of Tianjin, 1900–1949* (Stanford: Stanford University Press); Emily Honig (1986) *Sisters and Strangers: Women in the Shanghai Cotton Mills, 1919–1949* (Stanford: Stanford University Press); Joshua Howard (2004)

Workers at War: Labour in China's Arsenals, 1937–1953 (Stanford: Stanford University Press); Elizabeth Perry (1993) *Shanghai on Strike: The Politics of Chinese Labour* (Stanford: Stanford University Press); Alain Roux (2004) 'From Revenge to Treason: Political Ambivalence among Wang Jingwei's Labour Union Supporters', in Christian Henriot and Wen-Hsin Yeh (eds.) *In the Shadow of the Rising Sun: Shanghai under Japanese Occupation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

2. For an important exception to this general rule see Delia Davin (1976) *Woman Work: Women and the Party in Revolutionary China* (Oxford: Clarendon Press).
3. For earlier studies of Chinese workers in the PRC, see Charles Hoffmann (1974) *The Chinese Worker* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press); Christopher Howe (1971) *Employment and Economic Growth in Urban China, 1949–1957* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) and Christopher Howe (1973) *Wage Patterns and Wage Policy in Modern China, 1919–1972* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); as well as Andrew G. Walder (1986) *Communist Neo-Traditionalism: Work and Authority in Chinese Industry* (Berkeley: University of California Press). For a more recent work in this vein see Ching-Kwan Lee (1990) *Gender and the South China Miracle: Two Worlds of Factory Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press), which is concerned with many of the same issues as this chapter, but in a contemporary context.
4. One work that makes brief mention of inequalities in urban welfare and housing provision is Weiping Wu and Piper Gaubatz (2013) *The Chinese City* (New York, NT: Routledge). The edited volume, John Wilson Lewis and Jerome Alan Cohen (1971) *The City in Communist China* (Stanford: Stanford University), includes two chapters that relate to industrial workers and urban welfare: Paul Harper's 'Trade Union Cultivation of Workers for Leadership' and 'The Level and Structure of Employment and the Sources of Labour Supply in Shanghai, 1949–1957' by Christpher Howe. But neither of these articles provides much historical perspective, and they mainly utilize published statistics at the national level or from Shanghai and Tianjin and have little information about the experiences of specific groups of workers.
5. A prominent anthropologist who studied labor, Michael Burawoy used the term 'factory regime' to describe management and labor

relations in modern industry. In *The Politics of Production*, Burawoy describes despotic and hegemonic regimes of factory management. In this article, use of the term includes patriarchy and gender conflict as important elements of the regime of workplace control in Chinese silk filatures. Burawoy's conceptualization of the politics of production and the economic roles of the state are also applicable to the Chinese case. For Burawoy's sociological–historical analysis of factory regimes in western industry (both capitalist and socialist), see Michael Burawoy (1985) *The Politics of Production: Factory Regimes under Capitalism and Socialism* (London: Verso), especially Chapter 3.

6. Xu Xinwu (ed.) (1990) *Zhongguo jindai saosi gongye shi* (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe), pp. 561–8; Eleanor M. Hinder (1944) *Life and Labour in Shanghai: A Decade of Labour and Social Administration in the International Settlement* (New York: International Secretariat, Institute of Pacific Relations), pp. 35–6; Wuxi Municipal Archives (hereafter WMA) D2-1-11.
7. Xu, *Zhongguo jindai saosi gongye shi*, pp. 585–604; Perry, *Shanghai on Strike*, pp. 171–80; S. A. Smith (2002) *Like Cattle and Horses: Nationalism and Labour in Shanghai, 1895–1927* (Durham: Duke University Press), pp. 54–72, 145–6, 177–8.
8. Gao Jun et al. (eds.) (1988) *Zhongguo gongren yundong shi jiaocai jianbian (1919–1949)* [A collection of educational materials on the history of the Chinese workers' movement] (Shanghai: Huadong shifan daxue chubanshe), pp. 301–3; Zhejiangsheng zonggonghui, ed. (1988) *Zhejiang gongren yundong shi* [A history of the workers movement in Zhejiang] (Hangzhou: Zhejiang renmin chubanshe), pp. 220–43; Shanghai Municipal Archives (hereafter SMA) S37-1-168, S37-1-243.
9. WMA D2-1-10, D2-1-11; Qian Yaoxing, et al. (eds.) (1990) *Wuxishi sichou gongye zhi* [Wuxi silk industry gazetteer] (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe), p. 474.
10. For an explanation of the Communists' early policy of 'New Democracy' in regard to private urban industry see Tang Jianxun (1949) *Xin minzhu zhuyi wenda sanbai tiao* [Three hundred questions and answers on new democracy] (Hong Kong: Minhua chubanshe); Zhang Jiangming (1950) *Xin minzhu zhuyi jianghua* [Talks on new democracy] (Guangzhou: Minjian shuwu); and Wei Leshan (1951) *Xin minzhu zhuyi jiben renshi* [Basic understanding

of new democracy] (Hong Kong: Qiushi chubanshe), as well as Mao's 1940 essay 'On New Democracy'. Other relevant works by Mao include 'On Coalition Government' (1945), 'The Present Situation and Our Tasks' (1947) and 'On the People's Democratic Dictatorship' (1949).

11. For more general works on Chinese unions in the 1950s, see Paul F. Harper (1969) 'The Party and the Unions in Communist China', *China Quarterly*, no. 37, 84–119; Lee Lai To (1986) *Trade Unions in China, 1949 to the Present* (Singapore: Singapore University Press); and Jackie Sheehan (1998) *Chinese Workers, A New History* (New York, NY: Routledge), among others.
12. WMA D2-1-3, D2-1-9, D2-1-11; Qian et al., *Wuxishi sichou gongye zhi*, p. 336.
13. WMA D2-1-11; Qian et al., *Wuxishi sichou gongye zhi*, p. 468.
14. For other examples in which women workers found it nearly impossible to participate in systems for 'democratic management' in Chinese factories in the 1950s, see Robert Cliver (November 2009) 'Minzhu guanli: The "Democratization" of Factory Management in the Chinese Revolution', *Labour History* 50: 4, 409–35.
15. WMA D2-1-11, D2-1-12. James Gao describes similar shortcomings among the administrative and union cadres in Hangzhou in his book, James Gao (2004) *The Communist Takeover of Hangzhou: The Transformation of City and Cadre, 1949–1954* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press), pp. 76–9, 118–20, and 185–215 which describes the roles of the very few women cadres in Hangzhou.
16. *Renmin ribao*, 23 February 1951; Laodong chubanshe bianshenbu, ed. (1951) *Shanghai gongren kangmei yuanchao xingdong gangling* [Program for Shanghai workers' resist America aid Korea actions] (Shanghai: Laodong Chubanshe).
17. WMA D2-1-10; Qian et al., *Wuxishi sichou gongye zhi*, pp. 23, 468; *Jiefang ribao*, 27 July 1951; *Laodongbao* 5 November 1951; *Renmin ribao*, 17 March 1951.
18. WMA D2-1-11, D2-1-12.
19. For more detailed information on China's silk weavers before the 1949 revolution, see Xu Xinwu ed. (1991) *Jindai Jiangnan sizhi gongye shi* [A History of the modern Jiangnan silk weaving industry] (Shanghai: Renmin chubanshe); D.K. Lieu (1941) *The Silk Industry of China* (Shanghai: Kelly and Walsh, Ltd.); and Perry, *Shanghai on Strike*.

20. 'Sizhiye laozi xieshang huiyi qingkuang', in Shanghai Labour Bureau, ed. (1951) *Laozi xieshang huiyi xuanji* [Selections on labor–capital consultative conferences] (Shanghai: East China People's Press), p. 30.
21. SMA S39-4-54, S39-4-31 and S39-4-32.
22. SMA S39-4-53, S39-4-62, C1-2-654, C1-2-739.
23. SMA C1-2-231; *Laodongbao*, 28 November 1950.
24. SMA S39-4-31.
25. SMA C1-2-334.
26. At the AAS meeting in Chicago in 2015, I heard two papers relating to worker welfare in Maoist China, one by Covell Meyskens, 'Guerilla Labour: The Third Front and the Late Maoist Social State', and one by Jake Werner, 'Integrating the Excluded: The Rise of Mass Culture among Shanghai Workers, 1949–1958'. Taken together, these two papers revealed that even the most deprived of Shanghai's industrial workers enjoyed benefits far superior to those working on 'Third Front' projects in the mountainous hinterland.
27. WMA D2-1-10.
28. *Gongren ribao* (ed.) (1950) *Laozi xieshang huiyi* [Labor–Capital Consultative Conferences] (Beijing: Gongren chubanshe).
29. On the Democratic Reform Campaign see William Brugger (1976) *Democracy and Organisation in the Chinese Industrial Enterprise (1948–1953)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); Mark Frazier (2002) *The Making of the Chinese Industrial Workplace: State, Revolution, and Labour Management* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 118–22; and Sheehan, *Chinese Workers, A New History*, pp. 34–41.
30. Qian et al., *Wuxishi sichou gongye zhi*, pp. 337–8.
31. WMA D2-1-11.
32. WMA D2-1-9, D2-1-11.
33. WMA D2-1-10.
34. Some of the best works on women, gender, marriage, and family in revolutionary China, other than Delia Davin's book cited above, include Elisabeth Croll (1978) *Feminism and Socialism in China* (New York: Shocken Books); Phyllis Andors (1983) *The Unfinished Liberation of Chinese Women, 1949–1980* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press); Kay Ann Johnson (1983) *Women, the Family, and Peasant Revolution in China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press);

Judith Stacey (1983) *Patriarchy and Socialist Revolution in China* (Berkeley: University of California Press); Neil J. Diamant (2000) *Revolutionizing the Family: Politics, Love, and Divorce in Urban and Rural China, 1949–1968* (Berkeley: University of California Press); Gail Hershatter (2011) *The Gender of Memory: Rural Women and China's Collective Past* (Berkeley: University of California Press).

35. WMA D2-1-10.
36. SMA C1-2-333, C1-2-854.
37. *Laodongbao*, 1 June 1950.
38. WMA D1-2-6. Elisabeth Croll reports that, by 1952, the number of nurseries in factories, mines, commercial enterprises, government offices, and schools had increased by 22 times over 1949. Croll, op cit., p. 247, citing an article, 'Mother and Child Care' in *People's China*, 1 June 1953.
39. SMA C1-2-333.
40. SMA C1-2-854.
41. WMA D1-2-6.
42. Yongtai Filature Factory History Editorial Group (ed.) (1959) 'Yongtai sichang fazhan shi, 1896-1958 (chugao)' [A History of the Development of the Yongtai Filature, 1896–1958 (preliminary draft)] (Wuxi Municipal Archives).
43. Qian et al., *Wuxishi sichou gongye zhi*, pp. 240–1.
44. *Sunan ribao*, 1 June 1952.
45. WMA D2-1-10.
46. Qian et al., *Wuxishi sichou gongye zhi*, p. 241.
47. *Laodongbao*, 1 June 1950.
48. Delia Davin, *Woman Work*, pp. 182–5.
49. SMA C1-2-854.
50. Like Lenin, the Maoists were committed to gender equality and women's emancipation, but Lenin in particular tended to conceive of this as resulting from paid employment through agricultural collectivization and socialist industrialization. (See Lenin's November 1918 speech to the First All-Russia Congress of Working Women, for example.) Without sufficient provision of facilities for childcare, food preparation, and the many other unpaid labor women frequently perform in the home, however, this resulted in the famous 'double burden' of working-class and professional women, not only in socialist countries, but throughout the urban and industrialized world.

51. This finding supports similar conclusions by scholars such as Andors and Diamant, cited above.

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CHAPTER 7

A Utopian Garden City: Zhang Jingsheng's 'Beautiful Beijing'

Leon Antonio Rocha

This chapter analyzes a city that was never built, and that only enjoyed an existence in two somewhat obscure but fascinating texts, written by the notorious Chinese intellectual Zhang Jingsheng 張競生 (1888–1970). The two texts were entitled *An Aesthetic Outlook of Life* 美的人生觀 (*Mei de renshengguan*, 1924) and *The Method of Organisation of an Aesthetic Society* 美的社會組織法 (*Mei de shehui zuzhifa*, 1925); they described in detail Zhang's vision of a 'Beautiful China' 美的中國 (*mei de Zhongguo*) and a 'Beautiful Beijing' 美的北京 (*mei de Beijing*).[1] Zhang Jingsheng's grand designs for his ideal city were very much inspired by his personal experiences as a university student in France. And even though Zhang never explicitly cited Ebenezer Howard's (1850–1928) *Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform* (1898), the seminal text of the British Garden Cities Movement, Howard's influence could be discerned in Zhang's utopian scheme.[2]

An Aesthetic Outlook of Life and *The Method of Organisation of an Aesthetic Society* were part of the history of Chinese receptions and appropriations of the discourse of 'garden city' 花園城市 (*huayuan chengshi*), 'city beautification' 城市美化 (*chengshi meihua*), and 'combination of town–country' 城鄉合一 (*chengxiang heyi*).[3] As Zhang argued, all Chinese cities 'had been created through our ancient agricultural systems and the country's condition. In the current industrialized world, a world with

L.A. Rocha (✉)
University of Liverpool, Liverpool, UK

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global trade, many cities need to reposition themselves to meet our present needs. […] For our newly built city, we need to use a "combination of town–country system" 城市合一制 (*chengshi heyi zhi*)'.[4] For Zhang Jingsheng, the new, 'Beautiful City' needs to

> have the benefits of a town on the one hand, and it needs to have the vivacity of the countryside on the other. In various countries the metropolises are prosperous, while the villages are decaying, and this is all because it is easier to find a livelihood in the city. There is more amusement and a city has greater stability. But a city's corruption is proportional to its size, and the larger a city then the more crimes and evils there will be. So the two major questions in today's society are: how to ruralise a city, and how to urbanise a village.[5]

Historian David Strand pointed out that garden cities as an idea 'enjoyed a considerable vogue in the twenties and thirties in China'. Strand cited the example of Dong Xiujia 董修甲, 'an acute observer of urban affairs who held positions in the Shanghai and Hongkou municipal governments in the 1920s', and who was trained in urban economics and civic administration at the University of Michigan and University of California.[6] Writing in 1925, Dong argued that, following the garden cities design, a new China could cancel out the deprivation and degeneration in urban areas and the backwardness of the countryside, by bringing nature into the city and modern amenities into the countryside.[7] By the 1930s, specialist journals such as *Review of Civic Administration* 市政評論 (*Shizheng pinglun*), *Civic Administration Periodical* 市政期刊 (*Shizheng qikan*), and *Civic Construction* 市政建設 (*Shizheng jianshe*) regularly invoked Howard in debates on urban planning and China's future.

Zhang Jingsheng's radical imagination of the Chinese city could be situated in the socio-political setting and intellectual conditions of early twentieth-century China. Meng Qingshu identified a general 'utopian climate' in China in the 1910s and 1920s, Charlotte Furth pointed to the proliferation of 'social utopias' in the early Republican period, and Arif Dirlik and Peter Zarrow drew attention to the various species of futuristic thinking from Chinese socialists and anarchists.[8] This Chinese 'utopian impulse' led to, for example, the establishment of 'work-study programs' by Li Shizeng 李石曾 (1881–1973) and Wu Zhihui 吳稚暉 (1865–1953) to promote international pan-laborism; the foundation of 'moral advancement societies' in late-1910s Beijing; and the set-up of experimental cooperatives and intentional communities such as Beijing's 'Number One

Work-Study Mutual Aid Corps' or Liu Shifu's 劉師復 (1884–1915) 'Red Lychee Villa'. These Chinese projects espoused values such as physical labor, self-sufficiency, industrious learning, collective farming, cooperation, and egalitarianism.[9] They in turn had numerous foreign sources of inspiration, such as the Japanese 'New Village' 新しき村 (*Atarashiki-mura*) movement; the Colonie d'Aiglemont (1903–1909) in France; John Humphrey Noyes' Oneida community of free love and selective breeding; and the writings of Proudhon, Bakunin, and Kropotkin among many others.[10] However, Zhang's 'Beautiful Beijing' was unique in that other utopian projects in China did not comment on the fundamental redesign of the city; they were more concerned with setting up small-scale enclaves within an urban area, or retreating to the countryside altogether in search of a simpler, more wholesome way of life. Above all, Zhang Jingsheng dreamed of, echoing Ebenezer Howard, the 'combination of town–country' 城鄉合一 (*chengxiang heyi*) to devise new, prosperous Chinese cities full of delightful gardens, parks, and lakes as well as residences, industries, businesses, and state institutions. Unlike Ebenezer Howard, whose plans were (at least partially) realized in Letchworth (1904) and Welwyn (1919) in Hertfordshire in Southeast England, Zhang Jingsheng's utopian blueprint for a Chinese garden city led nowhere.

