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Studies of Editorials of Chinese Newspapers Regarding the Anti-Japanese War  
(1937-1945)

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A thesis  
presented to  
the faculty of the Department of History  
East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree  
Master of Arts in History

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by  
Kuangyi Pei  
August 2011

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Keywords: Editorials, Propaganda, Anti-Japanese War, History of Modern China

## ABSTRACT

Studies of Editorials of Chinese Newspapers in Regard to Anti-Japanese War (1937-1945)

by

Kuangyi Pei

More than sixty years have passed since China's Resistance War against Japan in 1937-1945 ended. Chinese people made a significant contribution to winning the victory over Japan. Chinese newspapers and magazines, especially editorials at that time, played a key role in the propaganda of the War of Resistance, boosting national morale, and exposing war crimes of Japanese aggressors.

Chinese newspapers and magazines included many important incidents and issues regarding the War of Resistance. This thesis selects editorials of three representative topics: the future of the War of Resistance, the defensive combat of the Chinese nationalist army in the front lines, and the war crimes of Japanese invaders to offer a clear, concise narrative whose central themes are better reflecting and commemorating that unforgettable time from the cultural dimension.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank each of the members on my committee: Dr. Henry Antkiewicz, Dr Melvin E. Page, and Dr. Emmett M. Essin III. Especially I thank Dr. Henry Antkiewicz, who carefully read my whole draft of the thesis offering valuable pieces of advice. In addition, I benefited a lot from the discussions between him and me. I appreciated his help and support.

My classmate Ms. Kelli Nelson squeezed her valuable time revising my whole draft and giving concrete revision suggestions. I also am grateful to her for her sincere help.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

China's Resistance War against Japan (the Second Sino-Japanese War<sup>1</sup>) was a military conflict caused by the Japanese invasion of China. The war began on July 7, 1937. The main battlefield was in Mainland China. Armies of two countries fought bitterly for eight years and finally China defeated Japan on September 9, 1945.

Generally speaking, at the present, research on the History of China's Resistance War against Japan is very fruitful, especially in the dimension of politics, military affairs, diplomacy, and economics. A large number of articles and books are published every year. But in the cultural dimension, especially relating to the newspapers, the current situation of research leaves much to be desired. It mainly displays two aspects: one is that there are very few articles and books appeared every year; the other is that the phenomenon of repeated research is common. Research interests of Chinese scholars usually focus on several influential newspapers such as *Xinhua Newspaper* and *Shen Bao*. Nobody is interested in reactionary newspapers or local newspapers, let alone the editorials of those newspapers.

The general reason of the phenomenon is because of the long Chinese civil war<sup>2</sup> in which the forces of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) defeated the Chinese Nationalist Party (the

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<sup>1</sup> In Modern Chinese History, there were two wars between China and Japan. The First Sino-Japanese War happened in August 1894-April 1895. As a result, Japan defeated Qing Dynasty (China) capturing Taiwan and Korea.

<sup>2</sup> The Chinese civil war was a war between the Kuomintang and CCP. The two parties competed against each other for the control of China. The war lasted seventeen years and could be divided into two phases. The first phase began in April 1927, ending in July 1937. The outbreak of Anti-Japanese War (1937-1945) caused an interruption of the civil war. The second phase was from 1946 to 1949. As a result, the Kuomintang was routed. Its remnants retreated to the Island of Taiwan.

Kuomintang) led by Chiang Kai-shek and set up People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949. So, the new PRC government supported and encouraged Chinese scholars to do research on its great and glorious history, that is, how the territory of CCP enlarged and its forces became stronger and stronger and finally seized power by armed struggle. As a result, Chinese academia aroused great enthusiasm about the history of the CCP and modern Chinese history in its political, military, economic, and diplomatic dimensions. The concrete reasons Chinese scholarship attaches great importance to research on these dimensions mentioned above are based on three points according to my observation. First, armed struggle was of paramount importance in the history of CCP. In 1949, the forces of CCP ousted the Chinese Nationalist Government (the Kuomintang, or KMT) from Mainland China. Because the Chinese Communists established their government via war in 1949, war was also the continuation of politics. So, Chinese academia gave top priority to researching political and military dimensions. At the same time, the wealth of sources (official documents, war history, memoirs, and reports) in these areas of history proved convenient for the research of the scholars.

Second, in China, culture was subject to politics and had to serve politics. The CCP won the victory by guns in the war of many years. Culture played a supporting role in the war. Chinese academia could not pay much attention to the war's cultural aspects. Moreover, the uninterrupted war before the establishment of PRC posed a great difficulty in preserving cultural publications. To make matters worse, since the establishment of PRC, many movements, especially the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution of 1966 to 1976, Red Guards deliberately burned or ruined lots of historical materials. Scholars more and more felt the difficulty to access the sources when the PRC resumed its ideological line of "seeking truth from facts" in the end of

1978. Naturally, up to that time, research results concerning the cultural dimension of the Resistance War were few.

Third, during 1927-1949, the Kuomintang led by Chiang Kai-shek ruled Mainland China, but in 1949 Chiang and his Nationalist (Kuomintang) followers fled to Taiwan. Since then, CCP-ruled Mainland China and KMT-ruled Taiwan have been antagonistic states. The two sides belonged to different camps in the context of the Cold War (1947-1991). According to the evaluation of the CCP, although the Kuomintang in the Period of the War of Resistance represented legitimate nationalism, it carried out a one-party dictatorship. The Nationalist armies were corrupt and inefficient and could not undertake the task of resisting the Japanese invasion. It was the forces of CCP that became the core of resistance forces that bogged down Japan in a protracted war. Publications in Taiwan mainly publicized the brave fighting of the Kuomintang armies in the front lines while charging the forces of CCP with defying military disciplines, waging guerrilla warfare, and avoiding conventional battles with the enemy. In retrospect, the arguments of the two sides were opposite sides of the same coin, lacking objective and fair appraisal of the CCP and the KMT in the Period of the War of Resistance.

Combining the three points discussed above, in my opinion, writing a thesis related to the editorials of the newspapers of China's Resistance War against Japan was of great significance. This is because the newspapers were the most important media of that time. The editorials of the newspapers performed the functions of reflecting and guiding the public opinions. Reading the editorials of the War of Resistance can help us observe anti-Japanese fervor of the Chinese people from a new angle. Moreover China's Resistance War against Japan was the first war the Chinese nation won a victory over invader since the first Opium War (1840-1842). Chinese



people have been proud of this achievement. Thus, it is necessary to continue research on the history of the War of Resistance, especially on the rather weakly studied editorial field. Although China defeated Japan via arms, we should not underestimate the role of the editorials. In fact, newspaper is the tool of political struggle. In the period of the War of Resistance, the editorials of Chinese newspapers played an important role in awakening Chinese populace, encouraging morale, and exposing war crimes of Japan. In the past twenty years, the study of the editorials of the War of Resistance lagged. It is time to make up the deficiency. My thesis is ready to provide my own contribution to the editorials of the War of Resistance.

China was in a pivotal time in 1937. Japan launched a full-scale attack on China in that year. By 1938, Japanese forces overran great territories of China. The Chinese nation was on the verge of national doom. The future and destiny of China affected the heart of every Chinese who was unwilling to become a conquered person. At this juncture, Chinese newspapers promptly issued a series of editorials to answer the questions most concerning the Chinese populace, for example, the future of Anti-Japanese War, how Chinese armies were fighting with Japan invaders, why the Japanese aggressors were so brutal and vicious, and so on. These editorials could help reduce Chinese readers' disillusion, stirring up their resolve to resist the invasion. Moreover, these editorials truly reflected the history of Chinese people resisting against invasion of foreign enemies and praising the indomitable spirit of struggle of the Chinese people. Today we review the editorials again, and we still can feel their patriotic fervor.

This thesis consists of an analysis of twelve editorials that appeared in Chinese

newspapers<sup>3</sup> during the war in the 1930s and 1940s. However, the future of this War of Resistance was rather a new topic for editors. Because the Anti-Japanese War was a protracted war, the editorials claimed that the final victory belonged to China, which became a popular political slogan. Why? Were there other answers for this outcome of war besides the explanation of top leader of CCP? I chose a few of editorials to argue the future of China from the aspects of international relations, comparison between China and Japan, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek's viewpoint, and Japanese economic crisis. The authors of two editorials were famous left-wing intellectuals whose opinions represented broader sections of Chinese intellectuals.

*Central Daily News* was the official newspaper of the Kuomintang in the Period of the War of Resistance. Its editorials reflected the viewpoint of the Kuomintang's rulers having a greater impact on the war both at home and abroad. But Mainland Chinese scholarship has not done significant research on the organ of KMT. Actually, editorials of the *Central Daily News* in the early phase of the War of Resistance extolled the merits of the Kuomintang army's fighting spirit. Its bitter resistance won the admiration and respect of the Chinese people. Reading those editorials could help us realize the performance of the Kuomintang army in a comprehensive view of the War of Resistance.

“Japanese war crimes in China are well known.”<sup>4</sup> But, in recent years, a few right-wing Japanese defended the Japanese army from accusations of war crimes in China, even denying

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<sup>3</sup> Certain Chinese newspapers of 1930s were stocked in the National Library of China (Beijing) in the form of microfilms. The author many times went there to browse through the microfilms in 2004 and 2005 and copied some microfilms containing the content of editorials concerning the War of Resistance. The thesis will rely on these editorials as the primary sources in combination with appropriate secondary sources in English. Owing to the remote years, the page number of the editorials in newspapers could not be identified. I did not mark the page number of every editorial in the footnotes.

<sup>4</sup> David M. Gordon, “Historiographical Essay: The China-Japan War, 1931-1945.” *The Journal of Military History*, (January 2006):177.

obvious atrocities the Japanese aggressors committed. In order to alert against the revival of Japanese militarism, it is necessary to continue to reveal the Japanese war crimes, urging Japan to face up to historical facts.

To most Americans, the defeat of Japan in World War II was the result of American armies' fighting in territories within the Pacific Ocean and the power of two atomic bombs. But China and the Chinese people made a great contribution to defeating Japan. The Chinese battlefield pinned down significant forces of Japanese army which prevented the transfer of more troops to the Pacific Theater as reinforcements. Chinese long-lasting resistance consumed the limited resources of Japan, speeding up its surrender. So, the analysis of the content of these editorials allows English-speaking readers to know more intimately the war-time miseries the Chinese people suffered, their unyielding willpower for resistance, and the shocking cruelties of Japan.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE FUTURE OF CHINA'S RESISTANCE WAR AGAINST JAPAN

Since China's Resistance War against Japan broke out on July 7, 1937, all those who were unwilling to become conquered people took action and threw themselves into torrents of resistance against Japan to rescue China. But in the first few months of the War of Resistance, China encountered a string of military disasters. Beijing fell on 28 July. Japan controlled Tianjin on 30 July. The successive defeats of the Chinese army raised great doubts in the minds of certain members of the middle class and the masses as to whether China could defeat Japan. More critically, pro-Japanese cliques on behalf of Wang Jingwei<sup>5</sup> in the Kuomintang declared that Japanese troops would subjugate China if the people continued to resist. Panic arose for a short while at the thought of China's inevitable subjugation.

#### The Future of the War of Resistance

*Shen Bao* had a long history in China. It was set up by a British man in 1872 in Shanghai and stopped publication in 1949. In the early 1930s, its opinion reflected the demands of anti-Japanese invasion of Chinese national bourgeoisie. When flames of war spread to Shanghai

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<sup>5</sup> Wang Jingwei (1883-1944), former Vice-President of the Kuomintang, was the leader of the Pro-Japanese group. In his youth time, he joined China's Republican Revolution of 1911 and was one of leading aides of Sun Yat-sen. After the War of Resistance broke out, Wang openly proposed to have peace negotiation with Japanese aggressors. In December 1938, he deserted the Kuomintang defecting to the enemy. In March 1940, Wang Jingwei became the Chairman of Reformed National Government in Nanking. In 1944, he died in Japan.

in the early August 1937, *Shen Bao* published an editorial entitled “The Future of the War of Resistance” that analyzed the reasons for the emergence of defeatism and put forward the solutions. The editorials claimed that there were two reasons that resulted in the emergence of defeatism. One was the influence of international society. The United States discouraged Chinese resistance for fear of damaging its business interests in China in hopes that Japanese expansion would be limited. The other was from inside the country. A number of people overestimated the seriousness of the fall of Beijing and Tianjin to keeping resistance alive to the Japanese mechanized forces that overwhelmed them.

The editorial also pointed out that the Chinese people could not place their hopes for the future of the resistance on foreign aid. Based on consideration of their own interests, the Western powers could not offer aid to China at that time. Foreign aid arrived when the Chinese nation aspired to total resistance. As for the second point, the editorial indicated that “The pessimistic psychology of all defeatists was not to be tolerated at all... The failure of the Twenty-Ninth Army was because some senior officers were poisoned with the psychology of repeatedly falling into snares of the enemy.”<sup>6</sup>

The Chinese Twentieth-Ninth Army was stationed in the Beijing and Tianjin area. After the July 7 Lugouqiao Incident (Marco Polo Bridge Incident) happened, General of the Twentieth-Ninth Army Song Zheyuan first ordered his soldiers to resist then sent some of his senior officers to negotiate with the Japanese. Under the overbearing pressure of the Japanese, Song agreed to the Japanese terms and promised to withdraw the 37<sup>th</sup> Division of the Twentieth-Ninth Army from the outskirts of Beijing and Lugouqiao, prohibit anti-Japanese

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<sup>6</sup> “The Future of the War of Resistance,” *Shen Bao*, 8 August 1937.

literature, and ban anti-Japanese organizations in Beijing and Tianjin. At the same time, he objected to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek's plan to dispatch three divisions to North China. Song held that his concessions to Japan could bring peace, but he was wrong.

Therefore, the editorial deemed that at the critical moment "we will not win the final victory of the War of Resistance until we cherish firm self-confidence."<sup>7</sup> Of course, this did not mean to act rashly. The editorial admitted that Chinese military forces lagged far behind Japan. But China had a unique advantage: the willpower for iron-like resistance which formed in the nineteenth century in the process of countering imperialist invasion. The willpower of the resistance was superior to that of the aircraft and artillery of the enemy. The editorial was sure that "what our resistance war now relies on is strong national will... as long as our resistance will does not languish... we will certainly win the final victory,<sup>8</sup>" on the grounds that the masses played a decisive role in this War of Resistance.

The editorial finally reminded the readers to remember the lesson of the September 18 Incident in 1931. On that day, Japanese Kwantung Army stationed in South Manchuria invaded Shenyang, the largest city of Manchuria. General Zhang Xueliang's troops gave up the fight against the Japanese aggressors, and Shenyang fell overnight. Japan took control of three provinces of northeast China within the following six months. The editorial attributed the fall of Beijing and Tianjin in 1937 to China's temporary concession to Japan and warned, "If we continue to tolerate, the aspect of being too content to retain sovereignty over a part of the country cannot also be maintained."<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> "The Future of the War of Resistance."

<sup>8</sup> "The Future of the War of Resistance."

<sup>9</sup> "The Future of the War of Resistance."

The editorial also indicated that the War of Resistance in 1937 had been different from the previous resistance war for the soldiers and the masses were sincerely united as one under the leadership of Chinese Nationalist Government. Moreover, everyone was determined to resist against Japan to the end. In the context of the great union of the Chinese people the editorial said, “We hope the government will rapidly clear the dark clouds which influence the morale of resistance, take advantage of valuable lessons of the national revolution, stir up the populace to organize and struggle with the enemy arduously and persistently.”<sup>10</sup>

#### After the War of Resistance

Zhang Naiqi (1897-1977) was one of the most famous patriotic people in the history of Modern China. He registered in Zhejiang Commerce School in his early years and later became a banker. In May 1936, Zhang and other celebrities organized the National Salvation Association in Shanghai which “called not only for resistance to Japan but specifically criticized Chiang Kai-shek’s continued pursuit of the civil war against the Communists.”<sup>11</sup> During the same year, he published an article entitled “The 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of September 18 Incident” in Manchuria and stated that the “Chinese people’s only means of existence is to resist against Japan. The basic forces of resisting against Japan are the masses of the people.”<sup>12</sup> Zhang Naiqi was full of confidence in the future of the War of Resistance. He issued a series of articles after Anti-Japanese War broke out to propagate the inevitable Chinese victory. The editorial “After the

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<sup>10</sup> “The Future of the War of Resistance.”

<sup>11</sup> Parks M. Coble, “Chiang Kai-shek and the Anti-Japanese Movement in China: Zou Tao-fen and the National Salvation Association, 1931-1937,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* Vol 44, no.2 (Feb 1985): 303.

<sup>12</sup> Guanying An, “Zhang Nai-qi is crying out for certain victory of the War of Resistance.” <http://www.zjol.com.cn/05zjmj/system/2005/08/02/006255966.shtml> (accessed 4 April 2011).

War of Resistance” was one of them. At the beginning of the editorial, Zhang expressed the prudent optimism for the future of the War of Resistance. Chinese Nationalist armies were doing their best to fight against Japanese armies in North China and Shanghai and won limited victories on two battlefields when he wrote the editorial. Zhang viewed that the limited victories indicated the final victory would belong to China. He then analyzed the Western powers’ attitude to the Sino-Japanese conflict.

Zhang’s analysis rested on the four specific nations among the Western powers that could exert influences on the War of Resistance. They were the Soviet Union, Britain, France, and the United States. Among the four countries, according to Zhang’s judgment, the Soviet Union could provide aid to China. The Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931 posed a direct threat to the safety of the Soviet Far Eastern territory. The Soviet Union had been on the alert for Japanese expansion in China since then. At the same time, it intensified her defensive forces on the Far Eastern front. The Japanese full-scale invasion of China in July 1937 prompted the Soviet Union to react radically. On August 21, “the USSR and China signed a nonaggression pact.”<sup>13</sup> Zhang Naiqi commented that

Although the aid the Soviet Union offered had not become apparent, we could also feel a little satisfaction from the expression of its domestic public opinion.... It now only needed to provide us a little material support and would be able to save great sacrifice of material and manpower resources in the future. The border defense of the Sino-Soviet region aiming at Japan in the Mongolia-Siberia area had actually merged into an organic whole geographically.<sup>14</sup>

The following fact proved that his viewpoint was correct. The Soviet Union was the only nation to offer munitions and dispatch planes and pilots to China in the early stage of the Sino-Japanese

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<sup>13</sup> O. Edmund Clubb, *20<sup>th</sup> Century China*, Third Edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), 219.

<sup>14</sup> Zhang Naiqi, “After the War of Resistance,” *Qiuwang Newspaper*, August 25, 1937.



War (1937-1938).

As for France, Britain, and the United States, Zhang Naiqi pointed out that the three nations were sympathetic to China. However, they would not become involved in the Sino-Japanese war. He held that once Japan defeated China, Britain's colonies in Southeast Asia, such as India and Malaysia, and even Australia would be vulnerable to Japanese attack. He reasoned that Britain would not act to China's advantage until China started nationwide resistance to Japan. He wrote, "Britain is inclined to restrain the fury of Chinese resistance to maintain the status quo; after China is determined to resist against Japan, Britain would rather support China, the lesser of two evils."<sup>15</sup> Britain held the greatest economic interests in China in the 1930s. British leaders were afraid that the spread of war would endanger their country's interests there. Britain hoped that an appeasement policy by China would end the war. However, Zhang assured that Britain's tactic would fail because of the indomitable resistance of the Chinese.