By revisiting Zhang's texts, I am taking a different approach from past readings. Frank Dikötter and Sakamoto Hiroko, in their histories of sexual knowledge in China, concentrated on Zhang's appropriation of eugenics and racial science, Peng Hsiao-yen focussed on Zhang's 'gynocentrism' and its connection to Social Darwinism, and Lee Haiyan critiqued Zhang's aesthetic ideology and its totalitarian undercurrents.[11] Instead, I analyze Zhang's imagination of new urban spaces that would foster 'sentimental subjects' and bring Chinese cities out of pathology and into modernity. In what follows, I first offer a profile of Zhang Jingsheng, summarize the background of his two utopian texts, and then dissect his account of 'Beautiful Beijing'.

Zhang Jingsheng's Sentimental Revolution

Zhang Jingsheng was born Zhang Jiangliu in Raoping, Guangdong, in 1888.[12] He came from a well-to-do merchant family, and aged 19, Zhang Jingsheng entered the Whampoa Military Primary School, where he studied French and became fluent in the language. He later enrolled at the Imperial Capital University, the precursor of Peking University. During his formative years in Beijing, Zhang encountered swathes of theories and

philosophies from the West and from Japan. He became so enthralled with Social Darwinism that he changed his name to 'Jingsheng', literally 'competition for survival'. Zhang's interest in sexology and eugenics was also cultivated around this time.[13]

In 1912, Zhang traveled to France and studied at the University of Paris. He lived among other students in the Latin Quarter, around the fifth and sixth arrondissement, and was enormously impressed with Hausmann's restructuring of the French capital. Relocating to Lyon in 1916, Zhang wrote his doctoral dissertation on Rousseau's pedagogical philosophy. He read widely, coming into contact with the works of Havelock Ellis, Francis Galton, and Auguste Comte among others. He was involved with the Sino-French Work-Study Movement, spearheaded by the aforementioned anarchist intellectuals Li Shizeng and Wu Zhihui, and believed that the minds and bodies of the Chinese youth could be transformed through diligent study and hard work.[14] Zhang returned to China in 1920 and was appointed Professor of Philosophy at Peking University. He taught classes in philosophy and aesthetics, French literature, and so-called investigation of customs 風俗調查 (*fengsu diaocha*). During the early 1920s, Zhang developed a reputation as a passionate, innovative if occasionally eccentric intellectual who sought to intervene in the way that Chinese people thought about love, marriage, sex, and eugenics.

In 1924 and 1925, Zhang published *An Aesthetic Outlook of Life* and *The Method of Organisation of an Aesthetic Society*. In *An Aesthetic Outlook of Life*, which at once combined aesthetics, philosophical vitalism, and utopian socialism, Zhang put forward 'beauty' as the most superior 'outlook of life' 人生觀 (*renshengguan*, equivalent to the German *Lebensanschauung*). He argued that the aesthetic could be the fundamental guiding principle of all things, because beauty could marry reason and sentiment, and reconcile the intellectual and artistic dimensions of being.[15] *An Aesthetic Outlook of Life* was Zhang's response to the 'Science and Outlook of Life Debate' that took place in China in 1923. That debate was concerned with the widespread destruction of Europe during World War I—whether that revealed the moral bankruptcy of European civilization, and whether a blind faith in the power of science and technology (and the concomitant denigration of the subjective and spiritual) was responsible for the violence and bloodshed. Chinese intellectuals questioned whether 'out-and-out Westernisation' was a viable direction for China, or if Chinese ethics and metaphysics had to be preserved to moderate the deleterious effects of Western, instrumentalist rationality.[16] Zhang

argued in favor of Westernization, but was supportive of specifically one configuration of Westernization, namely, the introduction of the aesthetic mode of being, merging 'extreme rationality' and 'extreme sentimentality' through beauty, synthesizing the Apollonian and the Dionysian.[17] As Terry Eagleton argued, the aesthetic appealed to intellectuals from diverse periods, because it appeared to offer 'a superbly versatile model of political aspiration, exemplifying new forms of autonomy and self-determination, transforming the relations between law, desire, morality and knowledge, recasting the links between individual and totality, and reversing social relations on the basis of custom and affection and sympathy'. [18] This was precisely what Zhang Jingsheng believed the aesthetic would achieve.

The Method of Organisation of an Aesthetic Society laid out more fully Zhang Jingsheng's grand vision of 'New China'. He imagined a nation, filled with meticulously planned and beautiful cities, inhabited by talented, virtuous, and libidinally liberated 'New People'.[19] He called for all the 'sentimental people' in China to unite and launch a revolution of beauty that would transform an ugly and pathological society from the bottom up:

> Our society, for several thousands of years, has been ruled by a bunch of people without any sentiment, and this made our laws unfair, our economy unbalanced, our education inadequate, and our emotions unconnected! Come together, sentimental people from everywhere! We should have a class awakening! [We] should unite into a front, overthrow the government and people that have no feelings![20]

Zhang's books were favorably reviewed by his fellow intellectuals. For example, the critic Zhou Zuoren wrote, 'the most admirable aspect of Zhang Jingsheng's work is his boldness. In a pathological, Confucian society like China, how utterly exciting and satisfying it is to raise high the banner of beautiful clothing, food, housing, even beautiful entertainment'.[21] But Zhou's praise perhaps represented the pinnacle of Zhang's popularity among other cosmopolitan Chinese intellectuals. By the late 1920s, Zhang would be reviled by his contemporaries; he was accused of peddling pornography and pseudoscientific nonsense. In 1926, Zhang invited readers of a literary supplement to submit stories of their sexual development. From the letters he received, Zhang chose seven accounts, added his own commentaries (based largely on the sexological reasoning and reproductive advice from Marie Stopes' *Married Love* and Havelock

Ellis' *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*), and published this as *Sex Histories Volume 1* 性史第一集 (*xingshi diyiji*).[22] The book contained the autobiographical confessions on the educated urbanites' desires and anxieties, and for Zhang *Sex Histories* was a performative act that inaugurated Chinese people's 'modern subjectivity' through the articulation and narrativization of their innermost nature—which he argued had been brutally oppressed by the customs and traditions of Old China.[23] Containing explicit descriptions of sex, *Sex Histories* became one of the most scandalous books in Republican China. Fake sequels were published under Zhang's name, and *Sex Histories* was endlessly pirated and parodied. Zhang's critics condemned his version of 'aesthetic eugenics', whereby he connected good sex (that led to simultaneous orgasm and the release of copious amounts of vaginal fluids) to the production of physically stronger and cleverer offspring. By around the 1930s, Zhang Jingsheng had largely faded from the intellectual scene. He died in 1970 during the Cultural Revolution in his native Raoping.

Utopian Bricolage and Aesthetic Energetics

Zhang Jingsheng's *An Aesthetic Outlook of Life* and *The Method of Organisation of an Aesthetic Society* were highly fragmentary texts—fascinating and frustrating in equal measure for both its theoretical fireworks and its argumentative leaps, in its abundance of imaginative proposals, and the chronic impoverishment in actual plans of action. Zhang offered long expositions as well as digressions on everything in China that was pathological and that had to be transformed to bring the nation in line with the modern world. He appropriated the concept of aesthetic education from Schiller, argued that the Chinese people had to become more like Rousseau's 'Natural Man' who nobly followed his instincts, and believed that the adoption of calisthenics and naturism would strengthen Chinese bodies and dispel shame.[24] He gestured toward the British Aesthetic Movement, pronounced the need for the aestheticization of the quotidian and the creation of an 'art of living'. A family's home, the basic unit of society, would be redesigned and refitted with delighted furniture, ovens and kitchenware, hygienic baths and flush toilets.[25] The economy in 'New China' was to be self-sufficient through the implementation of the Rochdale principles of co-operatives. Education would follow Helen Parkhurst's 'Dalton Plan'; all classes would be tailored to each student's abilities with no child left behind.[26] To cultivate a sense of national unity,

Zhang Jingsheng suggested the use of mass spectacles such as annual festivals, military parades, sports, and theater.[27] To enhance the Chinese race, 'undesirables' within the population might have to be sterilized in the name of 'Beauty' and 'Progress'.[28]

An Aesthetic Outlook of Life and *The Method of Organisation of an Aesthetic Society* were essentially a mixture of utopian speculation, political manifesto, science fiction, prescriptive manual, and a catalogue of the latest fashions in thought in 1920s China—a laboratory of ideas in which Zhang attempted to synthesize new thinking with the intellectual resources available to him. All this was peppered with vitriolic attacks against other intellectuals, and anecdotes from Zhang's personal experiences—his observations on French, German, and British eating habits; his participation in a Mi-Carême carnival in France; the beauty of European couture versus the ugliness of Chinese clothing; the tango dancers in Paris' Latin Quarter.[29] Zhang's books were therefore best described as 'bricolage'. In *Archaeologies of the Future*, Fredric Jameson argues that the bricolage is the defining feature of utopian writing; utopia is a daydream 'in which whole cities are laid out in the mind, in which constitutions are enthusiastically composed and legal systems endlessly drafted and emended, in which the seating arrangements for festivals and banquets are meditated in detail, and even garbage disposal is as attentively organized as administrative hierarchy, and family and childcare problems are resolved with ingenious new proposals'.[30]

It is not Jameson's intention—or mine—to dismiss utopias. Jameson points out that 'the eccentricities [...] and social diagnoses are neither random nor wilfully invented out of obsession or personal whim'.[31] Utopian texts like Zhang Jingsheng's function as the registering apparatus for a given social reality. A utopia 'must respond to specific dilemmas and offer to solve fundamental social problems to which the Utopian believes himself [*sic*] to hold the key [...] the persistent and obsessive search for a simple, a single-shot solution to all our ills. And this must be a solution so obvious and self-explanatory that every reasonable person will grasp it'.[32] Moreover, Jameson observes that the emergence of utopias 'registers the agitation of the various "transitional periods" [...] "pre-revolutionary ferment" [...] "relative calm before the storm"' during which 'practical politics' might be suspended or deemed ineffectual, during which intellectuals might feel disenfranchised.[33] But as popular demands became more precise and more urgent, and as political thinking became sharply channeled toward specific issues and concrete threats, utopian imagination would no

longer enjoy free play in the intellectual world. In the Chinese context, by the end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s, intellectuals became more militant, with many drawn toward Marxist-Leninism and abandoning their experiments in alternative living.[34] Jameson's formulation of the conditions of utopia fits well with the period in which Zhang authored his two books: the May Fourth Movement (ca. mid-1910s to mid-1930s). The Movement marked the upsurge of Chinese nationalism and the relentless attack on traditional culture. Chinese intellectuals frantically translated and appropriated all kinds of Western knowledges in their mission to awaken the masses and to concoct a panacea to cure the Chinese nation. For Zhang, the obvious single-shot solution to China's ills was aesthetics, which lay right at the heart of his utopian bricolage.

For Zhang, the greatest battle in the world was that between 'sentimentalists' who embraced the beautiful and the artistic, and the 'heartless people'.[35] He argued that this was more important than the class struggle promoted by Marxist revolutionaries. Zhang advocated a heroic, 'extreme sentimentality', which he placed in opposition to the Confucian 'Way of the Median'.[36] The traditional Chinese mentality for Zhang was synonymous with being mediocre, non-committal, and passive. Confucian moderation at best gave license to disengagement and the toleration of abuse, and at worst opened the door for collusion with evil. The figure of the traditional Sage, supposedly calm and unmoved when confronted with a world in turmoil, was rejected as false and pretentious, and had to be replaced by romantic, virile, aesthetic heroes leading China to victory through the sheer force of their collective will. Zhang called this the 'faith and worship of love and beauty'.[37] The new Chinese heroes would see beauty as the measure of all things and would use the aesthetic as the purifying and redemptive, transcendental force: 'From the perspective of beauty [...] if there is no flesh then there is no spirit, and if there is spirit then there will be flesh. Denigrating the flesh and prioritizing the spirit is just sleep-talking, prioritizing the flesh and denigrating the spirit is also absurd. When the aesthetic comes into effect, then all material things become transcendental, and the flesh becomes spirit'.[38] However, Zhang argued that beauty was not simply about luxury or frivolity, rather it was an 'economic instrument'. On an individual level, beauty would lead to a delightful daily existence, a vivacious mind, and a healthy body, and on the social level, Zhang argued that aesthetic considerations could guarantee the harmonious operation of all institutions.[39]

Zhang justified his pronouncements on the power of beauty with an 'energetics'. He argued that all life was made up of microscopic cells, with each cell possessing an infinitesimal amount of 'vitality'. A human being, then, had a 'total vitality' that was the sum of these infinitesimal amounts of cellular vitality. The material world surrounding an individual provided 'material energy', and this might vary depending on the environment—urban versus countryside, China versus the West. The combination of a person's vitality and the environment's material energy creates 'potential energy'. In Zhang's scheme, some of the potential energy would necessarily be expended on sustaining an individual's life (for example, producing and consuming food), and the rest spent on the family (reproduction, socialization of children), labor and production, relaxation and recreation, and finally artistic creation. The 'outward spread' of potential energy—creating something in the world—transformed it into 'energy of presence' or 'realisation energy'. The aim of Zhang Jingsheng's utopian project was to maximize each Chinese person's baseline vitality (via eugenics); to transform and rearrange the environment to maximize its material energy (via constructing an ideal city); and to devise ways for potential energy to be expended more efficiently (for instance shifting the burden of childcare from the family unit to state institutions). Overall, there would be more energy available for aesthetic creation, and thus the elevation of the human spirit.[40] This 'aesthetic energetics' animated Zhang's vision of a 'Beautiful Beijing'.