Americans were preoccupied with dealing with domestic economic crisis in the mid-1930s and lacked enthusiasm for international affairs. When Japanese invaders moved into China in 1937, President Franklin D. Roosevelt delivered a speech calling on international societies to "quarantine" the aggressors. "Yet the Americans, although sympathetic to China, strongly opposed involvement in the war."<sup>16</sup> Despite this fact, Zhang still believed that the United States could influence Britain. Moreover, he guessed that, like Britain, the United States was not willing to abandon its commercial interests in China.

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<sup>15</sup> Zhang Naiqi.

<sup>16</sup> Paul A. Varg, *The Closing of the Door : Sino-American Relations, 1936-1946* ( East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1973), 16.

Based on the analyses above, Zhang concluded that War of the final victory mainly relies on our own force to strive for. International attitude towards us mainly relies on our resolution to transfer. In other words, if only we ourselves had force, we could arouse international support force; if only we ourselves had resolution, we could strengthen international support resolution... How afterwards? The tendency has become obvious: that is if we had more resolution, our friendly nations would have more resolution.<sup>17</sup>

In the end of the editorial, Zhang Naiqi explored the war and peace question between Japan and China. In his opinion, there was to be no room for compromise in peace terms between the two countries. In order to have peace, the Japanese desired to oust the Kuomintang forces from North China and required Sino-Japanese cooperation on economics and politics. China wished to settle the conflict through negotiation. Chiang Kai-shek, however, insisted that “the loss of even one more inch of Chinese territory was unacceptable.”<sup>18</sup> Now that no possibility of peace existed, Zhang suggested that China’s strategy should be to stick to the resistance war to the end and consolidate the domestic unity.

### A Vast Country with a Large Population and Abundant Resources

Yu Dafu (1896-1945) was a famous novelist of Modern China. Living in Japan for eight years (1914-1922) helped him get fully acquainted with the country. On August 18, 1938, he wrote an editorial entitled “A Vast Country with a Large Population and Abundant Resources” to refute the theories of national subjugation by comparing Chinese and Japanese territories and their populations.

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<sup>17</sup> Zhang Naiqi.

<sup>18</sup> John Hunter Boyle, *China and Japan at War, 1937-1945: The Politics of Collaboration* (Stanford, California: Stanford University, 1972), 51.

Yu first stated that “why China dared to resist against Japanese invasion lied in her biggest advantage, that is, vast territory, a large population and abundant resources.”<sup>19</sup> He expounded his views on the Chinese advantage at great length.

When Yu Dafu wrote the editorial, the Sino-Japanese War had been raging for fourteen months. Japanese troops overran North China, the rich lower Yangtze River regions, and some ports. Foreign journalists and tourists who visited China took a pessimistic view of the country. But Yu’s opposed this opinion because “China was a country of vast distances....The area of the twenty-eight provinces (including Manchuria) aggregated about 3,097,836 square miles.”<sup>20</sup> In fact, China only lost a part of the whole territory. China still owned more than ten intact provinces. Any one of them was bigger than certain nations of Europe. So, Yu told those foreigners to look at a map of China so as not to be overwhelmed by the trivial.

Aside from geographical advantage, the Chinese nation possessed many other excellent characteristics. Yu mentioned three of them: endurance, fortitude, and elasticity, which meant that the Chinese were inured to physical hardship, possessed self-control, and had sufficient ability to meet an emergency. According to his observations, the masses in the rural areas and hinterland still lived and worked in peace and were content even if the prospect of war loomed large. Their passive lifestyle symbolized the hidden and implicit wealth that could be mobilized for resistance. However, foreigners, let alone the Japanese, overlooked this resource of population. Yu said that the “Chinese potential national strength and nationalism really are

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<sup>19</sup> Yu Dafu, “A Vast Country with A Large Population and Abundant Resources,” *Xingdao Newspaper* Constellation No 31(Hong Kong), August 31, 1938.

<sup>20</sup> Evans Fordyce Carlson, *The Chinese Army Its Organization and Military Efficiency* (Westport, Connecticut: Hyperion Press, 1940), 6.

miracles of the world when the War of Resistance began.”<sup>21</sup>

Yu also contrasted the population of the two nations. He estimated that China had a population of 470,000,000 while the Japanese numbered 70,000,000; China’s huge pool of draft recruits had at least 100,000,000 while Japan had 10,000,000; China could provide approximately 20,000,000 trained reserves while Japan had 2,000,000. A plentiful reserve of labor power was an advantage of China. It meant that China would possibly be able to keep up a prolonged war.

However, Yu Dafu emphasized that the three advantages discussed above could not guarantee a Chinese defeat of Japan. Winning victory over Japan must possess a prerequisite, that is, reform of domestic politics. Here, Yu indirectly criticized the Nanking Government. The Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931 caused the wave of anti-Japanese hostility throughout China. But Chiang Kai-shek listed Chinese Communists as the greatest menace to his rule and deployed his main forces to attack the area of Communist “bandits”. At the same time, Chiang, on the one hand, made concessions to the Japanese following incursions at Shanghai and North China while, on the other hand, he suppressed the rising anti-Japanese campaigns. As a result, the Nineteenth Army’s fighting against Japan in Shanghai in 1932 and Chahar People’s Anti-Japanese Army battling the Japanese in 1933 both ended in failure. Chiang’s appeasement policy continued to late 1935. Yu summarized the reasons for the anti-Japanese war in these early years and attributed them to political opacity, the absence of the mobilization of the masses, and the destabilization of national policy, rather than military or logistic failure.

Moreover, Yu Dafu was sure that these shortcomings had been corrected by a new

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<sup>21</sup> Yu Dafu.

anti-Japanese policy at the outbreak of anti-Japanese War in 1937. He wrote with confidence, “If China really was a sleeping lion in the past, she now opens eyes, inspires spirit and is ready to roar.”<sup>22</sup>

### Chiang Kai-shek Answered the Questions of the Correspondents

In June 1938, Chiang Kai-shek answered questions regarding the Sino-Japanese War. He indicated that “the result of the War of Resistance in the past eleven months increases the resolution of total resistance by the whole nation, and it enhances confidence in winning victory in the Anti-Japanese War at the same time.”<sup>23</sup> Chiang listed the three reasons that proved his statements. First, China had achieved genuine internal solidarity. Before the war, there were three principal political groups in China: the Kuomintang Party, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), and Kwangsi clique in the far south<sup>24</sup>. Among the three groups, the Kuomintang Party ranked No 1 and established the National Government in Nanking in 1927. The other two groups respectively owned territory and troops who held antagonistic relations with the Nanking Government.

After the War of Resistance began, leaders of the Kwangsi clique announced their support for the Nanking Government’s resistance against Japan. The CCP also issued a Manifesto on the United Front on September 22, 1937. In the Manifesto, CCP solemnly promised “to abandon armed struggle against the Nationalists...and reorganize and subordinate their armed forces

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<sup>22</sup> Yu Dafu.

<sup>23</sup> “Chiang Kai-shek Answered the Questions of the Correspondents,” *Wuhan Newspaper*, June 10, 1938.

<sup>24</sup> Carlson, 22.

under Nationalist command.”<sup>25</sup> The next day, Chiang Kai-shek issued a statement proclaiming, “The entire nation is awakened and solidly united.”<sup>26</sup> Moreover, the situation was more remarkable in the Japanese-occupied areas in Chiang’s opinion. In the end of 1937 and early 1938, Japan set up two puppet governments: the Provisional Government of the Chinese Republic and Reformed Government of the Chinese Republic. The former dominated North China, the latter Central China. The Chinese who joined the two regimes were “men with records of co-operation with Japan.”<sup>27</sup> But they could not exercise power. The Japanese advisors actually enjoyed dictatorial powers in each regime. Chiang Kai-shek pointed out that those who sought refuge with Japan only made up a small number of all the Chinese. The people in the enemy-occupied area basically upheld the Nationalist Government; even those who were discontented with the Kuomintang party in the past now turned their position around in its support of the KMT.

Second, the Chinese military capacity would double during and after the war. Chiang said that the Japanese imperialists erroneously estimated the situation of China. They claimed that China had not changed. They felt that the Chinese people were still politically and socially disorganized and disunited. Chiang said, “In their opinion, China can not be described as waging a war on a national scale in the modern sense of the world.”<sup>28</sup> So Japanese militarists were sure that the war would end in three months when the army thrust into North China. But this did not happen. Why? Chiang Kai-shek offered the answers when he said, “All our people are confident

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<sup>25</sup> Richard C. Thornton, *China, the Struggle for Power, 1917-1972* (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1973), 104.

<sup>26</sup> Chiang Kai-shek, “*Drive out the Invader*,” Chinese Ministry of Information, ed. *The Collected Wartime Messages of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, 1937-1945* (New York: The John Day Company, 1969), 43.

<sup>27</sup> George M. Beckmann, *The Modernization of China and Japan* (New York, Evanston, and London: Harper & Row, Publisher, 1962), 473.

<sup>28</sup> Chiang Kai-shek, “China’s Path to Victory,” Chinese Ministry of Information, ed. 72.

that our great nation will have no reason to be destroyed or subdued. In addition, armed forces, morale, weapon quality and quantity increase several times compared to the prewar period which are beyond what the enemy expected.”<sup>29</sup>

Third, Chiang Kai-shek judged, “From now on, the territory of the theater of the war is favorable to us against the enemy.”<sup>30</sup> Before that, North China and the lower Yangtze Delta were the main battlefields of Sino-Japanese War. The basic geographic feature of the two areas is extensive plains that were ideal for the movement of Japanese mechanized troops and logistical supplies. Moreover, the Chinese army once pursued positional warfare in the areas by using defensive tactics like extensive trench-work and deep-line concentration on narrow fronts. Although the tactics could temporarily block the advance of the enemy, they did not sufficiently wear down the Japanese offensive. To make matters worse, the Chinese army suffered heavy casualties. Chiang learned the lessons realizing the “pivot of the war situation was not up to whether one city or one place could be entrenched; the most important thing was to select favorable terrain to smash the main force of the enemy.”<sup>31</sup> He explained that with Japanese forces extending to the inner areas of China, the future battlefields would be hilly areas, areas crisscrossed with rivers, rivulets, lakes, and ponds which were favorable to the Chinese Army because it was familiar with them.

Finally, Chiang Kai-shek announced that the facts mentioned above gave the Chinese people reasons to believe that the War of Resistance would have an optimistic future. However, he emphasized that the Chinese people were not willing to go to war because war itself was a

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<sup>29</sup> “Chiang Kai-shek Answered the Questions of the Correspondents.”

<sup>30</sup> “Chiang Kai-shek Answered the Questions of the Correspondents.”

<sup>31</sup> “Chiang Kai-shek Answered the Questions of the Correspondents.”

tragedy of humanity. The Chinese people had no choice but to fight when they were facing invasion from Japan. At the same time, he urged the Western powers to provide aid to China and apply sanctions against Japan. When the Chinese army was fiercely fighting with Japan in October 1937, the assembly of the League of Nations passed a resolution expressing “its moral support for China” and suggesting that the members of the League “should consider how far they can individually extend aid to China.”<sup>32</sup> However, the United States and Britain declined to offer material aid to China for fear of irritating Japan. Chiang Kai-shek here again called on the League of Nations to act on the passed resolution. He pointed out that “if the resolution could be realistically implemented, it would shorten the time of the Anti-Japanese War.”<sup>33</sup> Moreover, he revealed the war crimes the Japanese army committed in China, such as bombing civilians, killing Chinese soldiers, using poisonous gas, and so on. Chiang reminded the Western powers that Japan was not only China’s enemy but also a common enemy across the world. So, he urged the governments of the Western powers to take their people’s requests for imposing sanctions on Japan seriously and taking action as soon as possible.

### To Stick to the Protracted War

The *Xinhua Newspaper* was the official periodical of Yangtze Bureau of the CCP which started publication in Wuhan in January 1938. It was the mouthpiece of all parties, groups, and individuals that were willing to join the Anti-Japanese War. On October 26 of the same year, the

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<sup>32</sup> Frank Dorn, *The Sino-Japanese War, 1937-1941 : From Marco Polo Bridge to Pearl Harbor* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co, 1974), 79.

<sup>33</sup> “Chiang Kai-shek Answered the Questions of the Correspondents.”



Xinhua Newspaper published an editorial entitled “To Stick to the Protracted War” expounding on the CCP’s views about the lengthy war.

With the continuance of the War of Resistance, many Chinese realized that Sino-Japanese War would be a protracted war. For example, Chiang Kai-shek thought in October 1937 “This war will not be finished in six months or a year, or any similarly short time.”<sup>34</sup> However, why would the war be protracted, what was the theoretical foundation of the protracted war, how could the people carry on a protracted war? Most people could not answer these questions. The top leader of the CCP, Mao Tse-tung, offered a satisfactory explanation for the questions.

In May 1938, Mao wrote *On the Protracted War*. He deeply analyzed the four basic features of mutual contradictions that existed in the Sino-Japanese War. He pointed out that these features determined the protraction of the War of Resistance, disproving the view of China’s inevitable subjugation or the view of China’s quick victory. Mao foresaw that the War of Resistance would pass through the following three stages: strategic defense, strategic stalemate, and strategic counter-offensive, and he was sure that the final victory would be China’s. The course of the War of Resistance completely proved the claims of *On the Protracted War*. After the publication of *On the Protracted War*, it became fashionable across China as the supreme strategic policy of Chinese defeating Japan. On October 26 of the same year, based on Mao’s theory of the protracted war, *Xinhua Newspaper* published an editorial to call on adhering to the protracted war.

In October 1938, the War of Resistance was at a turning point. In June 1938, Japan assembled approximately 380,000 men (including part of its navy and air strength), from three

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<sup>34</sup> Chiang Kai-shek, “*Fight to Win*,” Chinese Ministry of Information, ed, 44.

directions, to attack China's industrial heartland: Wuhan. Although China massed close to 800,000 men to defend Wuhan, the Japanese still broke through successive lines set up by the Chinese army outside Wuhan. By mid-October of the same year, Wuhan was on the verge of falling. At the same time, the Japanese opened up a new battlefield in Canton. On October 12, the Japanese took advantage of China's weak garrison at Taya Bay, just north of Hong Kong, dispatching a seaborne armada to land there. Chinese troops fled in panic. The Japanese drove straight in. On October 21, Canton (Guangzhou), the biggest city in south China with a population of more than a million people, fell into the hands of the Japanese.

The editorial explained that some people were overwhelmed when they heard of Guangzhou's fall and Wuhan's imminent danger and admonished the readers that there was no use in lamentation and indignation, let alone panic and despondence. The editorial stressed, "Momentary setbacks of the front lines and loss of a specific metropolis can only stir us to further strengthen our indomitable fighting will, the rightness and courage of sharing a bitter hatred of the enemy and confidence in final victory."<sup>35</sup>

The editorial encouraged countrymen not to lose confidence in the future of the War of Resistance. It stated that in spite of considerable losses, China had made great progress. This is because "Japan had won the battles but not the war."<sup>36</sup> The Japanese never realized their desire for a profitable peace. The editorial encouraged the Chinese people to hold onto their firm faith and said, "As long as we stick to resistance to the end, the final victory will surely belong to us."<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> "To Stick to the Protracted War," *Xinhua Newspaper*, October 26, 1938.

<sup>36</sup> George M. Beckmann, 473

<sup>37</sup> "To Stick to the Protracted War."

Next, the editorial generalized about the domestic situation in the past year. The invasion of Japan prompted Chinese Nationalists and Communists to end their state of hostility to one another in forming the Anti-Japanese United Front. The Communist forces became a part of the Nanking government's National Revolutionary Army. In addition, many "important provincial military leaders went to Nanking to offer their services and to reassure Chiang Kai-shek of their loyalty."<sup>38</sup> The editorial concluded that the Anti-Japanese War helped the Chinese people form a truly united nation, united army, and unbreakable national solidarity.

Concerning the military aspect, the CCP reorganized two military forces of CCP into the Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army in the second half of 1937. Although the National Revolutionary Forces oversaw these two armies, the Communists held the rights of command. The Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army infiltrated the Japanese unguarded rear conducting sustained guerrilla warfare against the enemy. By October 1938, the two armies became stronger and the number of the two armies surpassed 100,000 men. Moreover, the forces of the CCP equipped themselves with weapons taken from the enemy and discarded by the Kuomintang armies. For this reason, the editorial commented "Our army not only does not decrease the number in the fight of more than one year, but also makes unprecedented progress in quality."<sup>39</sup>

Aside from military progress, the editorial mentioned the awakening of the people. The Chinese people realized that "this was a different kind of war from the civil wars between rival war lords or the dynastic wars of Chinese history."<sup>40</sup> The people in the enemy-occupied areas

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<sup>38</sup> George M. Beckmann, 471.

<sup>39</sup> "To Stick to the Protracted War. "

<sup>40</sup> Evans Fordyce Carlson, 92.

wielded the weapons to resist Japanese aggression, whereas the people in the Kuomintang-controlled areas whole-heartedly supported the War of Resistance.

As for the domestic politics, the Kuomintang made a slight improvement in democracy under the pressure of the CCP and other political parties although it stubbornly adhered to a one-party dictatorship in the period of Anti-Japanese War. Notable signs of this were the establishment by the CCP of the National Defense Advisory Council (1937) and the People's Political Council (1938). The former recruited leaders of opposition parties and independents. The latter included representatives of CCP and some smaller political parties. The People's Political Council "had no actual power but was an influential advisory body that reflected various shades of Chinese opinion."<sup>41</sup> Consequently, the editorial confirmed that Chinese politics were advancing towards national democracy in spite of serious weaknesses.

With the capture of Canton (Guangzhou), the railway connecting Guangzhou and Hong Kong was cut off. China lost the main source for receiving foreign aid. However, the Burma Road linking Burma with China was still in operation although its transportation capacity was rather limited. In addition, the Soviet Union delivered supplies to China through a remote overland route. The Japanese tried to complete the strategic isolation of the Chinese forces, but China still was "assured supplies for the army."<sup>42</sup>

After listing the progress China had made, the editorial analyzed the situation in Japan indicating that "The Japanese war effort was beginning to run into difficulty at home."<sup>43</sup> The editorial cited data to illustrate this point.

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<sup>41</sup> George M. Beckmann, 480.

<sup>42</sup> "To Stick to the Protracted War."

<sup>43</sup> George M. Beckmann, 475.

First, Japan failed to achieve a quick victory. Second, Japanese grain had a bad harvest due to the drafting of nearly one million men, a shortage of horses, and the high prices of fertilizers. Third, about one-half of the non-war production sectors failed. Unemployment reached 1.8 million, the highest number in Japanese history. Fourth, import and export trade decreased by more than 20 percent. As for finance, “it was possible to finance necessary war materials to some extent through large gold shipments, but this practice steadily reduced the gold reserve toward the danger point.”<sup>44</sup> Japanese gold reserves plummeted in the past ten months. Prices skyrocketed. Although the Japanese government adopted strict measures to maintain the stability at home, there were nearly two thousand strikes in 1937.

Through comparing Chinese advantages with Japanese shortcomings, the editorial emphasized that the difficulties the people faced were temporary and surmountable, whereas the difficulties of the enemy were greater and inevitable. Finally, the editorial called on the Chinese people “to defeat temporary difficulties, overcome momentary problems, and stick to the protracted war...to reach the final victory.”<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> George M. Beckmann, 582.