Design for a Beautiful Beijing

In Zhang Jingsheng's utopian Chinese nation, the government would be run by a 'Parliament of Love and Beauty', consisting of 1000 intelligent, strong, and virtuous representatives chosen through an annual, nationwide talent contest.[41] The Parliament would elect the 'Great President' and run eight ministries, the most powerful of which were the Ministry of National Strength and Ministry of Engineering.[42] The former was responsible for keeping an enormous archive that stored the life histories of every citizen. Using that information, which included details on physical health and intelligence, the Ministry of National Strength performed a 'matchmaking' service that ensured the best men and women would continue to produce outstanding offspring for the nation. 'Undesirables' would likely be sterilized or prevented from reproducing. The Ministry also administered public health and hygiene policies, disseminated information on

birth control, and organized the collective childcare. In Zhang's design, the Ministry also regulated the patterns of internal migration across China through a residency permit system. All of these, Zhang stated, were necessary to maintain China's national strength by maximizing the people's vitalities.[43]

The Ministry of Engineering would beautify China through urban redesign and civil engineering projects. It would construct roads and highways connecting all parts of the nation, maintain railway tracks and streetcars, and build water supplies, electric grids, standard housing units, telecommunication networks, and underground sewage. State-employed engineers would erect monuments, build museums and libraries, theaters and concert halls.[44] Zhang Jingsheng argued for the paramount importance of architecture and urban planning: In his ideal city, the careful structuring of spaces would impact on all citizens emotionally. The city would be didactic, symbolic, and theatrical, imparting aesthetic values onto the Chinese people on an everyday basis. He wanted spaces to encourage people to flow in particular directions, to pay attention to specific monuments, and to conduct their lives following certain patterns.[45] A primary objective of Zhang's Ministry of Engineering was the transformation of China's capital into a 'Beautiful Beijing'. Zhang argued that Beijing had always been a filthy and chaotic place, filled with 'ugly, weak and weary' residents.[46] Zhang's 'Beautiful Beijing' would be a city of vast concentric rings. The radius of the city would be roughly 50 miles, and it would be divided into five distinct functional sectors.[47]

The 'study sector' in the north would be home to all educational establishments: nurseries and kindergartens, high schools and vocational institutes, polytechnics and universities, research laboratories and art conservatories. It would also be the site for libraries, bookshops, coffeehouses, and spaces for knowledge exchange.[48] To the east would be a 'residential sector', home to the entire population of the capital, who all lived in standardized apartment blocks. The places for rest and work would be rigidly demarcated; no business and trading activities could take place in the residential sector. The 'commerce sector' lay in the southeast: an area with department stores, boutiques, and offices. It would also be the location of the Parliament of Love and Beauty and the headquarters of New China's ministries.[49] The Grand Arcade in the commerce sector would be a place of real wonder. In Zhang's design, it would be a building with six floors, selling daily essentials, clothing, shoes, accessories, furniture, and home decorations. The top floor would house a theater complex, with

cafés and gardens for play and relaxation. Zhang suggested that Beijing's Grand Arcade would rival Paris' Galeries Lafayette; it would be a world in miniature where Beautiful Beijing's inhabitants could find anything from Parisian fashion to Viennese furnishings.[50] The 'industrial sector' would lie in the southwest, where all the factories could be found and they would employ Beijing's population. The industrial sector had to be located far away from the residential zone out of public health and hygiene considerations. Finally, the western end of New China's capital would be an 'arts sector'. It would be a district containing vast green open spaces, cinemas, theaters, concert halls, galleries, museums, as well as artists' studios (Fig. 7.1).[51]

As Zhang's diagram showed, five enormous tree-lined boulevards would radiate from the core of the capital, separating the city into five distinct

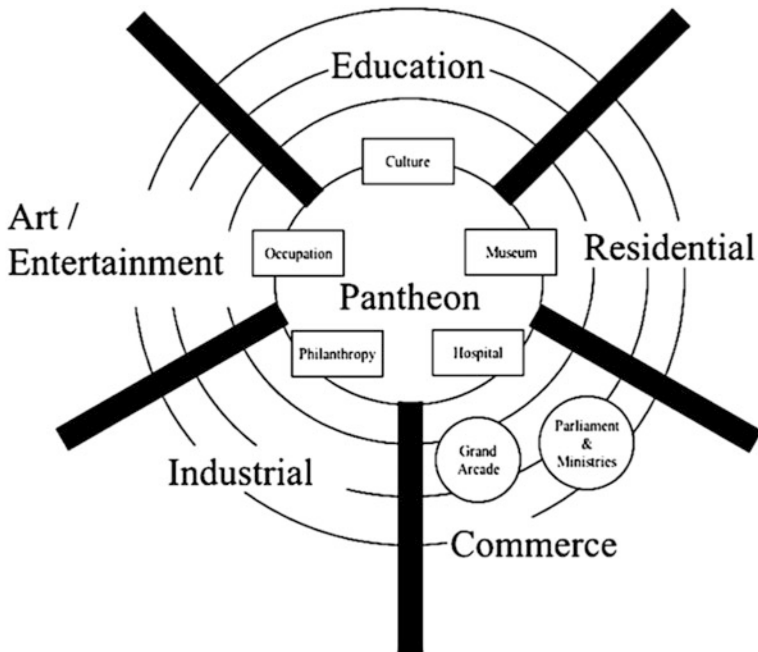

Fig. 7.1 Zhang Jingsheng's 'Beautiful Beijing', adapted by Leon Rocha from *Zuzhifa*, p. 185. In Zhang's text the illustration was accompanied by the caption 'Illustration for the Combination of Town–Country' 城鄉合一圖 (*chengxiang heyi tu*)

functional sectors, with concentric roads linking them to each other. The major boulevards would be flanked on either side by fields and the countryside, thus achieving the 'combination of town–country'.[52] The smaller roads would have sidewalks and a wide landscaped median or promenade for pedestrian use, planted with grass, flowers, trees, and shrubbery. Musicians and street performers would be permitted, with small stalls and benches for relaxation; couples holding hands strolling down corridors of delight and sensual pleasure.[53] Zhang's 'Illustration for the Combination of Town–Country' evoked Ebenezer Howard's design for the Garden City. In Howard's vision, there would be six radial boulevards traversing his ideal, concentric city from center to the circumference, dividing it into six equal 'wards' (compared to five in Zhang's scheme). In the city's core would be an open, circular space containing a garden, with a 'Crystal Palace' (glass-roofed arcade) and large public buildings—town hall, concert hall, theater, library, museum, art gallery, and hospital—surrounding it. However, in Howard's scheme the factories, warehouses, dairies, markets, coal yards, allotments, and large farms would be situated in the outskirts of the garden city, and in Zhang's 'Beautiful Beijing', industrial works formed one distinct 'wedge' of the city. Both Zhang and Howard argued that their ideal cities had to incorporate the best features of the countryside (beauty and peace, clean environment, and natural resources) and the best features from towns (socio-economic opportunities, places of amusements, and good facilities), thereby eliminating the problems of both rural and urban areas (isolation in the country and alienation in the city, idle farm hands, and urban unemployment).[54] However, what makes 'Beautiful Beijing' remarkable is Zhang's overt attempt to insert governmental power deeply into his citizenry. Instead of gardens and arcades, the core of Zhang's ideal city would be a so-called Memorial Temple that administered individuals in life and in death.

The core of Zhang's Beautiful Beijing would be the emotional locus and the 'collective soul' of the nation; this would be the site of the Memorial Temple and a central plaza, modeled on Les Invalides and the Panthéon in Paris and St Peter's Basilica in Vatican City.[55] Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City would be completely demolished.[56] Surrounding the Memorial Temple were five of the most prestigious institutions of the Chinese nation: the cultural institute, the national museum, the national hospital, the philanthropic institute, and the labor and occupation institute. In the Memorial Temple and central plaza, there would be mass celebrations of 'heroes' almost every day. The plaza would be filled with stalls

selling books and pamphlets, marquees with film-showings and open-air lectures delivered by university professors, and stages with people singing, dancing and re-enacting historical episodes, paying tribute to the lives and deeds of heroes commemorated on each particular day.[57] Zhang argued that this would be an opportunity for ordinary folk to become inspired by the achievements of the 'giants of history', people of 'extreme sentimentality and intelligence' such as Plato, Galileo, Leibniz, Newton, Darwin, Marx, Li Bai 李白, Du Fu 杜甫, and Su Shi 蘇軾.[58]

The Memorial Temple itself would be a gigantic structure built out of stone, where leaders of Beautiful China delivered all their speeches, where national festivals and state funerals were held, and where historical events and figures were remembered. The hall inside the Memorial Temple could accommodate an audience of 50,000. It also housed a bell which chimed on the hour; for Zhang this was of prime importance to his ideal city as the bell could help the citizens cultivate a sense of punctuality and regularity. In the higher levels of the Temple, there would be chambers where orchestras and choirs held recitals, performing operas and canonical pieces of Western classical music. The music would be amplified and could be heard all around the city, a 'subconscious form of education' as people went about their everyday routines.[59] The Temple was also a mausoleum or Panthéon: the final resting place of many heroes and heroines. In fact, every major city in China would have a Temple at its core: the remains of a provincial hero would be kept in the provincial city's Temple, and heroes of national or international significance would be buried in Beijing's Temple. The bodies of the most celebrated individuals would be embalmed and preserved, displayed in coffins made of glass, similar to Lenin's body in Moscow's mausoleum.[60] The main hall of each Memorial Temple would be divided into three areas. On the left-hand side one could find sculptures, portraits, and photographs of individuals of 'deep emotions and extreme love'.[61] On the right-hand side, there would be paintings of revolutionary heroes, and in the middle a list of names of people who revealed scientific and philosophical truths. There would also be numerous subterranean levels in the Temple; they would be deliberately chilly, eerie, and dark, in contrast to the warmth and brightness of the 'Hall of Heroes' on the ground level. In the underground, there would be neat piles of skulls and skeletons everywhere; this would be the final destination of people who committed crimes in Zhang's 'Beautiful China'. There would be the remains of 'libellous, defamatory monsters and pests' who spread lies and falsehoods, or 'treacherous traitors and violent warlords' who obstructed

the Chinese Revolution. In the center there would be photographs of all sorts of criminals from common thieves to murderers. The ashes of the most evil individuals would reside in the lowest subterranean levels, with their acts fully listed on the walls. During regular, compulsory tours of the Memorial Temple, citizens would be reminded of the heroes and villains of Chinese society and world history.[62]

All citizens of New China would end up in the Memorial Temple when they died, because in the new nation there would be no burial grounds that, according to Zhang Jingsheng, destroyed the aesthetics of cities and the countryside. Zhang wanted to eliminate the superstitious practice among the wealthy elite in China, who often purchased land that they believed had good *fengshui* and turned them into private cemeteries.[63] Instead, in Zhang's utopian city, everyone would be judged according to their actions throughout their lives, and assigned a final resting place in the Temple—above the ground if they lived moral lives or in the underground levels if they were unrepentant criminals. All citizens would keep an honest journal to report their thoughts and activities. When they died, this journal, along with the records from the Ministry of National Strength and testimonies collected from family members, friends, and colleagues, would be used by the state to reach a verdict on a person's life and deeds, and the deceased would be allocated a place in the Temple.[64]

As Lee Haiyan pointed out, if we read Zhang Jingsheng's aesthetic, utopian city against his more famous *Sex Histories*, we could see how his intellectual project was about binding the interests of the political state with the people's instincts and drives.[65] When it came to building an ideal society, Zhang wondered how he could reconcile subjective emotions and objective rationality, without descending into solipsism or reducing the world to materiality. In aesthetics Zhang thought that he had found a solution because beauty simultaneously engaged the intellectual faculty (aesthetic judgment) and visceral reactions (experiences of sublimation or disgust), and on this premise he built his 'Beautiful China'. For Zhang, within the aesthetic there lay an ideal of a compassionate community, an expressive and organic unity, a genuine revolution of people's entire sensibilities, of space for natural affection and sensual desire. However, as Lee Haiyan observed, Zhang Jingsheng's aesthetics was basically 'authoritarian through and through'. Zhang prescribed 'the standards of beauty by relying on a colonial structure of knowledge that graft[ed] the European ways of life […] onto indigenous forms in order to render the latter more beautiful'. He effectively appointed himself as the 'ultimate arbiter

that supplied universal standards' of what constituted aesthetic, ethical and truthful.[66] To enforce those non-negotiable, 'universal' standards he would install, at the heart of his ideal city, a Panopticon-like disciplinary apparatus ('Memorial Temple') that functioned via inculcation ('heroes' whose values and achievements would be commemorated and celebrated) and intimidation (those considered criminals and deviants would have their remains dumped in the Temple's subterranean mass graves and reviled in perpetuity as 'villains'). This is how aesthetic politics turns into a monstrosity: Ultimately to use the aesthetic as the basis of consensus is to establish politics on the impossible premise that we have the same minds, the same tastes, the same spontaneous reactions to the beautiful or the ugly. To use the aesthetic to liberate the subject, all subjects had to become the same kind of subject. To create the same kind of subject that appreciated the same kind of beauty would necessitate coercion.

Zhang's 1926 *Sex Histories* was his attempt to introduce the practice of confession to the Chinese masses. He argued that Chinese people's sexualities had been painstakingly repressed by traditional values, and unleashing those innermost desires via confession would lead to more 'modern', healthy subjects. In his idiosyncratic version of the 'ideal sex', Zhang connected skilful love-making between couples (and mutual simultaneous orgasms) with the conception of superior and more intelligent children. Zhang thought he managed to conjoin the collective, eugenic duty (reproducing better offspring for the nation's sake) with the emancipation of human nature and the pursuit of individual pleasure. For him, the intrusion of sexological and medical expertise into the world of intimacy and privacy entailed an intensification of sensuality, and aligned people's happiness and fulfillment with a state's agenda of maintaining the strength and productivity of a population.[67] In Zhang's utopian city, its citizens' regular confessions would be extracted and archived by a 'Ministry of National Strength' that put people into life-determining boxes depending on their biological attributes and everyday behaviors, all in the name of 'vitality'. Effectively, the aim of Zhang Jingsheng's utopian city was to reproduce the same minds and the same bodies.

From Blueprint to Plan of Action

How did Zhang Jingsheng envisage turning 'Beautiful Beijing' into reality? At the end of *The Method of Organisation of an Aesthetic Society*, Zhang called on his readers to 'establish their selves and their bodies'.[68]

He wanted young men and women to set up co-operatives and to experiment with self-sufficient communities.[69] Small education societies, study groups, and independent institutes could be founded to disseminate the gospel of aesthetics. Intellectuals had to engage with the public, write introductory guides, deliver free lectures; collectives of thinkers had to set up independent publishing houses.[70] Zhang encouraged his audience to embrace 'internationalism', visit foreign countries whenever possible, and invite famous thinkers from other nations to China.[71] For Zhang, the most pressing problem facing China was the 'Woman Question': work, independence, access to education, and freedom of marriage. Zhang proposed that one of the first steps to realizing his utopia was to emancipate all women, by establishing women's unions, shelters for women fleeing from abusive husbands, and societies offering protection for mothers and children. If necessary, Zhang argued that one had to 'adopt the tactics of the militant suffragettes'.[72]

Unlike Ebenezer Howard, Zhang Jingsheng never developed relationships with urban planners, academic sociologists or government bureaucrats, and never successfully mounted a coherent movement that gathered political interest, let alone financial support, to turn his vision of an ideal city into reality. Following Tani Barlow, Zhang's texts are best considered as 'vernacular sociology': 'a kind of thinking and writing which explained everyday life in terms of Chinese enlightened social theory and legitimated the ascendant elite's new social relations (small families, companionate marriage, possessive individualism, and so on), and social practices (scientific birth control, domestic hygiene, professional training and so on)'.[73] Even professional sociology and urban studies in Zhang's time—the practitioners of which were funded by American philanthropic bodies (such as the Rockefeller Foundation) or Ivy League universities—enjoyed little success in tackling the concrete problems in Beijing (prostitution, poverty, crime, and poor health). As Madeleine Yue Dong has discovered, 'for Beijing's politicians, association heads, and officials, what the sociologists were pointing out was undeniable but highly abstract. In their day-to-day power struggles and business deals, development projects and margins of profit were finite, compromises'.[74] Meanwhile Beijing's academic sociologists 'had no concrete means to alleviate the misery of people who lacked organisations or any power in political negotiations'.[75]

In any case, Zhang's *An Aesthetic Outlook of Life* and *The Method of Organisation of an Aesthetic Society* had limited impact on his contemporaries. His ideas on the beautification of the city were taken up enthusiasti-

cally by Yang Zheming 楊哲明 (fl. 1920s–1930s), who penned numerous books and articles popularizing urban planning and introducing the discourse of garden cities. In 1927, Yang published a booklet entitled *Aesthetic Municipal Administration* 美的市政 (*Mei de shizheng*), the rhetoric in which resonated strongly with Zhang Jingsheng's books:

> [A]n aesthetic municipal administration will make the entire management of a city receive a baptism of beauty. [...] An aesthetic municipal administration will involve a scientised and artistic construction of material civilisation, and of an enjoyable rural life. [I]n an aesthetic municipal administration, on the one hand the town has to be ruralised, and on the other hand the town must become urbanised. It is best to let ruralisation and urbanisation harmonise each other.[76]

However, Yang Zheming removed the more extravagant designs in Zhang's utopia, and discussed more concretely (and again along Howard's lines) the beautification of city layouts, roads and streets, rivers and lakes, state housing and public spaces, hygiene and transport.[77] Again, Yang Zheming's work could be read as 'vernacular sociology', written in a tone that was simultaneously hopeful and pessimistic. It was hopeful in the sense that Yang believed, through careful urban planning (and particularly the adoption of 'garden cities'), Chinese cities could become modern and prosperous. He was pessimistic in that he thought little could be achieved as long as intellectuals like himself and Zhang Jingsheng continued to be marginalized from political power.