<sup>45</sup> “To Stick to the Protracted War.”

## CHAPTER 3

### DEFENSE FIGHTING OF THE KUOMINTANG ARMY IN THE FRONT IN THE EARLY STAGE OF ANTI-JAPANESE WAR

The strategic defense phase of China's Resistance War against Japan took place from the Lugouqiao(Macro Polo Bridge) Incident of July 7, 1937, up to the fall of Wuhan and Canton (Guangzhou) in October 1938. In this phase, Japan relied on her military superiority, pouring scores of her army divisions and a part of her navy and air force into North China and East China. The Army of the Kuomintang undertook the task of defense on the front, successively carrying out the Pingjin Campaign, Shanghai Battle, Taiyuan Campaign, Battle for Xuzhou, and Wuhan Campaign. Countless heroic and moving deeds emerged in these campaigns.

#### Comforting and Encouraging Officers and Men in Nankou

In August 1937, Japanese aggressors moved westward along the Pingsui Railway attempting to take Chahaer province, north of Shanxi province and Suiyuan province. Located in the south section of the Pingsui Railway and the juncture between the Yan Mountains and the Plain of North China, about 40 kilometers from Beijing, Nankou was in a critical position that was easy to defend and difficult to attack. In the end of July, Chiang Kai-shek ordered General of the Thirteenth Corps, Tang En-bo, to lead his troops to defend Nankou.<sup>46</sup> The 13<sup>th</sup> Corps

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<sup>46</sup> Li Dongming, Wang Yan, YaoHongliang,Section Two, “ the War Situation after Beijing and Tianjin's Fall,” in Li Liangzhi, Wang Shuyin, Qin Yingjun, ed. Volume 7 General History of Chinese New -Democratic Revolution (Shanghai: Shanghai People Press, 2001), 286.

belonged to the Generalissimo's own army and was fairly well trained and equipped.

On August 8, the Japanese 5<sup>th</sup> Division and 11<sup>th</sup> Composite Brigade attacked Nankou. The Chinese 13<sup>th</sup> Corps took advantage of a natural barrier to put up a strong defense. The fiercest fighting happened at Nankou station. On August 12, Japanese aircraft, tanks, and infantry attacked the Chinese position. The Chinese defenders repulsed many attacks.

While the Chinese resisted bitterly in Nankou, Shanghai became another battlefield between the Chinese and Japanese. The battle of Shanghai began on August 13. Before this date, Chiang Kai-shek "sent his best German-trained divisions from Nanking down to Chapei on the borders of Shanghai."<sup>47</sup> "Chinese forces initially had some success, pushing Japanese troops out of Chapei and the university areas of Shanghai."<sup>48</sup>

The *Central Daily News* was the official newspaper of the Kuomintang which started publication in February 1928 in Shanghai. In 1949, it moved to Taiwan. After the War of Resistance broke out, the *Central Daily News* publically praised and supported the Anti-Japanese War. On August 16, it issued an editorial to convey greetings to Chinese officers and men in Nankou.

The editorial first pointed out that China now had no difference between the front and the rear since the nationwide resistance war started. The Chinese armies stubbornly held their ground in North China and the Yangtze Valley. Among these fights, the editorial viewed the Battle of Nankou as important because it lasted "from dawn of August 12 to the noon of August 14 without discontinuance. The casualties of the enemy were heavy in the two days. Our troops

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<sup>47</sup> Barbara W. Tuchman, *Stilwell and the American Experience in China, 1911-45* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1970,1971),169.

<sup>48</sup> Col. Roy M. Stanley II, 102.

seized a lot of booty.”<sup>49</sup>

Next, the editorial analyzed the significance of the battle of Nankou. It was the backyard of Beijing and was the gateway to Chahaer Province and Suiyuan Province. Nankou was like a bridge connecting Beijing with Chahaer and Suiyuan. Control of Chahaer and Suiyuan had been the fixed goal of the enemy. Japanese invaders advanced west towards Nankou. However, Chinese forces thwarted the Japanese attempt to take Nankou. The editorial held that “this feat should arouse attention across China.”<sup>50</sup>

The ruling center of the Nanking government was in the Yangtze River Valley. Shanghai “stands at the mouth of the Yangtze.”<sup>51</sup> It was the largest city in China as well as a great central coastal city in Asia. Shanghai was also the focus for foreign interest in China. In 1937, there were 63,000 foreigners living there. In a word, Shanghai was a place that easily attracted attention at home and abroad. The editorial deemed that although it was true that the Chinese were concerned about combat in Shanghai, Chinese should attach more attention to combat in North China. Before full-scale war broke out in 1937 with the Marco Polo Bridge (Lugouqiao) Incident, in 1935, the Chinese government’s institutions and armies had already retreated from North China under pressure from the Japanese. After this withdrawal, North China became the sphere of influence for Japan. The area became a paradise for smuggling and narcotic trafficking under Japanese protection. The local people lived in an abyss of misery.

The editorial stated, “Hardship the northern people suffered in a few of years is much greater than that of the southeastern people. The people of the southeast do not forget North

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<sup>49</sup> “Comforting and Encouraging Officers and Men in Nankou,” *Central Daily News*, August 16, 1937.

<sup>50</sup> “Comforting and Encouraging Officers and Men in Nankou.”

<sup>51</sup> T.R. Tregear, *A Geography of China* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1965), 253.



China especially showing support and reverence for officers and men who defend the northern territory.”<sup>52</sup> The fall of Beijing and Tianjin presaged the worsening of the war situation in North China. But the writer of the editorial was sure that the situation would stimulate more people to join the large numbers already in the War of Resistance. Moreover, only by achieving total resistance could the force of the whole nation be displayed. The force of the entire nation was strong enough to protect the North or South. In this aspect, officers and men in North China set an example for the whole people. Their heroic fighting was beneficial to the creation of a national Chinese force.

Considering the fact that war with Japan happened simultaneously in Shanghai and Nankou, the editorial judged that the Chinese now form an integrated battlefield. Wherever the enemy attacked, the Chinese people were ready to defend. The tactics of crushing Chinese armies one by one or isolating China could not succeed in such a context. Finally, the editorial emphasized that the reason for requiring the people throughout China to pay close attention to the battle of Nankou was because it was closely linked with the overall situation.

Manifestation of Nation and Character: Condoling Six Hundred Chivalrous Men in  
Downtown Baoshan

The Shanghai Battle was the first major engagement fought between the Sino-Japanese Armies as well as the largest and bloodiest battle of the entire eight-year war of resistance. The battle lasted three months, from August 13, 1937 to November 12. Troops of the two sides

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<sup>52</sup> “Comforting and Encouraging Officers and Men in Nankou.”

thrown into cramped Shanghai battlefields amounted to nearly 1,000,000 men (300,000 Japanese men and 500,000 to 700,000 Chinese men). The reasons that Chiang Kai-shek deployed the massive forces to concentrate in Shanghai varied. However, one reason was that he tried to make use of the streets of Shanghai and waterways of the surrounding areas to offset the advantage of Japanese mechanized units. In the battle, casualties of Chinese troops came to 187,000.<sup>53</sup>

Baoshan is located in northern Shanghai, at the entrance to the East Sea, guarding the gateway to the city. In August 1937, one Chinese battalion entered downtown Baoshan, constructed fortifications, gathered army grain and ammunition, and prepared for battle. On September 4, under the protection of more than thirty armored cars, Japanese forces attacked downtown Baoshan. On September 5, “Downtown Baoshao was completely encircled.”<sup>54</sup> On the same day, the Japanese used naval gunfire to bomb the wall of the downtown. Aircraft and armored cars covered the ground soldiers during the assault. Chinese defenders, under the command of Yao Ziqing, met the attack calmly. Japanese troops hit several snags for a while, unexpectedly firing sulfur shells towards downtown Baoshan. After that, Japanese heavy artillery blasted away the wall of the downtown. The enemy rushed inside. Yao Ziqing commanded subordinates to attack in the streets near East Gate. Fierce fighting in downtown Baoshan lasted almost an entire day. The battle lasted until September 7, and the entire battalion heroically gave their lives for their country.

On September 11, *Central Daily News* published an editorial entitled “Manifestation of Nation and Character” eulogizing the heroic deeds of the Baoshan defenders.

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<sup>53</sup> Jay Taylor, *The Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek and the Struggle for Modern China* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2009), 150.

<sup>54</sup> Pei Kuangyi, “Battle of Shanghai,” in Li Liangzhi, Wang Shuyin, Qin Yingjun., ed, 226.

The editorial briefly described the course of the Baoshan battle indicating that Battalion Commander Yao Ziqing led six hundred men to defend downtown Baoshan for two days and nights fighting to the fall of the downtown, and no one survived. The behavior of Chinese troops looking upon death as going home embodied the moral quality of the Chinese Nation.

The editorial claimed, “Loving peace and cherishing integrity have been part of the innate character of the nation.”<sup>55</sup> Whenever China was at a critical time, there were always some people with high ideals who bravely stepped forward. They did everything they could to save the desperate situation and even sacrificed their lives to help the people. Chinese history has been full of such instances for thousands of years. The editorial pointed out that these historical instances formed the character of the Chinese nation. Heroic episode had two functions in that “they played a role in frightening the enemy and inspiring morale at that time while stirring the aspirations of the people and establishing an optimistic mood in the future.”<sup>56</sup>

The editorial mentioned three famous officials loyal to their sovereign in ancient China: Tian Heng, Zhang Xun, and Xu Yuan. Tian Heng was a person with great power in the last years of the Qin Dynasty (221BC-206BC). He announced independence after the peasant revolt against the Qin Dynasty broke out in 209BC. Liu Bang then established the Han Dynasty in 206 BC. Tian Heng was reluctant to declare himself a subject of the Han Dynasty, leading his disciples to an island. Liu Bang sent someone to offer amnesty to Tian. He was forced to leave for the capital, but Tian Heng committed suicide on the way, and so did his disciples.

Zhang Xun and Xu Yuan were the officials of Tang Dynasty (618AD-907AD). In 757, they

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<sup>55</sup> “Manifestation of Nation and Character : Condoling Six Hundred Chivalrous Men in Downtown Baoshan.” *Central Daily News*, September 11,1937.

<sup>56</sup> “Manifestation of Nation and Character : Condoling Six Hundred Chivalrous Men in Downtown Baoshan.”

commanded soldiers to defend the city of Suiyang, Henan Province. The insurgent troops encircled Suiyang for several months. Neither Zhang nor Xu had relief forces outside or rations inside. Suiyang fell. They declined to surrender and were killed.

Tian Heng, Zhang Xun, and Xu Yuan accepted death rather than compromise their loyalty and principles of righteousness. The editorial explained that they passed their views from generation to generation. As a result, loyalty has dissolved into the blood of the Chinese nation. So that the Chinese nation could survive in East Asia for five thousands, the editorial claimed it owed it to this integrity.

The editorial emphasized that “the obligations of soldiers were to defend land and resist external invasion.”<sup>57</sup> Six hundred men in Baoshan not only achieved their duty but also disregarded their own weak forces to fight to the death. Their acts displayed that they inherited the loyalty and principles of righteousness of the forefathers. At the same time, the editorial expressed conviction that the heroic act of defending downtown Baoshan to the last man amply proved that “the vigor of the Chinese nation [had] not waned.”<sup>58</sup>

The fierce degree of battles in Shanghai was unprecedented. “The Chinese exhibited an ardor and military skill which most people had not believed they possessed.”<sup>59</sup> The editorial attributed the brave resistance of the Chinese army in Shanghai to the leadership of the Kuomintang government and the command of Chiang Kai-shek. It also warned those who ignored the responsibility of the resistance war and sought their own personal interests to stop or

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<sup>57</sup> “Manifestation of Nation and Character : Condoling Six Hundred Chivalrous Men in Downtown Baoshan.”

<sup>58</sup> “Manifestation of Nation and Character : Condoling Six Hundred Chivalrous Men in Downtown Baoshan.”

<sup>59</sup> Lois Wheeler Snow, *Edgar Snow's China : A personal Account of the Chinese Revolution Compiled from the Writings of Edgar Snow* (New York: A Division of Random House,1983), 158.

else they would receive severe punishment. Finally, the editorial required all Chinese people not to disgrace their forefathers but to resolve to sacrifice to the limit.

### Congratulations on Winning Taierzhuang Victory

Japan took Nanjing, the capital of China in December 1937, and then shifted her battle center to the Jinpu rail line. General of the Chinese Fifth War Area, Li Zongren, conducted his troops to combat with the Japanese army in the south part of Shandong Province. The Chinese Army stationed one unit in Taierzhuang, 30 kilometers northeast of Xuzhou in late March 1938. The Japanese Fifth Division and the Nineteenth Division launched a vigorous offensive against the position. Chinese defenders indomitably resisted the enemy. These two Japanese divisions rashly advanced, forming an isolated force. The Chinese forces of the Fifth War Area seized the favorable occasion, mustering the massive forces to encircle the enemy exteriorly. The fierce battle lasted more than half a month, 10,000 Japanese were killed, and it became known as the Taierzhuang Victory. It was the greatest victory the Kuomintang army achieved since China's Resistance War against Japan.

In order to congratulate on the Taierzhuang Victory, the *Xinhua Newspaper* issued an editorial on April 8, 1938. The editorial on the one hand epitomized the significance of Taierzhuang Victory, on the other hand, it reminded the Chinese army to keep calm to meet new challenges.

The editorial first retold the battlefield report of the Taierzhuang Victory “wiping out ten thousands of the enemy, seizing lots of rifles, light and heavy machines guns, light artillery guns,

howitzers and armored cars.”<sup>60</sup> Then it stated the important meaning of the victory in the Second Phase of the First Period.

The Second Sino-Japanese War may be divided into three periods. The first period began with the outbreak of the war and ended with the fall of Wuhan (July 7, 1937-October 25, 1938). The first period may be re-divided into three phases. The First Phase was from July 7, 1937, to December 13, 1937 (Fall of Nanking). The Second Phase began on December 13, 1937, and ended on May 19, 1938 (Evacuation of Xuzhou). The Third Phase extended from May 19, 1938, to October 25, 1938 (Fall of Wuhan).<sup>61</sup>

The situation of the Second Phase of the First Period was pregnant with grim possibilities when the Chinese army engaged in a battle with Japan’s army in Taierzhuang where it was located on “a branch railway from Yihsien that connected with the Longhai line to the south.”<sup>62</sup> Taierzhuang provided a protective screen for the northeast of Xuzhou. If the Japanese force took Taierzhuang, it could advance south then west along the Longhai line capturing Xuzhou. Xuzhou was “the strategic junction of the north-south Tianjin-Nanjing railway with the east-west Belgian-built Longhai railway connecting Xi’an to the coast.”<sup>63</sup> Once Japan seized Xuzhou, it could march west to seize Zhengzhou along Longhai railway then turn south to attack Wuhan.

In addition, from the Marco Polo Bridge Incident (July 7, 1937) to before the battle of Taierzhuang (March 1938), the Kuomintang army did not win a truly meaningful victory when waging the war with Japan. The morale of the Kuomintang army was low. The masses in China

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<sup>60</sup> “Congratulations on Winning Taierzhuang Victory,” *Xinhua Newspaper*, April 8, 1938.

<sup>61</sup> Chinese Ministry of Information, ed. *China Handbook 1937-1945 : A comprehensive Survey of Major Developments in China in Eight Years of War* Revised and Enlarged with 1946 Supplement ( New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947), 299.

<sup>62</sup> Frank Dorn, 152.

<sup>63</sup> Dick Wilson, *When Tigers Fight : The Story of the Sino-Japanese War, 1937-1945* (New York: The Viking Press, 1982), 86.

were also concerned about the fighting capability of their own army. The Chinese were eager for a victory. The Taierzhuang Victory satisfied this wish. Its victory was very helpful to “raise the morale of the front lines and confidence of victory of the people throughout China.”<sup>64</sup>

The editorial analyzed the four reasons of Taierzhuang Victory. First, the Kuomintang Army employed correct military strategy adopting mobile warfare rather than positional warfare. In the First Phase of the First Period, positional warfare was the main fighting form of the Kuomintang Army. The facts proved that taking positional warfare could not give play to the specialty of the Chinese Army. Although the Chinese wore down the enemy in the process, their own losses were great. In the Second Phase of the Second Period, the Chinese learned the previous lessons. In the Taierzhuang battle, Chinese forces engaged in mobile warfare using “two strong points: a large territory and a big force,”<sup>65</sup> amassing superior forces to attack a single enemy column. So, the editorial commented that the adoption of mobile warfare had “great significance in striving for the victory in the Anti-Japanese War.”<sup>66</sup>

Second, the Taierzhuang Victory showed the coordinated fighting capability among the Chinese troops. The Fifth War Area of China undertook the battle of Taierzhuang . The forces of the War Area were composed of previously provincial troops.<sup>67</sup> Before the battle of Taierzhuang, Chiang Kai-shek’s two corps were transferred into the Fifth War Area. Owing to civil war of many years, there was a contradiction between provincial troops and the Central Army. However, all of the troops forgot their previous ill will in the War of Resistance, helping and cooperating with each other.

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<sup>64</sup> “Congratulations on Winning Taierzhuang Victory.”

<sup>65</sup> Mao Tse Tung, *On the Protracted War in Mao Tse Tung Selected Works Volume Two 1937-1938* (New York: International Publishers, 1954), 209.

<sup>66</sup> “Congratulations on winning Taierzhuang Victory.”

<sup>67</sup> Li Yurong, “Battle of Xuzhou,” in Li Liangzhi, Wang Shuyin, Qin Yingjun, ed, 542.

Third, the Taierzhuang Victory illustrated that the more Japanese invaders went deep into the inner areas of China, the greater the possibility of their being destroyed at any time. Japanese aggressors quickly advanced into Taierzhuang and became an isolated force. “They fell into dire straits of running out of ammunition and provisions under the encirclement of Chinese army.”<sup>68</sup>

In the strategic defense stage (The First Period), although the Chinese army suffered huge losses (some 800,000 in battle<sup>69</sup>), losing extensive territory of North China and lower the Yangtze River Delta, the number of Japanese casualties was over 300,000<sup>70</sup>. Moreover, the financial resources and material resources of Japan were worn down. Overthrowing China within three months also became a standing joke.

Large numbers of brave Chinese troops rallied in the Pingjin, Shanghai, Xuzhou, and Wuhan campaigns. Many senior officers and thousands upon thousands of unknown lower officers and men, under oath of rather being killed in battle than becoming a colonial slave, made a life and death struggle with Japanese aggressors until they shed the last drop of their blood. Their heroic deeds not only encouraged the fighting will of all Chinese people but also received praise from the world opinion.

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<sup>68</sup> “ Congratulatory on Winning Taierzhuang Victory”

<sup>69</sup> O. Edmund Clubb, *20<sup>TH</sup> Century China* Third Edition (New York : Columbia University Press, 1978), 226.

<sup>70</sup> Chiang Kai-shek, “The Second Stage of the War,” in Chinese Ministry of Information, ed, 132.