If Howard's 'garden cities', 'combination of town–country', and 'city beautification' discourse circulated widely in the Republican period, it disappeared in the Maoist era and re-emerged in the Reform years to dominate debates on urban development and civic administration in the 1980s and 1990s. One of the most well-known examples was the Dalian Garden City project, explicitly modeled upon Singapore and Kitokyushu and initiated in the 1990s by Bo Xilai 薄熙來 (1949 –) during his tenure as Dalian's mayor.[78] The Guangdong cities Shenzhen, Guangzhou, and Zhanjiang, as well as Xinyang in Henan Province, all had the label 'garden city' attached to them. The Songjiang 'One City, Nine Towns' 一城九鎮 (*yicheng jiuzhen*) project from 2001 to 2005 involved the development of nine 'garden cities', each with its own 'European' styling, to relieve the population and environmental pressures on Shanghai. The most famous of the Songjiang 'garden cities' was Thames Town, built to resemble a

Victorian market town, now mostly bought up by real estate speculators and left unoccupied, as well as serving as a backdrop for Shanghainese couples' wedding photographs. Ebenezer Howard's seminal text was fully translated for the first time into Chinese in the 1980s by Jin Jingyuan 金經元, a former director and professor at the China Academy of Urban Planning and Design. The translation was republished in 2000 by the Commercial Press; its back cover declared that Howard's ideas were 'urgently needed by Chinese people today'.[79] The underlying agenda of Republican readings of garden cities was of course markedly different from contemporary receptions—bringing China in line with the rest of the world versus ameliorating the social and environmental problems brought about by that very process of modernization—but both early twentieth-century intellectuals like Zhang Jingsheng and today's technocrats in the Chinese party-state imagined aesthetic spaces and habitable cities, rationally planned, occupied by citizens filled with vitality. And Ebenezer Howard continues to be a point of anchorage for these Chinese dreams.

Notes

1. Zhang Jingsheng (2009) 'Mei de renshengguan' [An Aesthetic Outlook of Life], in Zhang Peizhong (ed.) *Mei de renshengguan: Zhang Jingsheng meixue wenxuan* [An Aesthetic Outlook of Life: Zhang Jingsheng's Selected Writings on Aesthetics] (Beijing: Sanlian shudian), pp. 1–116; Zhang, *Mei de shehui zuzhifa*, *op. cit.*
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4. Zhang Jingsheng (2009) *Mei de shehui zuzhifa* [*The Method of Organisation of an Aesthetic Society*], in Zhang, *Mei de renshengguan*, pp. 184–5.
5. Zhang, *Mei de shehui zuzhifa*, p. 183.

6. Strand, *A High Place Is No Better Than a Low Place*, p. 109. On Dong, see Kristin Stapleton (1999) 'Yang Sen in Chengdu: Urban Planning in the Interior', in Joseph W. Esherick (ed.) *Remaking the Chinese City: Modernity and National Identity, 1900–1950* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press), p. 97; Kristin Stapleton (2000) *Civilizing Chengdu: Chinese Urban Reform, 1895–1937* (Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press), p. 223; Ri Ko (2013) Guomin zhengfu shiqi de Hankou dushi jihua yu shishi [The City Planning of Hankow in the Period of National Government, 1926–1938], *Huanjing yu yishu xuekan* [Journal of Environment and Art] 14 (2013), pp. 18–50.
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60. Ibid., p. 152.
61. Ibid., p. 153.
62. Ibid., pp. 155–6.
63. Ibid., p. 172.
64. Ibid., p. 153.
65. Lee, 'Governmentality and the Aesthetic State', pp. 123–4.
66. Ibid., p. 121.
67. Rocha, 'Translation and Two "Chinese Sexologies"', pp. 163–4.
68. Zhang, *Mei de shehui zuzhifa*, p. 240.
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CHAPTER 8

Habitability in the Treaty Ports: Shanghai and Tianjin

Isabella Jackson

Treaty ports were among the most habitable cities in Republican China, for those who could access the features of the treaty port environments that made them good to live in. The racial inequality characterized by treaty ports entailed inequality of access to space, especially green spaces. In most cities, habitability meant (and means) different things for the poor and the wealthy, and the poor could be pushed out to cater for the needs of the wealthy, as was true in the treaty ports. But administrations primarily serving foreign interests rather than Chinese ones further divided those who had access to a habitable environment from those who did not. Such exclusion of the Chinese from elements of what made the treaty ports habitable at times fuelled anti-imperial nationalism. The unique environment of the treaty ports, where colonial administrations experimented with town planning alongside Chinese municipal governments in the same cities, is what distinguishes urban development in China most clearly from that of other countries. This chapter focuses on habitability in treaty ports, to examine the role played by colonial administrations in both shaping and responding to demands for habitable cities by the people residing in them.

The first crucial element of habitability is safety: a city has to have effective policing, defense, and firefighters to ensure that the population is physically safe. The next requirement for habitability is hygiene and

I. Jackson (✉)
Trinity College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland

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sanitation, including a clean and safe water supply. Ruth Rogaski provides a masterful exploration of the ways in which hygiene was bound up for both European colonizers and new Chinese elites with notions of modernity, which was as true in Shanghai as in the focus of her study, Tianjin.[1] Cities also need effective transport networks and sufficient employment opportunities for their inhabitants. Once these requirements are met, the middle classes begin to demand educational opportunities, which, as Aaron Moore's chapter in this volume shows, in China resulted in aspirational rural families sending their children to cities for schooling. Yet such practical considerations are not the sole indicators of habitability. What came to be particularly valued by the urban middle classes in Republican China, both Chinese and foreign, was space, particularly green spaces. As urban populations expanded, space was increasingly at a premium, and the ability to access larger homes, a garden, open public spaces, and parks became ever more desirable. Wealth bought access to space in cities, and so the relative habitability of different areas of a city was linked directly to the inhabitants' class. In the fraught urban environment of treaty ports, where foreigners abused their privileges—won through war and unequal treaties—and viewed their Chinese neighbors as racially inferior, divisions based on class as well as race shaped the urban space.

Treaty ports are particularly illuminating when examining the intimate relationship between class and space. Chinese cities had long expanded beyond their original walls, while many walls were destroyed in the early twentieth century, either forcibly by the foreign troops of the Eight-Nation Alliance during and after the Boxer War of 1900–1901 (as in Tianjin) or in the reforms of the late Qing or the early Republic: Shanghai and others pulled down their city walls after the Xinhai Revolution of 1911 to facilitate free movement of people and goods, physically marking the break with the old.[2] Chinese urban communities and their local authorities were not, therefore, constrained in their expansion. The delineated boundaries of the foreign settlements in the treaty ports, however, were somewhat less flexible, and their consuls and colonial municipal authorities were acutely aware of the pressing need for ever more space to meet the habitability requirements of their growing populations. The municipal councils secured formal expansion of the settlements and sought informal expansions through building roads external to the settlements. They purchased land for parks and passed building regulations to ensure streets were a certain width and were not overshadowed by buildings above a certain height. Wealthy Chinese and foreigners alike invested and lived in the most habitable areas in the treaty ports, whether they were in the foreign settlements or not.

This chapter focuses on the two largest treaty ports—Shanghai and Tianjin—and primarily on the policies of the Shanghai Municipal Council (SMC) and Tianjin's British Municipal Council (BMC), to compare how they sought to create habitable settlements. The two administrations are examined in terms of the size of their respective settlements and their efforts to expand them, their building regulations, and their provision of public spaces. Teasing out the similarities and differences in their approaches and the response of the inhabitants of the Shanghai International Settlement and the British Concession at Tianjin allows us to understand what was perceived as important for habitability and who had access to the most habitable parts of the city. Colonial administration was crucial to the development of both cities, but their differences in governance allow a comparison between the two to reveal important commonalities and differences in treaty port habitability.

Shanghai was among the first five treaty ports opened by the Treaty of Nanjing, which concluded the First Opium War in 1842. The International Settlement was formed by the merging of the so-called English and American Settlements in 1863 and was situated to the north of the original Chinese city. It was managed by the SMC, which was dominated by Britons but included Americans, Germans, Russians, latterly Japanese, and eventually Chinese members. Because it was international, the settlement was not subject to the same level of consular management of the neighboring French Concession, or the various foreign settlements in other treaty ports like Tianjin. The SMC developed regulations and policies as it saw fit, subject only to the approval of the foreign ratepayers who qualified to vote in annual meetings through property-ownership. The SMC therefore primarily served the interests of business and the wealthy foreign community.

Tianjin was opened as a treaty port by the Treaty of Tianjin of 1858 (ratified in the Beijing Convention of 1860) at the culmination of the Second Opium War. The Qing government granted land at Tianjin to be leased to the British, French, and American governments for concessions, though the Americans never fully established their concession. By 1902, seven further nations had opened concessions at the port, and each concession authority had to negotiate with the others and with the Chinese municipal authorities in its efforts to manage the city. The BMC (and the British Municipal Extension Council, which ran the extension area from 1898, with many of the same members as the senior council) ran affairs in a similar way to the SMC, answering to local foreign ratepayers, but the British consul held ultimate authority and had to approve the council's proposals before they were put into practice.

The cities' geography and economy brought challenges for maintaining habitability. Summers in Tianjin were hot and humid, while winters

were long and fiercely cold, particularly the winter of 1930–1931 when ice fields extended 70 miles out to sea.[3] The city, including the foreign settlements, was sometimes flooded, as in 1917. The British Concession had had to be drained and the level of the land raised before the foreign settlers could live there.[4] Shanghai, 600 miles further south, had much milder winters but the summers were hotter and the humidity was year-round, with the associated risk of waterborne diseases such as cholera. Both cities were defined by their status as ports, with a huge volume of maritime trade passing through them: 17.5 million tons in vessels passing through Shanghai annually at the turn of the century and 2.4 million tons passing through Tianjin.[5] Tianjin developed a strong heavy industry, largely in the areas outside the foreign concessions, while Shanghai's industry was dominated by textiles and factories proliferating in all areas of the city. Both cities attracted large numbers of immigrants for the working opportunities available, putting pressure on the urban space.

Town planning and responsibility for rendering cities habitable falls to municipal governments more often than to central governments, and this was certainly the case in late Qing and Republican China. In treaty ports, colonial municipal councils borrowed practice from their home countries to regulate urban space. They devised rules governing the width of roads, height of buildings, and availability of light and air inside buildings. They also established public parks and recreation grounds to ensure residents had access to adequate open spaces. These measures were all designed to render the settlements more habitable: more pleasant for inhabitants and more desirable for the middle classes who sought out recreation and leisurely enjoyment of green spaces. These efforts were used by the councils, the cities' foreign inhabitants and visitors, and some Chinese reformers to claim foreign administrative superiority.[6] Guide books contrasted the wide roads and well-kept streets of the foreign settlements with the 'Chinese city'.[7] Treaty port administrations were thus partially legitimized by their ability to render their settlements habitable, as many Chinese took advantage of the habitability afforded by colonial authorities despite opposing foreign imperialism on Chinese soil.

'Model Settlements'

The SMC believed that it administered a 'model settlement', a claim repeated in municipal reports and internal memoranda, by guide books to Shanghai, and by the self-regarding English-language newspaper the

North China Herald.[8] In reality, it was more of a reference point than a model: British residents in other treaty ports demanded the same developments pioneered in Shanghai, such as residents of the British Concession in Tianjin demanding a clean water supply after a waterworks was established in Shanghai in 1883.[9] The idea that the International Settlement represented a model of urban management in China was also present in British government discussions about Shanghai and even on occasion by local Chinese officials seeking to build an advanced municipality following the establishment of the Shanghai Municipal Government in 1928.[10] The idea of 'model settlements' originated in nineteenth-century Europe and referred to places where the needs of modern commerce and industry were met by the amenities of the modern age under the auspices of an enlightened political authority to secure social order and public welfare for all. It implied peaceful coexistence of different groups (primarily different classes in Europe) with equal access to everything from clean water to a public library. A classic example of a model settlement is the *Eixemple* ('extension') section of Barcelona, developed outside the walled town at the same time as Shanghai's International Settlement.[11] Other foreign enclaves in China claimed to be model settlements. Kuling (Lushan), for example, was to be established as a model settlement according to its founder (English missionary Edward Little) in 1899. The resort was always tiny, but its location in the mountains south of Jiujiang made it a healthy environment and Britons, Americans, Germans, Russians, and, by the 1920s, Chinese retreated there in their hundreds to escape the summer heat. Dalian was seen as a model city by both its Japanese authorities and later by the Chinese press in the early People's Republic, as explored by Christian Hess.[12] The idea was not unique to Shanghai, but nowhere was it described as a model as consistently as the International Settlement. It was a reputation the settlement authorities were keen to promote, and which depended on the settlement being habitable.

In Tianjin, the different concessions sought distinction through different means. The Japanese obtained expensive central urban space for their concession, establishing the Japanese empire as a force in north China. Other concessions emphasized the role of architecture in stamping the national character on the physical city. The Italian Concession aspired to celebrate Italian architecture and recreate the 'aristocratic' essence of Italian culture, as described by Maurizio Marinelli.[13] The Austro-Hungarians had high hopes that their concession would be symbolic of their imperial aspirations in China, similarly expressed in distinctive national architecture.[14]

For its part, the BMC at Tianjin wanted to achieve distinction by administering a singularly habitable urban enclave.

The motivations behind the efforts of the members and employees of such colonial municipal councils to create a habitable environment were varied. They wanted to ensure the settlements were attractive places in which to invest and do business for both foreigners and Chinese. More businesses and higher-value property meant higher rates for the municipal revenues. More importantly, the foreign ratepayers who voted to approve council budgets and byelaws and the councilors who formulated policy were drawn from the business community and served the interests of their own kind. Among settlers (more than those who sojourned for shorter periods) there was also a strong element of municipal pride, which encompassed a sense of local, national and imperial honor.[15] Among foreigners this local pride was compounded by racist assumptions that foreign urban management was superior to Chinese municipal government. It was a view that helped justify claims to bring more of the city under foreign control.

Expansion

Shanghai and Tianjin, and their foreign settlements, grew through the treaty-port era in both population and area. Population growth was rapid as Chinese and foreign migrants arrived seeking safety from rebellions and warfare and the opportunities afforded by the cities. The rapidly growing population produced anxiety among established inhabitants, both Chinese and foreign, as they sought to distinguish themselves from new arrivals. Among Shanghai's Chinese, this was most pronounced in the prejudice against Subei people explored by Emily Honig, while foreigners similarly sought to distance themselves from White Russian refugees.[16] Concern about these incoming groups led those who could afford it to seek physical distance from the poorer migrants, but in the crowded environment of Shanghai, this was not always possible.

The foreign settlement authorities sought greater urban space directly through securing formal expansions to their jurisdictions. The French and International Settlements at Shanghai expanded several times in the nineteenth century. The first extension to what was then called the English Settlement came in 1848, the same year as the establishment of the American Settlement and the signing of the agreement between the French consul and the Shanghai Daotai for the French Concession, which was founded the following year. The extension was achieved through a simple agree-

ment between the British consul and the Daotai to extend the western boundary of the Settlement.[17] In 1863 the English Settlement combined with its American neighbor to form the International Settlement, as the foreign community sought to better defend itself from external disorder during the Taiping Rebellion. A further extension was secured in 1893, but the greatest expansion was to be the last, agreed in 1898 and enacted the following year, bringing 10,000 more houses and over 50,000 more Chinese residents under the direct authority of the SMC.[18] This rendered the Settlement over 40 times its original size at 5583 acres or 8.7 square miles: still a small area for the population, which was 350,000 according to the 1900 census and numbered over 1 million by 1930.[19] The French Concession also expanded in 1900 and again in 1914, to a final area of 2525 acres. Though smaller, the French concession was far less industrialized and less densely populated than the International Settlement, so it provided a more spacious and habitable environment for its residents. They included leading politicians (notably Sun Yat-sen), warlords (including Zhang Xueliang 张学良), businessmen (particularly Catholics like Zhu Zhiyao 朱志尧), and criminals (among them Du Yuesheng 杜月笙): those with means in Shanghai often chose to live in the French Concession for the space that it afforded.