## CHAPTER 4

### ATROCITIES OF JAPANESE AGGRESSORS

Japan had paid close attention to the role of air force since it launched an overall aggression war against China, regarding it as an important means to achieve its military aggression goal. In the early stage of the Anti-Japanese War, the Japanese army sent out planes to drop bombs on Tianjin, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Wuhan, and other big cities with wantonness and indiscrimination, whose purpose was to exhibit the brutality of the aggressors and ruin the resistance will of the Chinese people. On July 29, 1937, Japanese planes bombed Tianjin destroying 2,545 houses. Bombing also made Nankai University and other educational institutions into a pile of debris. On August 13 of the same year, Japanese troops ignited flames of war in Shanghai. Up to January 3, 1938, Shanghai and its peripheral zones were bombed 6,000 times by Japanese planes, tens of thousands of non-army personnel and innocent people were killed or wounded. The bombing and shelling of Japanese aggressors reduced Hujian, Fudan, Tongji, and other known colleges and universities wholly or mostly to ruins.

#### The Enemy's Aircraft Slaughtered the Innocent Masses

On September 3, 1937, the *Shen Bao* carried an editorial denouncing the atrocities of Japan. The editorial first listed the death-toll after the bombing. In twenty days, the war crimes Japan committed in Shanghai were too many to be counted. The heaviest casualties occurred in two cases. The former happened in a company, where no fewer less than six hundred refugees or

more were killed by bombs, the latter in a railway station, where as many as four hundred people or more lost their lives. The editorial emphatically pointed out that “the dead are all innocent people rather than fighters at the front lines.”<sup>71</sup> Japanese aircraft not only bombed downtown Shanghai but also the suburbs. Even trains and buses transporting refugees became the target of shooting. “Justice cannot stand such behavior, and neither can the law.”<sup>72</sup>

The editorial invoked an act of international law to illustrate that the non-fighting personnel should receive protection during wartime. But Japan disregarded the relevant law and sent out aircraft to attack civilians and non-military zones with bombs. Moreover, the Japanese gloated about it. The editor believed that humanity around the world would not tolerate such conduct. Next, it gave an example of the British Ambassador to China injured in the airstrike. On August 26, the car in which the ambassador rode was running from Nanking to Shanghai. “A large Union Jack was painted on the roof of his car.”<sup>73</sup> However, Japanese aircraft hit the car. The ambassador was injured. Afterwards, Japan made excuses of the Union Jack being too small to be seen and claimed the attack was an accidental incident. The editorial asked of the Japanese attack on the ambassador’s car: “If true, how do you explain thousands of Chinese civilians being massacred by bombs?”<sup>74</sup>

The Japanese airstrike not only caused heavy casualties of civilians but also brought disaster to commerce. In the 1930s, “Shanghai Settlement are the tallest buildings in Asia, the most spacious cinema palaces and more motorcars than in any Eastern metropolis, or in all other Chinese cities combined. Here are the great Chinese department stores, the powerful foreign

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<sup>71</sup> “The Enemy’s Aircraft Slaughtered the Innocent Masses,” *Shen Bao*, September 3, 1937.

<sup>72</sup> “The Enemy’s Aircraft Slaughtered the Innocent Masses.”

<sup>73</sup> Martin H. Brice, *The Royal Navy and the Sino-Japanese Incident 1937-41* (London: Ian Allan, 1973), 42.

<sup>74</sup> “The Enemy’s Aircraft Slaughtered the Innocent Masses.”

financial houses.”<sup>75</sup> After the bombardment, commerce ceased. The International Settlement almost became an empty city. Moreover, Japanese aircraft raids extended from Downtown Shanghai to its outskirts. The editorial viewed that Downtown Shanghai and its outskirts were closely related and mutually dependent. Once the outskirts were reduced to a state of ruin by war, the prosperity of Downtown Shanghai would be impossible. Therefore, “the direct purpose of the Japanese action is to try to destroy China’s territory and masses, while the indirect purpose is to destroy the commerce and property of Britain, France, America and other countries in China.”<sup>76</sup>

The editorial finally stated that China had ample reasons to take revenge on Japan for airstrikes based on accepted laws of war. But China was not yet ready to deal with Japan. It warned the Japanese that “if Japan brags that it is a civilized nation, it should abide by the law of civilized nations by immediately restraining its army from taking inhuman actions.”<sup>77</sup> If Japan does not comply, in that case, China would do everything possible to defend the country. The Chinese people absolutely will not go down on their knees when facing threat and outrage from Japan.”<sup>78</sup>

### The Enemy Bombed Cultural Institutions

*Central News Daily* issued another editorial censuring the war crimes of Japan. The editorial first listed the names of some cultural institutions being bombed. Japanese initially bombed three schools in Tianjin with the Sun Yat-sen University in Guangzhou, the last one to be

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<sup>75</sup> Lois Wheeler Snow, 25.

<sup>76</sup> “The Enemy’s Aircraft Slaughtered the Innocent Masses.”

<sup>77</sup> “The Enemy’s Aircraft Slaughtered the Innocent Masses.”

<sup>78</sup> “The Enemy’s Aircraft Slaughtered the Innocent Masses.”

hit. In addition, Japan bombed universities in Shanghai and Nanking and junior middle schools in Nanchang and Wuchang. The bombardment damaged these institutions and a few of them became piles of debris. The editorial pointed out, “Damaging schools, destroying cultural institutions have become old tricks of the enemy.”<sup>79</sup> Such cases had become innumerable since outbreak of war. How could Japan’s inhumane acts be explained? The editorial held that there were no more persuasive reasons except for brutality and ugliness.

The editorial indicated the aftermath of Japanese targeting Chinese cultural organs. First, Japan broke promises of not bombing civilians and non-military zones. Second, Japan recently dispatched envoys abroad to try to cover up war crimes in China. But the more Japan tried to hide its activities, the more Japan was exposed. Third, Japan could not offer a tenable argument about bombing the cultural organs. “Those organs are far away from the military zones. Moreover, they are not used at all for military purposes.”<sup>80</sup>

The editorial further explained the reason for the Japanese bombing Chinese cultural institutions. Japanese imperialists viewed the “place of education as the source of national consciousness.”<sup>81</sup> So they were extremely hostile to Chinese schools, intentionally attacking them. On July 29, 1937, Japanese aircraft made an air assault on Nankai University in Tianjin for four hours, “systematically and unhurriedly raining incendiary bombs on the university buildings....”<sup>82</sup> Central University in Nanking underwent the bombardment four times. By doing this, Japanese imperialists tried to wipe out a source of anti-Japanese propaganda and demonstrations. The editorial sternly warned Japanese imperialist sternly that “your aircraft and

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<sup>79</sup> “The Enemy Bombed Cultural Institutions,” *Central News Daily*, October 3, 1937.

<sup>80</sup> “The Enemy Bombed Cultural Institutions.”

<sup>81</sup> Barbara W. Tuchman, 167.

<sup>82</sup> Barbara W. Tuchman, 167.

bombs at most can destroy our buildings but can not shake the spirit of our culture in the slightest degree. Your every bomb is better than one millions books dealing with Anti-Japanese War for it helped Chinese youth realize the viciousness of your hidden evil intention.”<sup>83</sup> The editorial at last demanded the Japanese imperialists stop the brutal bombardment otherwise they would never escape the punishment of history.

### Guangzhou Is in Bombardment

Xia Yan (1900-1995), original name Shen Naixi, was a well-known Chinese playwright, screenwriter, and art critic. He joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1927. After China’s Resistance War against Japan broke out in 1937, he actively took part in the anti-Japanese national salvation movement, writing a large number of essays and political comments. In early 1938, Xia Yan fled from Shanghai to Guangzhou where he experienced large-scale air raids in person. Soon afterwards, he wrote an article titled “Guangzhou Is in Bombardment” and published it in the *Xinhua Newspaper* on June 12, 1938.

Guangzhou was the largest city in South China. It is located on the delta of the Pearl River close to the South China Sea adjoining Hong Kong and Macao. Because Guangzhou is in a sub-tropical area and evergreen all the year round, it was praised as The Flower City. In 1938, Guangzhou had a population of 1.5 million.<sup>84</sup> Xia Yan applied the technique of contrast to describe how the Japanese bombardment wrecked the city.

Xia Yan wrote, “You would not understand how ruthlessly and horrifically the Japanese

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<sup>83</sup> “The Enemy Bombed Cultural Institutions.”

<sup>84</sup> Frank Dorn, 225.

aircraft bombarded the densely populated metropolis if you had not personal experience.

Guangzhou had undergone ten month's bombardment from September, last year."<sup>85</sup> However, according to two British travelers' accounts, by the end of February 1938, the Japanese target was not downtown Guangzhou but the suburbs.<sup>86</sup> Under this situation, residents in Guangzhou neglected to take precautions against air strikes. As a result, tragedy befell them.

Beginning on May 28, the enemy's planes on a large-scale bombed Downtown Guangzhou. There were at least twelve planes coming, at most fifty-two planes. The bombs dropped were gigantic, weighing three to five pounds. There were at most one hundred twenty bombs at one time dropped in one day. There were at least three air raids each day. On May 29 and June 6, the bombing lasted two whole days. The residents in the city did not even have the opportunity to gasp. Dropping bombs did not have just a military purpose. Shops, civilian houses, schools, kindergartens, hospitals, even the Taomei hospital whose roof hung the national flag of France all became Japanese targets. On May 28 and 29, the casualties were above one thousand. On June 6, the number of the dead was twelve hundred. The wounded could hardly be counted.<sup>87</sup>

After the bombardment, Guangzhou became a hell on earth.

Streets were packed with women who semi-madly cried for their lost husbands and sons. Each and every one coffin made in white wood was loaded into cargo cars.... There were rows of corpses covered with reed mats and bloodstains which first were red then tan finally black....Pieces of flesh, the furry skull of children, grey-yellow brains were scattered on the most prosperous roads.<sup>88</sup>

Xia Yan also cited a report written by a correspondent of Hong Kong in Guangzhou to illustrate the horrible sight after bombardment. The correspondent witnessed a bombing. He stated that more than six hundred civilians were killed on one road. Blood dyed the whole road. A heavy bomb blasted a barbershop, killing over one hundred people. In addition, three schools

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<sup>85</sup> Xia Yan, "Guangzhou Is in Bombardment," *Xinhua Newspaper*, June 12, 1938.