The British and French concessions at Tianjin expanded when they could: firstly in 1897, at a time when expansions were taking place in treaty ports all over China as foreign powers took advantage of China's weakened position after its defeat in the first Sino–Japanese War. Further expansions were gained in 1902, alongside the opening of new concessions by members of the Eight-Nation Alliance following the Boxer War. The British Concession expanded from its original 76 acres to over 1000 acres (1.6 square miles), absorbing the American Settlement along the way, while the French Concession grew from 60 acres to 382 acres (0.6 square miles). The French authorities resented that their concession was smaller than the British, Russian, German, and Japanese concessions, and sought a further expansion by force in 1916, supposedly to protect local Catholics.[20] The French authorities predicted no opposition to their occupation of Laoxikai 老西开, to the north of the concession, but were met instead by a surge of nationalist resistance, including a sustained strike and boycott, that prevented the expansion.[21] This was an early spur to the growth of Chinese nationalism.[22]

Such attempts at expansion were rarely successful following the fall of the Qing in 1911, as Chinese nationalism grew, but the colonial authori-

ties in Shanghai and Tianjin continued to expand beyond their boundaries through road-building, policing, and the provision of amenities, charging taxes in return. In Shanghai, the SMC had to give up its expansionist ambitions by the end of the 1920s as the Nationalist city government made the control of extra-settlement roads increasingly difficult: From 1928 the roads were policed jointly by the Shanghai Municipal Police under the auspices of the SMC and the Chinese city's police force. But in Tianjin, where the administration of the Chinese city was less a priority for the Nanjing government and multiple foreign concessions created a complicated web of jurisdictions, the colonial authorities were even slower to give up their hold over such extra-settlement areas. As late as 1937 the BMC approved the provision of water and electricity to residents of the Race Course Road Extension Area, even though they were beyond the concession's boundaries in the Chinese city.[23] These expansionist activities were justified on the basis that they were providing crucial services for their residents, and demands for the formal incorporation of new extensions to the settlement were based on the need for more space. Both the provision of services and the greater availability of space combined to make these areas more habitable for the wealthy Chinese and foreigners who lived there.

In Tianjin, the British Concession divided between the 'old concession' and the so-called Extension and Extramural Extension (translated respectively as 擴充界, *kuochong jie* or 'expanded concession', and 推廣界, *tuiguang jie* or 'extended concession', while the concession proper was called the 老租界, *lao zujie*—'old concession'). Initially, the first extension area was managed by a separate 'British Municipal Extension Council', while the second extension area, dubbed the 'Extramural Extension', was left without administration and largely undeveloped: 'a curious and indeed ridiculous situation' according to a long-term British resident.[24] It was not until 1918 that the three separate British areas were merged into one municipality under a single administration, but that did not stop both extension areas becoming popular residential districts.

Space was at a premium in the crowded International Settlement at Shanghai, but in Tianjin residents of the British Concession enjoyed much more space. More than 1 million people lived in Shanghai's International Settlement alone by 1930, whereas the population of the whole city of Tianjin was a little over a million. Of these, almost a quarter lived in the foreign concessions, while the vast majority were in the Chinese-administered city. The three areas under British administration had a population of 39,000, while the core concession, excluding the extension

areas, was the most densely populated with 30,000 residents, leaving the extension areas much more sparsely populated. The British Concession at Tianjin (including extension areas) therefore had on average 24,000 people per square mile, while the International Settlement at Shanghai had 115,000 per square mile (higher than the population density of twenty-first-century Shanghai). The most densely populated concession in Tianjin was the French concession, with 50,000 residents:[25] a population density of 83,000 per square, still nearly a third lower than that of Shanghai's International Settlement.

Many wealthy Britons and Chinese, including merchants, retired warlords (including Sun Chuangfang 孙传芳), and former Qing officials (like diplomat Zhou Xuexi 周学熙), lived in the suburban British extramural extension, enjoying the space for large houses and gardens.[26] Building regulations made property too expensive for poorer Chinese,[27] so the Municipal Council achieved unofficial segregation by class. This contrasts with other sites of large scale urban migration in this period, such as the Manchurian cities of Mukden, Changchun and Harbin, where migrants occupied the lowest level occupations but were distributed evenly through the cities.[28]

Land purchases continued throughout the existence of the settlements. Between one quarter and one third of the SMC's budget was set aside for land purchases and road-building projects, forming the vast majority of extraordinary municipal expenditure (spending on long-term projects intended to benefit future generations of ratepayers). This meant spending 27.3 million *tael* on land and works in 1930.[29] The BMC had a similar emphasis on building and land purchases, publishing the public works report first in its annual reports (whereas in Shanghai it was always the Watch report that took prime position). The British municipality at Tianjin devoted a third of its general budget to works, excluding its further investments in the Electricity Department and Water Works, representing 376,000 dollars in 1936. Acquiring space for urban development was thus central to these administrations. The demand for ever more space for urban residents was used to justify colonial expansion: seeking new urban space for a more habitable city.

Building Regulations

Ruth Rogaski stresses how public health regulations were used to impart notions of hygienic modernity, but the regulations that shaped the development of a city's buildings performed a similar modernizing function.

In most cities, regulations are used by authorities to civilize their own urban populations, but treaty authorities were seeking to impose their ideas of what constituted civilized behavior on an 'other'. This was more apparent in the British Concession in the competitive colonial environment of Tianjin than in the more laissez-faire International Settlement at Shanghai. The BMC employed zoning to keep industrial and residential areas separate,[30] serving both the industrial activity on which much of the local economy depended while preserving the habitability of suburban quarters. Residential areas were further zoned according to different classifications of housing, creating a degree of segregation comparable to that identified by Carl Nightingale as typical of colonial administrations and therefore much of the world.[31] There was no such zoning formally in Shanghai: It was primarily the cost of land that dictated whether business, industry, or residential buildings predominated in different parts of the city. The Chinese city government attempted to establish a residential zone in 1935, but the cost of housing, a lack of employment opportunities, and fears about the safety of the zone in the case of Japanese attack meant few settled there.[32] The central district of the International Settlement, the original English Settlement nestled next to the Huangpu riverfront, was by far the most expensive, and so was dominated by banks and hotels.[33] Larger textile factories were concentrated further up the river in the northwest of the Settlement, which had briefly been the American Settlement in the early treaty-port era, and around the Soochow Creek for the ready supply of water, though smaller workshops were scattered throughout the city.[34] Residential buildings were found throughout the Settlement, with modest alleyway 里弄 (*lilong*) housing and poorer dwellings concentrated in Hongkou in the north of the Settlement and more spacious garden alleyway-houses or detached houses, foreign-style 洋房 (*yangfang*) in the western areas incorporated into the Settlement in 1899 or in the extra-settlement areas beyond.[35] Despite this variation, everywhere in the International Settlement was, compared to the rest of the city, heavily built up: space was to be found in the French Concession and the wider Chinese city, but these areas lacked the safety and building regulations of the SMC-administered Settlement so were, to some renters and buyers, less desirable.

The shortage of space and lack of zoning in the International Settlement at Shanghai meant that industry and private residences existed cheek by jowl. Hanchao Lu's evocation of the crowded housing of the *lilong* shows how they provided not only housing but business and social functions.[36]

This was the chaos of treaty ports criticized in the 1920s by one of China's earliest town planners, Dong Xiujia 董修甲, who advocated the careful zoning of cities.[37] Regulations were one way to overcome this problem and improve the habitability of the Settlement. The less interventionist SMC, however, preferred safety measures to be adopted because they were in the interests of companies and their insurers rather than due to coercive municipal regulations. It was constrained by the difficulty of introducing new byelaws, which had to be approved by the ratepayers at public meetings; in other foreign concessions in China, consuls could impose new byelaws as they saw fit, and in Chinese-administered urban areas the authorities had all the powers invested in them by the state. The SMC's Public Works Committee was reluctant to allow mixed residential and commercial uses in the same building, but concluded in 1925 that it was powerless to prevent it if all safety regulations were met.[38]

Early building regulations addressed public health requirements. In 1909 this came to include measures to render houses rat-proof to prevent the spread of plague: raising the floor level and eliminating any hollow spaces in the walls and floors.[39] The other early priority was safety, primarily the prevention of fire, which was achieved through mandating a minimum width of roads, the provision of water hydrants on streets and in commercial buildings to control fires that might break out, and the use of fire-resistant building materials. Building regulations could also ensure access to light at street level: A lack of light in alleyways was cited in a police report in 1909 as a factor in crime rates, but light came to be valued for less pragmatic reasons.[40] When the new skyscrapers of the central district were proposed in the last great building spurt in the 1920s, the SMC debated what should be the maximum height to ensure sufficient light in the streets. The principle was laid down that the maximum height of buildings would be 1.5 times the width of the road (with no height limit on the Bund where light was guaranteed from the riverfront) drawing on practice in Hong Kong and American cities.[41] Natural light and air were valued because they made the dense urban space more habitable.

Linking the availability of space to the height of a building had the result that Chinese houses, which were not permitted to rise above two storys, had less yard space than foreign-style houses: two-story buildings were only required to have three feet of space between them and the row of buildings behind.[42] This resulted in the distinctive *lilong* housing associated with Shanghai, which provided the close-knit communities described by Hanchao Lu, but also meant Chinese had access to far less open space

in Shanghai than in other Chinese cities like Tianjin, while Shanghai's foreigners, whose houses were not governed by the same regulations, had access to more space in the suburbs. The different regulations for different categories of housing meant not only de facto segregation by race but also that race determined a resident's access to space, light, and air.

In making the city more habitable for its wealthier inhabitants, the SMC denied living space to the poor. The SMC repeatedly attempted to use its regulations to justify forcibly expelling whole communities, notably the inhabitants of huts erected 'as temporary structures from straw and salvaged material' by refugees to the city.[43] Initially hut-dwelling communities, made up of factory workers, rickshaw pullers, traders, and the unemployed, were confined to the Chinese-administered city, though where they bordered the International Settlement they were opposed as unsightly and a potential source of crime and disorder: The SMC attempted to order their removal in 1921, without success.[44] In the 1920s huts spread into the northeastern Settlement area of Yangshupu, numbering over 1000 by 1925. The SMC then discussed these huts as a threat to public health, but attempts to remove them were again thwarted. In 1931 the SMC decided to remove 10 percent of the huts per year until they were eliminated, starting with those posing the greatest health hazard. The number of huts only increased following the destruction caused by the Sino–Japanese conflict of early 1932 and concerted opposition by the inhabitants of the huts meant the removal policy was abandoned in 1934. But two years later, with over 5000 huts housing over 25,000 inhabitants, the Commissioner for Public Works insisted that action must be taken once more.[45] He claimed he could act only once Public Health Department inspectors reported unsanitary conditions to their counterparts in the Public Works Department, but the Commissioner for Public Health argued he had not the resources to take on this responsibility.[46] The latter's reluctance suggests that the impetus for removing the huts came from concerns for the urban landscape, under the purview of public works, rather than strictly the protection of public health, as had been claimed. The Commissioner of Public Health told the *China Press* in 1938 that the hut villages were easier to monitor for disease than their inhabitants would be 'if they were scattered into squalid buildings which already are overcrowded'. 'Until new homes are found for these people', he expanded, it would be difficult to address the problem.[47] Public health reasons thus did not underpin the desire to remove the huts, but were an excuse for removing unsightly dwellings for the benefit of Shanghai's

wealthier inhabitants. The SMC hoped that the private sector would provide cheap housing for the hut-dwellers, but made no efforts to incentivize building work. Since 1928, the Labour Commission of the Greater Shanghai Government had been building 'model villages' where housing would cost no more than $2 per day, to provide for the hut-dwellers.[48] The SMC's concern was the habitability of the settlement for the foreign business community, whereas the Chinese City Government addressed the needs of the city's wider population. Despite repeated efforts, the SMC failed to eliminate the huts, meaning their inhabitants continued to live in poor conditions and the Settlement's wealthier residents had to tolerate their continued presence.

Provisions to make the Settlement more habitable increased over time, as building regulations became more extensive, governing not only safety but also hours of operation and other measures to reduce noise and disturbance to the public. Chinese cities, particularly Shanghai, were seen as excessively noisy by both Chinese and foreigners. Ji Wen's 姬文 1904 novel about the lives of Shanghai's industrialists and merchants was entitled *City Noise* 市声 (*Shisheng*). American Carl Crow devoted a full chapter of his 1938 memoir to noise in China, in which he claimed that 'quiet in China is so rare and so hard to obtain that it is looked on as a luxury to be enjoyed only by the fortunate few'.[49] The zoning in Tianjin's British concession ensured that residents could enjoy some peace and quiet, but in Shanghai the SMC attempted to restrict noise at night and the police were given powers to enforce the regulations. Residents, Chinese and foreign, called on the SMC to enforce the regulations more tightly to improve their living conditions. In 1929 six residents, three Chinese and three foreign, wrote together to the Assistant Commissioner of Public Works to complain about the excessive noise, often continuing all night, from a Chinese-owned ironworks on Singapore Road.[50] Municipal police visited the ironworks and for a few days the disturbances were reduced, but the complainants wrote again when the noise resumed. They called for action in no uncertain terms:

> We put it to you that if these Works were situate [sic] in a more centrally located district, they would ere now have been closed down or their activities restricted…We further venture to suggest that were there fifty people living in the immediate vicinity instead of six, this letter would have all fifty as signatories. Under the circumstances we as *bona fide* ratepayers, appeal to you to take definite action in respect to what is indubitably a public nuisance.[51]

The reference to central districts is revealing: The residents believed that those who lived in the most exclusive parts of the International Settlement, with the highest rents and land values, were treated more favorably by the SMC and enjoyed a more habitable environment. Basing their appeal on their status as ratepayers asserted a desire for equal treatment on the basis of contributing to the municipal revenues and a sense of belonging to the Settlement. The regulations did not preclude noisy activities during the day, so the SMC's officers declared that they were powerless to help further, but a final letter from the residents declares that the 'courteous assistance of the police' resulted in a great improvement in local noise levels.[52]

Even wartime did not deter complainants. In 1938, a Chinese resident of Singapore Road wrote to the SMC to object to the issuing of a permit to a Chinese-owned nail factory on the road, despite it breaking municipal regulations barring noisy factory work between 10 pm and 6 am. The municipal inspectors investigated and requested that noisy work cease at night and thick walls be installed around the sheds. The factory owner subsequently wrote, confirming that he would cease the manufacture of nails at night, as this was the noisiest part of the work, but expressing the hope that 'the complainants will be more sympathetic toward their fellow-countrymen who have not only lost their entire plant in Hongkew but unluckily happen to be factory owners at these difficult times with numerous handicaps to be confronted with'.[53] Yet the complaints continued, including a letter written in English by a student objecting to the noise when he was trying to study for his examinations at the Polytechnic Public School. He urged the SMC's inspectors to 'please come and hear for yourself how noisy it is'. The dispute continued: habitability could not be ensured, particularly following the destruction wrought by the war in 1937.

Other subjects of complaints included alterations to houses and business buildings that might collapse and endanger pedestrians (as in the case of a bridge connecting a house to a restaurant on Fuzhou Road), pose a fire hazard (such as a wooden construction used as a tailor's shop), or a health hazard (as was claimed of an old police box converted to a latrine), compromise natural light (as did a sleeping loft erected above a rice shop on Henan Road), or simply present an inconvenience or an unsightly view.[54] All these middle-class complaints came from Chinese residents, demanding that the SMC take action to improve their living environment. These problems did not arise in the more habitable British concession in Tianjin with its careful zoning of residential and commercial property and much lower levels of industry.

Public Spaces

Public parks, gardens, and recreation grounds became increasingly important in nineteenth-century notions, particularly in the west, of what made a city habitable, and they continue to be promoted as key criteria for livability in China, as elsewhere, today.[55] Treaty-port Shanghai and Tianjin both boasted a number of such green spaces, though the rules governing them differed in revealing ways. Infamously, in Shanghai, Chinese were barred from the so-called public gardens on the Bund until 1928. The bar was put in place in the 1880s as the population grew and the Settlement's foreign residents sought to create a rarefied foreign-only space for their own relaxation, with Chinese admitted only insofar as they catered to foreign needs: as the servants of foreign children. The SMC went so far as to open a separate Chinese public garden in 1890 to firmly establish the segregation of the communities.[56] It received complaints, however, that it was frequented largely by the 'coolie class', so middle-class Chinese did not want to use it: Naturally enough, they sought admission to the same parks as the foreigners. Other parks under the authority of the SMC admitted Chinese only when dressed in Western clothing or with special passes, notably the Hongkew Park (Hongkou; now Lu Xun Park) and Jessfield Park (now Zhongshan Park). Both were beyond the limits of the Settlement and were thus much larger in area. The SMC also opened small playgrounds for children: In total it oversaw 14 parks, gardens, and recreation grounds within the Settlement and a further four beyond.[57] All the municipal parks attracted large numbers of visitors and praise in the local press, as the foreign and Chinese communities alike enjoyed having public spaces to take their children and escape the pressures of the city. The Shanghai French Concession, known for being more spacious and green than the International Settlement, also included eight small parks and squares, with no racial bar to entrance.

Parks in Tianjin's French and, when they existed, German and Russian concessions, and in the Chinese-administered city, had no racial criteria for entry.[58] The British were the least tolerant, but even the BMC admitted 'respectably dressed' Chinese to its only park, Victoria Park (the same basis as the SMC had admitted Chinese until the 1880s, coinciding with the opening of Victoria Park in 1887). The British in Tianjin were not necessarily any more enthusiastic about sharing their public space with Chinese than their compatriots who dominated the International Settlement at Shanghai, but their prejudice was much more firmly directed toward

working class Chinese who could be excluded by a simple dress code. The difference was that space was at less of a premium in Tianjin: Middle-class Chinese, who would be those meeting the dress code, could be admitted to the park without risking crowds of visitors disturbing the peace, as was feared in Shanghai. The desire for space, an essential component in a habitable city, hardened the racial prejudice of Britons in Shanghai. The righteous nationalist anger that the exclusion of Chinese provoked continued to reverberate through the twentieth century, as Robert Bickers and Jeffrey Wasserstrom explore.[59] The Shanghai Public Gardens became a symbol of the imperialism of 'old China' and the fundamental inequality, both racial and class-based, of the treaty port world.

Conclusion

Space was critical to habitability in Chinese cities, and the premium placed on access to space had a twofold effect. First, as middle-class foreigners and Chinese alike bought houses in the more spacious areas of the treaty ports, they achieved a degree of segregation by class. Both foreign and Chinese residents made use of municipal regulations to demand that undesirable features, whether buildings or the poor, were removed from their own areas. While this occurred in cities around the world, it was exaggerated in the foreign settlements of China due to their unusually delineated borders. The settlements created artificial boundaries that constrained urban expansion in ways comparable to the natural boundaries of Manhattan or Hong Kong Island. The middle classes increasingly valued and demanded access to green public spaces and quiet, peaceful residential areas. Second, the acute pressure on space in Shanghai contributed to the more pronounced racism apparent in municipal policies there compared with other treaty ports, as manifest in the sustained though unsuccessful campaign against hut-dwellers and in the exclusion of Chinese from the public gardens. Foreigners in Tianjin, sharing space only with middle-class Chinese and with ample space to go around, did not feel the need for such extreme policies. The racialization of space in the American south by the Jim Crow laws and in Apartheid South Africa was more pronounced, but it had echoes in Shanghai. It is therefore no surprise that the initial growth of Chinese nationalism in Republican China was based in Shanghai: In addition to the opportunities provided by the news media and sojourning populations, and the concentration of foreign imperialism on the city, the more contingent pressure on space in such a densely populated urban

environment and the resultant sharper expressions of racial prejudice provoked nationalist outrage.

The SMC may have sought to burnish the reputation of the International Settlement as a model settlement, but its habitability was limited in crucial ways. While the neighboring Chinese authorities sought to rival Western-style public health provision, in other areas the foreign administration provided not a model but a warning. The Chinese city government worked harder to provide a habitable environment for the poor, while the chaos of treaty ports criticized by Chinese observers like Dong Xiujia stimulated a demand for zoning in urban planning. Examining the delineations of space in the treaty ports highlights how habitability in Chinese cities could be exclusionary. Foreign administrations focused on rendering their settlements habitable for foreigners as a priority and, by extension, those Chinese who could afford to live in more spacious areas and who chose to adopt Western habits, but not for most Chinese. Creating a habitable urban environment for some often meant denying habitability to others.

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CHAPTER 9

Urbanization and Nature in China: The Example of Lake Tai

Toby Lincoln

This chapter begins with two publications named *Taihu youji* 太湖游记 (*Travels in Lake Tai*). The first, written by a Wuxi student, Hu Jiansheng 胡健生, was published serially between 1915 and 1918 in *Xuesheng zazhi* 学生杂志 (Student Magazine). The second, by Ai Xuan 艾煊, who had spent much of his life living on the shore of the lake, was published in 1963.[1] Both writers began their visit to the lake in Suzhou, moved north-west to Wuxi, round to Yixing, and completed the circuit at Huzhou. They described the beauty of the lake in glowing terms. Hu Jiansheng climbed the mountains to the west of Suzhou, where, 'looking at the clear sky all around opened my heart, while below at the bottom of the mountain, the trees were half hidden in the mist.…However, the cold wind was gently blowing. As it puffed in from afar, I felt very comfortable'.[2] Nearly 50 years later, Ai Xuan set off in a boat one morning. 'The sun was just rising. Once it appeared, suddenly all the dazzling colors of tangerine yellow, light pink, rose purple and emerald green blended together in the distant cloudy layer. The water on the lake reflected the brightness. The many-colored morning clouds complimented and shined on each other. It was very beautiful'.[3] In contrast to poetic depictions of the natural environment were the nearby cities, especially Wuxi, which in 1915 was expanding rapidly. From the peak of neighboring *Xi Shan* 锡山

T. Lincoln (✉)
University of Leicester, Leicester, UK

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(Xi Mountain), Hu Jiansheng saw 'a forest of smokestacks'.[4] Ai Xuan compared Wuxi to Suzhou, which was a beautiful handicraft city, while the former was a 'modern industrial city. Everywhere large factories can be seen, their smokestacks rising into the cloudy sky'.[5]

Between the natural world and the human world, the city and the countryside, there were many connections. Hu Jiansheng traveled out from the West Gate of Wuxi City along a newly built road, which wound its way out to the town of Rongxiang 荣香, and was wide enough for cars and rickshaws.[6] Ai Xuan was less impressed with infrastructure, probably because by the 1960s there were fewer really new innovations, but he noted recent changes. Whereas Hu Jiansheng took the steamer from Suzhou to the east peak of Dongting 洞庭, this was a journey Ai Xuan was able to complete by car in just 30 minutes.[7] Further south, near Yixing, cadres sent down to the countryside in 1958 had joined soldiers in clearing land for tea cultivation. Over the next two years, a tea leaf–processing plant and dormitories for workers were constructed, and building work began on a new road.[8] Industry as well as tourism could serve as the catalyst for infrastructure development. The tea plantation also points to how the lake and its shoreline were seen as useful resources. Hu Jiansheng wrote that on Dongting a rich seam of coal had been discovered, and officials estimated that total production could be as much as 240 tons a month. They suggested building a school and police station to provide workers with education and security.[9] Nature provided far more than fossil fuels. Much of Ai Xuan's account concerns how the land around the lake was farmed, whether for tea, oranges, or gingko, and there are several descriptions of happy workers singing songs, which, given that the book was published on the eve of the Cultural Revolution, is to be expected.[10] These two accounts reveal much about Lake Tai and the complexity of its relationship to the surrounding cities and the urbanizing region as a whole. The lake was a pure natural place with freshwater, glorious sunsets, and the gentle breeze rustling the treetops. However, although nature's intrinsic value was acknowledged, the lake's scenery and resources existed primarily for human exploitation. Farming, industrial development, and tourism all required ever more connections to the city, and this meant that throughout the twentieth century, urbanization encroached upon the shores of Lake Tai.

This chapter examines how the Chinese saw Lake Tai as a resource that made surrounding cities habitable throughout the twentieth century. If it seems strange that I should be writing primarily about a lake when my focus is the city, then it is worth remembering that historians have long considered the relationship between the built environment and the natural world. Urban environmental historians trace the ways in which the city has

affected the natural environment, whether that was the growth of agriculture to support settled populations, the diversion of rivers, deforestation, or industrial pollution. Meanwhile, the natural environment has affected cities, with inhabitants having to deal with the dangers and perceived annoyances of nature such as disease, pests, or the weather. This leads to the final interaction, which is how cities have responded to environmental change. Here, the acceptance of environmental issues has been the prerequisite for the adoption of the legal, commercial, or political methods that urban populations have used to address them.[11]

This chapter focuses on the first two types of interactions, and argues that urbanization has significantly affected Lake Tai, while the lake itself has gradually become both physically and discursively part of what makes individual cities and the urbanizing region as a whole habitable. The lake has been valued as an economic resource with the potential to increase the prosperity of cities across the region, and so improve the lives of their inhabitants. An increasingly important element of this value is tourism, and it is because of this that the intrinsic natural beauty of the lake has been seen as important. The emphasis placed on different values ascribed to the lake has changed over time. In the first half of the twentieth century, it was seen as a transport conduit for the region as a whole, although its resources were also ripe for agricultural and industrial exploitation, while tourism was becoming recognized as a source of income. After 1949, agricultural and industrial production took precedence, but the importance of the lake's natural scenery has re-emerged during the reform era. Throughout, there has been tension between the competing demands on the lake's resources, and it is only recently, as urbanization threatens the very natural environment that is so important to the lake's contribution to urban habitability, that steps have been taken to preserve it.

Seeing the Lake

In his study of Xiang Lake, near Hangzhou, Keith Schoppa highlights how local histories, artistic representations, and other sources have much to teach us about the Chinese relationship to their environment.[12] In this chapter I use municipal and regional plans, guidebooks, and travel writing because I seek to tease out the multiple ways in which those who were responsible for thinking about and managing cities were discussing their relationship to the lake. Archival sources show clearly how the state imagined and planned urbanization, but guidebooks and travel writings also reflect elite and official discourses, and this is as true of the Republican and

Maoist eras as it is of the late imperial period and the reform era.[13] I do not deny the value of other representations of Lake Tai such as paintings, poetry, scientific studies, or irrigation surveys, and indeed they sometimes touch on the relationship of the lake to the city. Together with histories of the lake and the surrounding region, many of these ways of seeing take an explicitly anthropocentric perspective, focusing on how nature only exists for humanity, a prerequisite for the notion that a lake can be valued for its contribution to urban habitability.

Traditionally in China there was not the same clear distinction between the natural and human world as in the West, but this did not mean nature could not be manipulated or that humanity was not center stage. Indeed, the development of agriculture and the actions of the state have destroyed ecosystems over the centuries.[14] The distinct separation of the natural and the human worlds had become widely accepted in Chinese discourse by the 1920s with the adoption of the term *ziran* 自然 (nature) from the Japanese, and this lay behind Nationalist and Communist developmental policies. At the same time, urbanization began to reorient the values of Chinese society toward the city.[15] Discussions of nature increasingly concerned how it could benefit expanding cities, and the natural environment was sacrificed for urban development. However, in the reform period the conversation has come full circle, as following examples elsewhere around the world, Chinese have been developing an environmental consciousness.[16] Despite this, urbanization is still a key objective, and this means that even as policy-makers seek, often in vain, to resolve the tensions between the natural and the built environment, they privilege making life in China's cities habitable.

Lake Tai has long been part of a regional ecosystem, and was a crucial factor in the development of farming practices, the land tenure system, rural handicrafts, lineage relations, and migration. As far back as the Tang dynasty, this supported an urban system, while urban morphology, such as gardens in Suzhou, Wuxi, and other cities, and the effect of canals on street layout reflected the geography of the region.[17] Studies of the Lake Tai region in the twentieth century have focused on the living standards of the peasantry, land reform, and the impact of the Great Leap Forward, but it was only in the reform era that work began on studying the impact of urbanization on the lake from a wide variety of perspectives, including science, architecture, and urban studies. However, just as with West Lake in Hangzhou, and to some extent Xiang Lake, the urbanization of Lake Tai is a process that began over 100 years ago as new technologies and

official narratives of development began to transform the regional urban system, and the cities that comprised it.[18]

Republican Period

Hu Jiansheng was not the only student writing about Lake Tai. In 1925, two students from Jiangyin proposed the establishment of a Lake Tai Special Administrative Area. They listed the detrimental impact of the Jiangsu–Zhejiang War, and the multiple languages and customs of the people living around the lake as reasons for abandoning existing provincial boundaries. The new administrative area would not only bring peace, but would also help to revive transport and commerce, and so contribute to future regional prosperity.[19] References to a wider discussion suggest that there may also have been proposals from local elites and government officials, but I have been unable to find further evidence of these. Either way, despite the ravages of war, Lake Tai was beginning to be seen as important to regional urbanization, a transformation that was most clearly manifested in new infrastructure.

The steamer service between Huzhou and Wuxi, which began operation in 1923, was established by a partnership of investors from cities across the region.[20] Xue Mingjian 薛明剑, the manager of the Shenxing Number Three Cotton Factory in Wuxi, and a prolific writer and advocate for the city's development, compiled a short guide to commemorate the steamer company's establishment. In aspirations that would be repeated over the years, he hoped that the new transport link would lead to a forest of factory chimneys along the lake shore. Out on the islands, he envisaged the construction of viewing platforms and villas, with elevators carrying people to the top of mountains so they could see the city lights that would shine like Hong Kong. Finally, the shorelines of Huzhou and Wuxi would be developed as commercial centers to attract tourists away from West Lake in Hangzhou.[21] Wuxi was to benefit far more than Huzhou from its proximity to the lake, but water transport remained important to the region as a whole. Although railways from Shanghai to Hangzhou and Nanjing were now carrying freight, over half of all trade in the region was still shipped along the Yangzi River, and many boats went via Lake Tai. Since the lake was part of the regional river system, which in turn connected it to Shanghai, water transport linked newly opened factories in rapidly developing cities such as Suzhou and Zhenjiang to international markets.[22] It was not only railways that were a new means of transport.

By the early 1930s, a ring road around Lake Tai was under construction, which would connect the lake with the regional road system, help the development of commerce and industry, aid in the elimination of bandits, and allow easier access to scenery. By 1931, much of the road had been built, and in an indication of how radically urbanization could alter the natural environment, the Jiangsu provincial government hired 600 workers, who had recently been constructing a railway line in Zhejiang, to clear a path through the mountains.[23]

War with Japan brought great destruction to the Lower Yangzi Delta, and Lake Tai became a haven for bandits and Communist guerrillas. However, peace meant new plans for a Lake Tai administrative area. Although they were rejected by the government, they illustrate the value of the lake to the region as a whole, as well as pointing to how during times of war safety was a prerequisite for prosperity and habitability, something that is explored in more detail in other chapters in this volume. In July 1945, representatives of several native place societies in Chongqing submitted a resolution to the Nationalist Government's People's Political Council. It proposed a new 43 km road running from the banks of the Yangzi River at Jiangyin to Lake Tai to create a regional industrial city. Factories and warehouses would be concentrated in the north, with the pleasant natural environment around Lake Tai suitable for housing. The road was never built, but commentators compared it to German autobahns and wrote approvingly of the two airports that would connect the region to the global network of cities.[24]

There is no evidence that the proposal was discussed at the People's Political Council. However, a second proposal from General Tang Enbo 汤恩伯, who was then commanding officer of the garrison in Nanjing, received government attention. He argued that the geography of Lake Tai had always made this area difficult to govern, and that for many years bandits had been an obstacle to development. The pre-war command post to suppress bandits had been revived, but the problem persisted. For this reason, a special administrative area should be established, which would return Lake Tai to its former prosperity.[25] Tang's *Taihu jianshe yijian shu* 太湖建设意见书 (*Opinions for the Construction of Lake Tai*) noted the lake's value for national defense, economic prosperity, good transport connections and the beauty of its scenery. The proposed area would be administered by the Jiangsu Provincial Government, and cover all the islands in the lake and an area 5 km from the shoreline. The main responsibilities of the new management bureau should be to register

the population, organize water patrols, and set up police stations on the major islands. Once security had been secured, steamer services should be restarted and roads repaired. Ideas to support commerce included a Lake Tai Water Production Company, the construction of docks, and the planting of orchards. Scenic sites around the lake should be repaired and new ones constructed, with a Lake Tai Tourist Company established to manage them. Meanwhile, domestic and foreign travel companies would bring visitors to the lake. All this activity should be funded by the provincial government, although the bureau would also collect money from such sources as fishing and shipping licenses.[26]

Tang's proposals were roundly rejected. However, the replies demonstrate the different ways in which the government valued the lake. The Ministry of Interior noted that water patrols set up by the governments of Jiangsu and Zhejiang were already rounding up bandits. Despite this, it was too dangerous to invest in repairing scenic sites, while the Ministry of Transport and the provincial governments would improve communications infrastructure. The Ministry of Defense argued that provincial funds were insufficient for a new administrative area, and that while Lake Tai was certainly a haven for bandits, many remote areas on provincial boundaries were similarly afflicted. Funds would be better channeled into existing institutions than used to set up a new administrative area. The Ministry of Transport stated that shipping licenses were already being administered, and that repair of roads damaged in the war was under way. Finally, the Ministry of Finance confirmed that funds were barely sufficient to ensure the security of the region.

The longest response came from the Jiangsu Provincial Government. Tang, like others before him, felt that the size of the lake supported claims for a special administrative zone, but this actually made it too large an area to be governed effectively. Moreover, since some cities, such as Wuxi, were close to the lake, extending the zone out to 5 km from the shoreline would be impossible. Turning to security, both Jiangsu and Zhejiang had long had their own water police forces, which were now co-operating, while towns and villages had their own militia. The provincial government noted the beauty of the lake's scenery, but there were obstacles to improving transport and increasing tourist numbers. The government also acknowledged that more could be done to support fishing and other industries. Finally, it concluded that given the lack of industry in the area, initially government funding would be required to set up any administrative zone, although it might become self-supporting in the future.[27] The response to Tang Enbo's proposals are the most detailed government

documents available from the Republican period concerning Lake Tai's relationship to regional urbanization. Together with the other plans for regional development discussed above, they illustrate how the lake was primarily valued for its contribution to the economic prosperity of the region. It connected cities in the urban system, and its resources could be used for commerce, industry, and tourism.

In his discussion of Huzhou and Wuxi, Xue Mingjian alluded to the growing importance of Lake Tai to individual cities, and nowhere was this more the case than with Wuxi. I have written extensively about the expansion of Wuxi City and the urbanization of the surrounding countryside during the Republican era, and I do not intend to repeat that in detail here.[28] Instead, I highlight briefly how the lake was becoming both discursively and physically part of the city as it expanded, a trend that would continue after 1949. The value of the lake to the city was not lost on those responsible for drawing up plans for Wuxi's expansion. In 1929, the new Wuxi Municipal Planning Department advocated the construction of pleasant residential neighborhoods around Lake Tai, so that inhabitants could take advantage of the fishing, boating, and flower gardens. Meanwhile, workers would be housed in new industrial districts to the north, where dozens of factories had been built since the turn of the century.[29] Such plans were never realized, but it was during the Republican period that Lake Tai as a tourist destination became more closely linked to Wuxi than any other city along its shores.

By the 1930s, guidebooks to Wuxi included Lake Tai in the list of sites that a visitor could not afford to miss, and many suggested itineraries for a long weekend for those looking to escape the hustle and bustle of Shanghai. The one-day tour, which the guides suggested, could be taken by boat, rickshaw or car, set out from Chongan 崇安 Temple in the center of Wuxi City and headed toward Lake Tai, taking in Huishan 惠山 (Hui Mountain) and the gardens along the shoreline before returning to the city. For the two-day tour, the author of *Wuxi Daoyou* 无锡导游 (Guide to Wuxi) advised visiting the central elementary school, before continuing out into the countryside. Meanwhile, the writers of *Wuxi: Taihu* 无锡:太湖 (Wuxi: Lake Tai) felt that a trip to the caves of Yixing was appropriate. The three-day tours merely added an extra garden or two to the itinerary.[30] A favorite destination was Yuantouzhu 鼋头渚 (Sea Turtle Head Island). Yang Hanxi 杨韩西, a local industrialist, bought 60 *mu* of land on top of the peninsula and planted an orchard, as well as building a small guesthouse, a lighthouse and family shrine.[31] In 1934, Baojieqiao

宝界桥 (Treasure World Bridge) was constructed to connect it to other scenic sites along the lakeside. At 1500 m long, the bridge spanned the smaller Five Li Lake, linked Li Yuan 蠡园 (Li Garden) with Sea Turtle Head Island, and was, claimed the author of *Wuxi Daoyou*, the longest bridge in southeast China.[32]

Visitors' accounts attest to how important Lake Tai was becoming to Wuxi City as a tourist destination. One such was Yu Dafu 郁达夫, who traveled to Wuxi from Shanghai, and put up for the night in the Lake Tai Hotel in Meiyuan 梅园 (Plum Garden). Woken early by the chiming of a monastery bell, he slipped outside. 'To the south was Lake Tai, but I couldn't make out its shape. However, I felt that the space in that direction was like countless silver threads and that the lake surface was reflecting the bright moonlight back in silver arrows'.[33] Yu Dafu, probably more than most visitors, appreciated the beauty of Lake Tai, but he was not above using the fastest and most comfortable means of transport to get there, eschewing the sedan chair and the boat in favor of the bus.[34] As we saw above, Lake Tai suffered during the war, but when peace returned, tourism began to recover. Early one May morning in 1946, Rui Lin 芮麟 took the train to Wuxi, where he transferred to a car that drove along Kaiyuan Road toward the lake. Rather than continue along Treasure World Bridge, he boarded a boat from where he could see the mountains, the sky and the clouds reflected in the clear water. Another visitor, Guo Zhen 国桢, drew attention to wartime damage to Sea Turtle Head Island, since the lighthouse had no roof, the windows in the interior doors had all been broken, and there was no furniture.[35]

Throughout the Republican period, Lake Tai was being gradually drawn into both the developing regional urban system, and becoming part of individual cities, particularly Wuxi. In doing so, it was seen as a resource that could contribute to commerce, industry and tourism, all of which were increasingly important to urban habitability. As yet industry, infrastructure, and molding of the lakeside to create gardens and scenic spots had not destroyed its natural beauty. However, the seeds of those tensions that were to lead to its despoilation were sown in the first half of the twentieth century.

The Maoist Era

Despite the development of regional planning in the Maoist era, there were few proposals for the development of Lake Tai. Writing in 1959, scholars in East China Normal University mentioned the existence of a

Taihu liuyu zhengli jihua 太湖流域整理计划 (*Lake Tai area management plan*), which may have been the same as that mentioned in a local Wuxi guidebook.[36] I have been unable to find any further references to such a plan, but there were numerous irrigation surveys and scientific studies of the lake, which mentioned its infrastructure links.[37] As Ai Xuan saw on his travels, these continued to develop. In Wuxi, despite the focus on production during the Maoist period, the natural beauty of the lake remained important to the city's identity, while also becoming valued for its recuperative properties.

Discussions of the value of nature were couched in the language of socialism, but just as during the Republican period, writers of local guidebooks clearly saw the lake as a resource that made Wuxi City more habitable by contributing to its prosperity and making it a nicer place to live. Fewer guidebooks were published after 1949 than during the Republican period, but two sources provide an insight into Lake Tai's ongoing relationship with Wuxi City. It is worth remembering that they were compiled before the Great Leap Forward, and it is reasonable to assume that with the exception of visits to communes during the Cultural Revolution, tourism ceased in the 1960s. One, *Wuxi daoyou* 无锡导游 (*Wuxi Guidebook*), was published by the Parks Office of the Wuxi City Construction Bureau, and the other by the Wuxi Gazetteer Office. The office's introduction to what was designed to be a series of publications is illuminating since in collecting sources for the history of Wuxi, scholars had emphasized how, 'under the party's leadership, there was resistance to imperial, feudal and Guomindang reactionary rule, and the valiant efforts to struggle against nature, which ensure that people understand clearly the path that must be taken'.[38] Part of the struggle against nature involved the expansion of Wuxi City, and it was claimed that by 1959, industrial production had increased five times since the revolution, and the city had doubled in size. The old city wall had been replaced with a ring road, the roads to Plum Garden and Sea Turtle Head Island had been repaired, and the road to Hui Mountain was now tarmac instead of cinders.[39] Scenic sites around the lake were also being transformed. The party had repaired sites on Hui Mountain and neighboring Xi Mountain, and it intended to create a chain of scenic spots connecting the city to the lake. Indeed, visitors could still see the lake to the west and chimneys of the city rising like a forest to the east.[40] It might be expected that temples and other vestiges of the former supposedly feudal era would not be mentioned, but both guidebooks describe the history of these sites in some detail, although they no longer

retained their former uses. Part of Hui Mountain Temple was converted into the Wuxi City Museum, in which revolutionary artifacts and local handicrafts were displayed. In 1953, a monument to those who had died in the revolutionary wars was erected. Finally, on Xi Mountain, the pagoda and viewing platforms were repaired and a zoo constructed.[41]

Nor was such work limited to scenic sites within the city. In 1952, Li Garden was enlarged with a corridor connecting it to a neighboring garden.[42] By this time, Treasure World Bridge, which had been an impressive piece of infrastructure when it was constructed, was now almost part of the scenery, since, 'no matter if visitors travel on top of the bridge, or take the boat underneath it, they will all feel the beautiful lake and mountain landscape'.[43] Crossing the bridge brought visitors to Sea Turtle Head Island, and as before the war, guidebooks recommended the Huashen 花神 (Flower God) and Guangfu 光復 temples as places of interest. A new addition to the peninsula was the *Gongren liaoyangsuo* 工人疗养所 (Worker Recuperation Center), which as one teacher lucky enough to stay there for two weeks in 1955 noted, was very peaceful.[44] Its success may have been the reason why plans for a second center were drawn up. Harmony with the natural world was important to the center's design, and the architects wanted to produce a socialist landscape that would be like poetry rather than like an essay. However, it was incorrect to say that the natural environment was perfect and could not be improved to better service the people. Of course, such improvement could go too far, and for this reason it was important to put planning first and ensure that alterations were in accord with local conditions.[45] Here we see expressed clearly the tensions between the perceived need to change the natural environment of the lake to make life better for people living in cities, and the threat that these changes posed to the elements of the lake that gave it this natural beauty.

The Reform Era

Scholars and planners in the reform era quickly recognized the difficulty of reconciling regional urbanization with the protection of Lake Tai's environment. There were too few natural resources for industrial development, the population was too dense, and there was too much pollution. Lake Tai was in danger of becoming like other places in China, where 'in areas abundant with flowing rivers, there is no clean water to drink, and in a countryside full of fish and rice, there are no fresh fish to eat'.[46] Since regional planning was now popular, Lake Tai should become an economic

zone, which would simultaneously develop the city and the countryside, utilize water resources more efficiently, open up scenic areas and protect the environment and ecological balance.[47]

A similar tension existed in plans for the lake in Wuxi. In 1977, the Wuxi City Construction Bureau produced the *Wuxi Taihu fengjing luyouqu guihua dagang* 无锡太湖风景旅游区规划大纲 (*Wuxi Lake Tai scenic area tourist plan*), which was amended two years later. The area was to cover 366 km^2, and include 115 km of the lake shore.[48] The plan saw Lake Tai and the surrounding area as a resource. 'The natural scenery has its own natural form of beauty, but it is a scenic resource that has not yet been opened up. It only needs to be managed properly, and it will serve the development of the tourist industry'.[49] Beyond this, 'the city and the scenic area must maintain a suitable distance from each other. However, the arrangement of scenic sites, the chain of the forestry system and the threads of road transport all create close connections between the city and the scenic area. Urban construction should also gradually become more suitable to the nature of a scenic tourist city'.[50] There was much work to be done. Previously, individual sites in the city, the suburbs, and the countryside had been managed separately, with no thought given to how they formed an integrated whole. Moreover, the army and industrial work units all built haphazardly wherever they could gain access to land, and little thought had been given to the natural environment. The report mentioned four centers for convalescence or retirement, eight quarries, and multiple demands placed on the land for agriculture. Indeed, visitors to the Hubin 湖滨 Hotel complained that the birdsong was drowned out by the cacophony of quarrying, the felling of trees, and other noises. On top of these problems, destruction and neglect during the Cultural Revolution meant there were no longer any scenic spots in Xihui 锡惠 Park, much of Plum Garden was barren, and Sea Turtle Head Island was a wilderness. Finally, there were 70 ancient monuments and revolutionary sites, but only 30 could be repaired.[51]

Despite this, in 1978, 408,000 people had visited the parks and gardens across the scenic area, 49,000 of whom were overseas Chinese or foreign visitors.[52] Clearly, the area was of interest to many people, and the committee drew up concrete recommendations for its development. There were several initial urgent tasks. These included reforestation, money for farmers to help them purchase fuel and to prevent further felling of trees. Quarrying should only be allowed in designated areas, and all polluting industries should cease operation. Turning to scenic points and viewing

platforms, these should be repaired and new ones constructed as necessary, with priority given to those around Lake Li and Sea Turtle Head Island.[53] Plans called for concentration of all services into a few special zones so as not to destroy the scenery. Hotels should be expanded, but there should be no buildings taller than one story, and the majority should be in the style of villas surrounded by trees and gardens. Nevertheless, it was planned to increase the total number of bedrooms to around 10,000, and to build a visitors' center to the north of the Lake Tai Hotel. Finally, while many roads were not suitable for widening or resurfacing, some work was required. Projects included improving the lake side road between Li Garden and the Wuxi–Suzhou Road, and building two roads to connect Nanfangquan 南方泉 with the lake.[54] In connecting the scenic area to Wuxi City more closely and looking to improve facilities for tourists, the authors of the plans were making a conscious decision to emphasize utilizing Lake Tai and its shoreline as a tourist resource.

Their sensitive approach to development was not shared by all. An article in a 1980 guidebook suggested several improvements to the scenic area. These included transforming Treasure World Bridge into a suspension bridge, with separate lanes for pedestrian and vehicle traffic. It would be lit at night, and so become a tourist site itself. Other plans included a swimming pool next to the bridge and further south an aquarium.[55] Other reactions confirm the tensions created by the growing importance being placed on the value of Lake Tai as a tourist destination. One article pointed out that the lake was an example of a natural scenic area, characterized by little human influence as opposed to a scenic area closer to the city, such as West Lake, which had been altered greatly by human activity. However, the recent construction of the multi-storyed Hubin Hotel ruined the scenery of Li Garden.[56]

Conclusion

In the twenty-first century, with more than half of the Chinese now living in cities, urbanization poses more of a threat to the natural environment, which in places has become uninhabitable. In response to this, environmental protection has become increasingly valued, at least in part because of the need to make cities habitable. At the same time, nature has also become increasingly valued for its importance to tourism and the possibilities it offers for improving urban life. This is as true of the Lake Tai region as it is of any other part of China. Planning in the Republican era may not

have been as professional as it is now, but it still emphasized multiple paths of development. Then, natural scenic sites were just one of several ways in which the lake contributed to the prosperity of the urban system and individual cities. Now, such sites, together with the natural value of the lake, are increasingly important in its relationship with the region's cities. Policy makers and planners at regional and municipal levels talk of developing an environmental consciousness, incorporating scenic sites into master plans, and resolving the continuing contradictions between rapid urbanization and the threat this poses to the lake.[57]

The tensions remain unresolved, as they do elsewhere in China and around the world. Urbanization in all its forms continues to encroach on the lake, and mass tourism now poses a new threat. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in *Don't Cry Tai Lake*, one of Qiu Xiaolong's popular detective novels. Looking out of the window of his villa in the Recuperation Center, which still exists on Sea Turtle Head Island, inspector Chen saw how far Wuxi City had expanded. On one side there were driveways for private villas, the lake shore at last providing that pleasant residential environment for rich Chinese that Xue Mingjian and other Wuxi locals dreamed of decades before. 'To the other side, there were rows of multi-story buildings, with identically shaped balconies aligned like matchboxes, as those in a large new hotel'.[58] Despite such development, the lake still had the power to inspire the same reaction is it did in Yu Dafu. As Chen relaxed in the bath, 'he had the luxurious feeling of becoming one with the lake, as he watched the tiny bubbles rising in his glass of Perrier'.[59] As in earlier decades, such descriptions stand in stark contrast to industrial development, but whereas Hu Jiansheng and later Ai Xuan had to stand atop Hui Mountain to see the natural and the built environment side by side, now factories 'loomed along the lakeshore, with their smokestacks pouring out smoke against the brownish hills'.[60] It is not only smokestacks that pollute the lake. In *Don't Cry Tai Lake*, the chemical company, whose boss is murdered, is guilty of tipping untreated waste into the lake in pursuit of profit, and it is a running joke throughout the book that locals and those in the know do not eat fish and shrimp or drink the water from the lake. In this, we see the irony of a century of urbanization. As the city expanded, the countryside was first re-imagined, then gradually encompassed, and finally despoiled. Lake Tai, for centuries crucial to the livelihoods of millions in the Lower Yangzi Delta, and throughout the twentieth century at the center of plans to make the city a more pleasant place to live, has itself become increasingly uninhabitable

for multiple forms of life, and this in turn threatens the very values that are seen as making China and her cities habitable for humanity.

Notes

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3. Ai Xuan (1963) *Taihu youji* [Travels in Lake Tai] (Shanghai: Xiaonian ertong chubanshe), p. 55.
4. Hu Jiansheng (1917) 'Taihu youji', *Xuesheng zazhi*, 4: 9, 229.
5. Ai, *Taihu youji*, p. 68.
6. Hu, *Taihu youji*, p. 231.
7. Hu Jiansheng (1915) 'Taihu youji', *Xuesheng zazhi*, 2: 8, 194; Ai, *Taihu youji*, p. 31.
8. Ai, *Taihu youji*, pp. 100–2.
9. Hu, *Taihu youji*, p. 198.
10. Ai, *Taihu youji*, pp. 47–8.
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16. Weller, *Discovering Nature*, pp. 67–9.
17. For a recent summary of scholarship in Chinese on these areas see: Zhang Genfu, Feng Xianliang and Yue Qintao (2014) *Taihu liuyu renkou yu shengtai huangjing de bianqian ji shehui yingxiang yanjiu* (1851–2005) [Studies in changes in population and the natural ecology of the Lake Tai area and their effect on society (1851 – 2005)] (Shanghai: Fudan daxue chubanshe), pp. 1–16; Zong Juru and Zhou Jieqing (1999) *Zhongguo Taihu shi* [History of China's Lake Tai] 2 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju chuban fahang), vol. 2, pp. 531–85, 667–99; For an early work in English that looks explicitly at the Lake Tai region see James C Shih (1992) *Chinese Rural Society in Transition: A Case Study of the Lake Tai Area, 1368–1800* (Berkeley: University of California Institute of East Asian Studies); Mark Edward Lewis (2009) *China's Cosmopolitan Empire: the Tang* Dynasty (Cambridge Mass: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press), p. 117.
18. Zhang et al., *Taihu liuyu renkou yu shengtai huangjing*, pp. 92–149, 226–58; Zong and Zhou, *Zhongguo Taihu shi*, vol. 2, pp. 585–93, 923–29, 974–1005; Wang Liping (1999) 'Tourism and Spatial Change in Hangzhou, 1911–1927', in Joseph W. Esherick (ed.) *Remaking the Chinese City: Modernity and National Identity, 1900–1950* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press), pp. 107–20; Schoppa, *Song full of Tears*, 199–203.
19. Zheng Songping (1925) 'Taihu liuyu she tebie qu yi' [Suggestion to create special Lake Tai area], *Xuesheng wenshu congkan* [Compilation of Student writings and art], 2: 8, 14–15; Sun Shixun (1925) 'Taihu liuyu she tebie qu yi' [Suggestion to create special Lake Tai area], *Xuesheng wenshu congkan*, 2: 9, 20–2.
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21. Ibid., pp. 29–130.
22. Shen Zaishan (1926) 'Taihu liuyu shuili gongcheng guihua chuyi' [My humble opinion on the plans for water management of the Lake Tai region], *Hehai zhoukan* [Rivers and Seas Weekly], 14: 1, 19–20.

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24. 'Wuxi fuweiyuanhui di er ci huiyi zhi ti an' (1946) [Suggestions to the second meeting of the Wuxi Restoration Committee, in Wuxishi shizhi bangongshi (ed.) *Xue Mingjian wen ji*, vol. 2: pp. 946–48; Lu Guanyi, 'Jianli Changjiang xiayou gongye zhongxin quyu zhi chuyi' (1946) [My observations on constructing the industrial center in the lower reaches of the Yangzi River], *Gongcheng jie* [Engineering World], 3, 4–7; Jiang Bai Ou (1946) *Taihu fengjing xian* [The scenery of Lake Tai] (Wuxi: Taihu chubanshe), p. 6.
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26. Tang Enbo (1947) 'Taihu jianshe yijian shu' [Opinions for the Construction of Lake Tai] Academia Historica 001000006899A.
27. Neizheng bu. [Ministry of Interior] (1947) 'Feng jiao yan yi wenguanchu han Yang weishu siling Enbo cheng song Taihu jianshe yijian shu yi an chengfu jian he zunyou', (Respectfully deliver the opinions concerning the case of the Opinions of Constructing Lake Tai from garrison commander Tang Enbo which were sent from the Civil Service Office and have been examined and responded to as requested) Academia Historica 001000006899A.
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CHAPTER 10

Conclusion: Are Chinese Cities Becoming More Habitable?

Karl Gerth

Over a half century ago, as our editors note in their Introduction, the pre-eminent Chinese architect Liang Sicheng observed that people living in cities had four basic necessities: places to live, work, engagement in leisure activities, and benefit from decent transportation. In recent decades, the basic necessities of habitability have become even more basic—and dire. The basic challenges are well beyond what Liang could have possibly imagined: breathable air, food and water free of poisons, affordable housing, and transportation without chaos and danger. To be sure, Liang spoke of the need for healthy food, accessible food, decent housing, and orderly transport. But the scale of the problems related to air, food, housing, and transport appears to outpace the abilities of planners to ameliorate them and make cities more habitable. The question of the habitability of Chinese cities will remain central for decades to come.

Contemporary Chinese urban planners and their predecessors are understandably proud of their century of successes, which the contributors to this volume do much to unearth. In addition to Liang, lesser-known figures such as the prolific early twentieth-century writer on cities, Dong Xiujia, helped introduce and popularize concepts of urban habitability to an educated public. More recently, Wan Li, a critical figure in the socialist era, contemplated how cities could be both economic powerhouses and

K. Gerth (✉)
University of California San Diego, San Diego, CA, USA

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habitable places. Wan favored, for instance, public transportation over private automobiles, the absence of which, perhaps, was the defining feature of Chinese socialist-era cities.

Urban planning successes rarely came easily. Small-scale, local victories were more common. The essays collected in this volume reveal how difficult, contested, and, at times, racist and class-focused the solutions were. Moreover, solutions begot additional problems, even with something as basic as providing public security. Xu Tao's chapter reveals how the Shanghai Volunteer Corps helped keep Shanghai secure for foreigners more than for the Chinese and then, eventually, for Chinese elites more than for the working-class Chinese. And Aaron Moore demonstrates how children learned to adjust to historically specific urban dangers, even aerial bombardment. These cases confirm that political leaders were aware of problems, big and small, and consistently tried to rank and execute solutions. As Christian Hess shows, anticipating urban problems on the verge of taking over Dalian, the Chinese Communist Party established a police force on the eve of taking over the city after 1949.

For over a century, the Chinese search for urban models was impressively diverse and cosmopolitan. Imported models, though, also created problems. Ideas on how to plan cities from Europe, America, and the Soviet Union arrived in China throughout the twentieth century. At times, officials partly implemented these ideas, as Isabella Jackson shows on how foreign authorities in the treaty ports of Shanghai and Tianjin sought to make the sections of those cities under their control more habitable. Likewise, both Xu Tao's and Ning Jennifer Chang's chapters make clear that the imperialist presence catalyzed both patriotic opposition—for instance, by reserving urban spaces and activities such as horse racing for foreigners—and also emulation by Chinese counterparts.

No city is an island. Urban problems originate from and spill over into surrounding areas. Toby Lincoln most directly engages this truism, focusing on the functions of the countryside in making cities habitable. His case study is Lake Tai, which lies a 100 miles west of Shanghai and remains one of China's largest freshwater supplies. Lincoln analyzes how the city's needs impacted the lake's realities. As the regional urban system expanded throughout the twentieth century, the lake and its shoreline also became valued as a natural resource that could satisfy the needs of the region's expanding cities.

Ideal habitability for an entire city may be an unrealistic goal, a subject for dreamers and urban utopianists such as the subject of Leon Rocha's essay, Zhang Jingsheng. For Zhang, writing in the 1910s and 1920s, the

concept of habitability extended far beyond narrowly construed necessities to include the enhancement of moral and spiritual life. Urban planning might create better living through architecture and even music broadcast throughout the city that drowned out less desirable urban sounds.

Most reformers attempted more modest efforts to make parts of cities more habitable. Indeed, some parts have always been more habitable than others, including during the socialist era (1949–78), when 'work units' (*danwei*) greatly impacted one's quality of life. The best *danwei* provided everything from housing and healthcare to education for employees to all-expense-paid vacations. Little wonder that workers in the state-owned enterprises were known as China's 'labor aristocracy', though as Robert Cliver shows, the distribution of resources and power even within *danwei* could vary greatly, between places and between genders. Nevertheless, for Chinese members of *danwei* in industrialized cities throughout China, cities were much more likely habitable.

Likewise, in the post-socialist era, micro-habitability akin to being part of a good work unit persists. As with the pre-socialist era, once again, the habitability of one's city depends on class and income rather than labor and *danwei*. Such renewed focus on class-based micro-habitability includes using imported models of class-based exclusivity such as gated communities, as discussed in the eye-opening recent book by anthropologist Li Zhang (*In Search of Paradise: Middle-Class Living in an Urban Metropolis*). Indeed, in addition to habitability for some, cities also provide ways to experience inequality, discrimination, alienation, and other forms of uninhabitability.

Urban planners and theorists in modern China were well aware of the difficulties of creating and maintaining a habitable living environment. But planners did try, often under situations as challenging as they now face. How high can a government prioritize piping in music across a city while simultaneously fighting a massively destructive war with Japan amidst a long civil war? And how much might the government spend on housing during the heavy-industry focused development strategy and mass campaigns of the socialist era? Unsurprisingly China's urban problems have grown as fast as its cities over the past century. Anything other than the mixed results we see in this volume might have been unreasonable to expect.

Nevertheless, the ways Chinese imagined, planned, constructed, and experienced cities as habitable spaces during the twentieth century allow us to identify longer-term patterns. What were the persistent priorities for Chinese cities? And the corollary: What problems have been allowed to fester under multiple regimes and despite changing concepts of habitability?

The most striking trade-off—prioritizing economic growth at the expense of environmental considerations and individual preferences on how to live—is not unique to China. The evolving place of private automobiles shows the persistence of economic considerations. In the early socialist era of the 1950s, the Chinese state opted to make private ownership of cars a near impossibility. And urban habitability did not depend on cars. Indeed, until the late 1990s, most urban residents worked in state-owned factories and lived in company-owned housing nearby, meaning they could easily walk, ride a bike, or take public transportation from home to work and back. There was no need for private cars. At most, one might need a bicycle. Carbon-powered vehicles were reserved for trucks, with a token effort made to accommodate the transportation needs of top officials.

Over the past 20 years, by contrast, the Chinese state decision to prioritize automobile production has had innumerable impacts on urban habitability. With state backing, private ownership of cars is now a driving force transforming China from a land with few private cars to the world's largest car manufacturer and market. This ascendance of urban car ownership was not an accident or simply the state withdrawal from what was now considered a personal decision whether to own a car. The state has shaped the need for private ownership of cars in many subtle ways. As increasing numbers of state-owned enterprises were being closed and others were relocated to the suburbs, for instance, workplaces became less accessible and a new commuter culture emerged. In place of mixed-use development, where people live and work in the same neighborhood, city centers across China have been raised and rebuilt into central business districts (CBDs) of gleaming office skyscrapers, pushing affordable housing out to distant suburbs.

The rise of cars reminds us that cities have always served more than one function, functions certainly more heavily prioritized than habitability. For centuries, Chinese cities were administrative and military power centers as well as economic engines. Habitability never trumped those other considerations. That said, higher priorities often had habitability byproducts: the varied cuisine of Beijing, the nice gardens of Suzhou, the artistically accomplished residents of Yangzhou, the access to Western culture of Guangzhou, the access to central Asian religious culture of Xi'an—all of these specific urban qualities are consequences of other urban priorities. In a similar way, the national government prioritizing cars—while rendering Chinese urban air nearly unbreathable—also create urban features desir-

able for those with access to cars: housing options such as American-style suburbs, shopping trips to luxury malls on city outskirts, and car-centered vacations with local car clubs.

The decision to promote car ownership, made in the 1990s, radically changed Chinese cities and their habitability more than anything else. Moreover, this was a change made at the national level, beyond the bailiwick of any specific urban planner. But the consequences of the national policy shift are lived very locally. In addition to the notoriously bad traffic jams that plague Chinese cities and its dangerous roads, air pollution is the terrible result. The Chinese government now has to issue alerts on when it is safe to go outside, less allow one's children to play outside. When Mark Zuckerberg, the founder of Facebook, went for a 'smog jog' during a visit to Beijing in 2016, thousands flocked to social media to express their concern for his health. In other words, millions of Chinese (and foreigners) now assume the borderline uninhabitability of their cities.

One might mistakenly think Chinese planners are coming to the rescue, finally prioritizing urban habitability, particularly breathable air. The evidence: the heavy emphasis China is now making in becoming a leader in the production of electric vehicles (EVs), both bicycles and automobiles. Consumers often assume such vehicles are more environmentally friendly and make cities more habitable. EVs may make Chinese cities quieter. But most of China's electricity is coal-generated, so EVs will not eliminate air pollution.

Environmental considerations such as breathable air are not the only aim of the policy shift to electric vehicles. Economic and geostrategic considerations matter at least as much to national leaders. To continue expanding the global and domestic competitiveness of Chinese cars—and own the technology and intellectual property associated with such improvements—as well as reduce China's dependence on imported oil, the central government is using its coordinating power, control over the top SOEs, and financial inducements to propel the development and spread of EVs. In other words, national economic and geostrategic considerations continue to outweigh local urban priorities, even priorities as basic as breathable air. Indeed, sometimes even local measures to make traffic and air pollution more bearable have national priorities in mind. Leading up to the Olympics in 2008, for instance, Beijing took extraordinary measures to curb air pollution. In an effort to reduce the number of cars by 1 million, only cars whose license plates ended in an even number

were allowed on the road one day, and odd-numbered license-plated cars the next.

Aside from air pollution, the focus on carbon-fuelled national economic growth—and the ballooning carbon pollution that accompanies it—will have other long-term impacts on urban habitability. One of the many deleterious effects of global warming is rising sea levels. Preserving dry land is, perhaps, the only challenge for habitability this century on par with breathable air. It is easy to predict China will attempt massive engineering projects to protect its cities. Seawalls, dykes, and levees will be built to ensure continued habitability on a scale that will make Venice and the Netherlands look like the engineering equivalent of toy models. But, as with air pollution, this will also push coastal cities such as Shanghai to the edge of habitability.

Protecting Chinese cities from rising sea levels will also expose another long-term Chinese urban planning truism: The only thing greater than the urban challenges China faces is its faith in engineers. China's belief that it can engineer itself out of problems, including basic problems of habitability such as the existence of potable water, is second to none. Beijing and surrounding cities with tens of millions of residents are expanding fast, despite encroaching desertification and dwindling water tables beneath the North China Plain. There is insufficient water for the millions who live there. Rather than relocating the capital or even slowing its population growth, Beijing is doing the opposite: planning to grow, along with rings of satellite cities. The rescue plan is China's most ambitious engineering project ever: the massive South–North Water Transfer Project. The project will transfer tens of billions of cubic meters of freshwater annually from southeast China along three canals to the Beijing–Tianjin corridor, including the 1500-year-old Grand Canal.

Chinese planners—national and local—are asking much of its engineers. Indeed, it would be easy to conclude they are asking too much: hold back the ocean, clear the skies while driving ever more cars, and now quench the thirst of tens of millions of northerners with freshwater transported over hundreds of miles. And yet, as the pioneering environmental historian of China Mark Elvin has demonstrated, Chinese have perfected the art of living on the edge of uninhabitability for centuries, often outrunning Mother Nature but never without costs—dikes burst, earth shifts, and species die. Elephants, Elvin shows, once roamed as far north as Beijing.[1] The costs of Chinese cities pushing against even more

extreme environmental limits may be even greater than the disappearance of elephants.

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