<sup>86</sup> W.H.Auden & Christopher Isherwood, *Journey to a War* (New York: Octagon Books, 1972), 35.

<sup>87</sup> Xia Yan.

<sup>88</sup> Xia Yan.

were badly damaged. Dozens of children's corpses were found in a school.

Before the Japanese air raids on Guangzhou, streets in Guangzhou were a combination of westernized style and pure Chinese characteristics "all hung with the long inscribed shop-banners, golden, scarlet, and white."<sup>89</sup> There were a large number of restaurants, groceries, pharmacies, and barbershops. The streets were busy with people coming and going all the time. However, after the bombing, downtown Guangzhou was no longer recognizable. "The most prosperous streets in Guangzhou all have been bombed into debris. Regions next to Huangsha Station have been razed to the ground. Along Yonghan Road, Hui'ai Road and Long Embankment in Weihua Street, whenever you walk dozens of steps, you always run into either a pile of scorched earth and broken bricks or a line of corpses which were bombed into pieces."<sup>90</sup> Even trees in downtown Guangzhou suffered disaster. In June, the trees are usually in full bloom. But if bombs exploded nearby the trees, leaves were shaken off, and the trees withered.

Xia Yan disproved the lies of Japanese imperialists. When Japanese air forces launched air assaults on Chinese cities, they always sought some excuses to conceal cruelty. Japan alleged that its aircraft were sent to bomb military and governmental institutions in Guangzhou. But the bombardment actually extended to the whole city. Xia Yan argued that many of the buildings of military and governmental institutions were imposing, but the bombs of Japan did not hit them. Even if they were hit, the bombs could not also endanger the life of officials in those buildings because those persons had left before the air strike. So Xia Yan held that the Japanese claim of bombing military and governmental organs was only the sophistry aiming at concealing massacre.

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<sup>89</sup> W.H.Auden & Christopher, 34-35.

<sup>90</sup> Xia Yan.

### Protest the Outrage of Japanese Aircraft

Chungking is situated in western China at the upper Yangtze River. Its northern, eastern, and southern parts are surrounded by mountains. In the 1930s, the only route connecting Chungking and East China was the waterway of Yangtze River. Mountainous terrains combined with precipitous gorges of the Yangtze at its upper reaches were “comparatively secure from attack except from the air.”<sup>91</sup> After outbreak of war, the Nationalist Government of China shifted west to Chungking. Since then to the end of the Anti-Japanese War, Chungking had been the capital of China.

When war came to a military stalemate in October 1938, Japanese air forces sent out aircraft to launch long-lasting and large-scale strategic attacks on Chungking. The bombardments that happened on May 3 and 4 1939 shocked the whole nation. In two days, Japanese aircraft dropped hundreds of bombs on commercial and residential areas in Chungking, killing thousands of people. In 1941, Japan seized the favorable chance of the outbreak of European war and attempted to hasten the settlement of the “China Incident.” Japanese authorities were ready to move southward. Japan drew up the No 101 fighting plan for bombing Chungking. From May to October of the same year, Japanese air forces made 80 air raids on Chungking, dropped 10,587 bombs, killed 4,149 persons and wounded 5,411 persons.

On May 31, 1940, *Xinhua Newspaper* published an editorial revealing the brutalities of Japanese aggressors.

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<sup>91</sup> Kenneth Scott Latourette, *The Chinese Their History and Culture Fourth Edition, Thoroughly Revised Two Volumes in One* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964), 351.



The editorial first stated that Chungking was recently bombed by Japanese aircraft. The losses of workers, civilian zones, and cultural institutions were greatest. Two universities in Chungking were bombarded. Some scholars and students died in the bombardment. The editorial indicated that “Japanese imperialists recently successively and violently bombed the capital of war-time Chungking. They have only one purpose, that is, they want to end the China Incident as soon as possible, taking advantage of the moment of Europe’s tangled warfare so as to fish in troubled waters.”<sup>92</sup>

In April and May 1940, Nazi Germany overran Western Europe. The Netherlands fell, France was in imminent danger, and British forces retreated from the European continent. The victory of the Nazis in Western Europe stimulated the desire of the Japanese advance to the south. Japanese authorities viewed Britain, France, and the Netherlands’s colonies in Southeast Asia as a “vacuum zone,” whose domination the Japanese were trying to replace. In order to extricate herself from the Chinese battlefield, Japan wanted to lure the Chungking government into surrender. The editorial deemed that “Japanese warlords vainly hope to force China to make a humiliating peace, so recently they especially employed the cruelest terror policy, taking the opportunity to try to undermine economic construction in the rear area, smash our cultural institutions to shake our will and increase our difficulty in order to achieve the purpose of ending China-Japan War as quickly as possible.”<sup>93</sup>

The editorial claimed that Japanese attacks on Chungking could not discourage the will of the Chinese people let alone subjugate them. Actually, the attacks scared Wang Jingwei and a handful of his followers.

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<sup>92</sup> “Protest the Outrage of Japanese Aircraft,” *Xinhua Newspaper*, May 31, 1940.

<sup>93</sup> “Protest the Outrage of Japanese Aircraft.”

Next, the editorial mentioned that the Chinese cultural undertakings and industrial buildings were working despite Japanese bombardments. Although Japanese bombs could devastate the buildings of schools, cave dwelling schools and field schools sponsored by CCP were booming elsewhere both beyond Japanese lines and behind them. The capital of the CCP, Yen-an, in northwestern China “was now one of the nation’s largest educational centers.”<sup>94</sup> Japan blockaded Chinese coasts, cutting off almost all sea routes access to receiving foreign aid. But the Industrial Co-operative Movement made up for the deficiencies of domestic goods to some extent. The Industrial Co-operative Movement started in 1937. “By the end of 1939 there were over 1,300 individual co-operatives in the western and southwestern provinces.”<sup>95</sup>

The editorial lamented the death-toll in the air strike. At the same time, it also indirectly criticized the Chungking authorities for not doing their best in their defensive work. The editorial put forward several questions regarding air defense to remind the authorities concerned to pay much attention to the air raids of the enemy “to avoid pointless losses.”<sup>96</sup>

When the editorial was issued, World War II, beginning in Europe in September 1939, had lasted close to two years. The United States was not involved in war. Chiang Kai-shek and his leading Nationalist Government appealed to the US for financial support, but the result was small. Although the US was more and more alert to Japanese expansion in Asia, employing economic measures to restrain Japan before July 1940, the US continued to export iron, steel scrap, and petroleum products to Japan. So three presidents of Chinese universities submitted a joint letter to the American people “calling on them to prevent shipping American steel and oil

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<sup>94</sup> Lois Wheeler Snow, 189.

<sup>95</sup> George M. Beckmann, 482.

<sup>96</sup> “Protest the Outrage of Japanese Aircraft.”

products to Japan as to decrease the casualties of innocent Chinese people and curb Japanese brutalities.”<sup>97</sup>

The editorial in the end emphasized that Japanese air assaults posed difficulties for the Chinese people. At the moment, they especially needed unity and progress. Only by achieving this could they overcome difficulties and defeat Japan.

According to incomplete statistics, from July 1937 to July 1943, there were 762,183 casualties <sup>98</sup>across the whole country from Japanese air raids.

Japanese aggressors implemented a savage policy of “burning all, killing all, looting all” in the CCP-led base areas behind the enemy lines. People, livestock, and property of every place Japanese invaders mopped up were killed or swept away. Large quantities of villages were reduced to a state of ruin. Men fifteen to sixty years old were slaughtered if considered “inimical” to Japan and women suffered wanton insults. Incomplete statistics show that 3,180,000 people were murdered, 2,760,000 captured, 2,960,000 injured or disabled, amounting to 8,900,000 people in the seven CCP-led base areas behind the enemy lines (Jinsui, Jinchaji, Jinjiluyu, Shandong, Suwan, and Central Plains) from 1937 to 1945. In addition, burned rooms were 19,520,000, the loss of cereals 114,900,000,000 jin<sup>99</sup>, the loss of livestock 54,310,000.

In all, China’s military and civilian casualties were 35 million. Direct property loss was valued at 100 billion US dollars, indirect loss 500 billion US dollars<sup>100</sup> in the eight years of the aggression war Japan launched.

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<sup>97</sup> “Protest the Outrage of Japanese Aircraft.”

<sup>98</sup> “Atrocities of Japanese Aggressors in China.” <http://www.8years.net/1937/SubDetail.jsp?parentId=17&pageno=9> (accessed 17 May 2011).

<sup>99</sup> Jin is Chinese Unit of Measurement which is used to measure the mass of objects. 1 jin is equal to 500g.

<sup>100</sup> Chao Gangchuan. “Great Historic Feat and Immortal Patriotic Epic: to Commemorate 60th Anniversary of the Victory of China’s Resistance War against Japan.” Website of The Central People’s Government of the People’s Republic of China, [http://www.gov.cn/ldhd/2006-01/19/content\\_164506.htm](http://www.gov.cn/ldhd/2006-01/19/content_164506.htm).(accessed 17 May 2011).

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

During China's Resistance War against Japan, there were countless editorials published in Chinese newspapers and magazines whose theme dealt with every aspect of the War of Resistance. However, calling on the whole country to unite to resist Japanese aggression, eulogizing the army and the people to protect our homes and defend our country, and castigating crimes of Japanese aggressors constitute the essential contents of the editorials. Characteristics of the editorials concerning the War of Resistance may be summarized as follows:

First of all, the editorials kept in step with times. The future of the War of Resistance had to do with China's destiny the moment the War of Resistance broke out in July 1937. The guidance of the editorials was definite. *The Future of the War of Resistance Against Japan, After the War of Resistance, Abundant Resources and Large Population*, on the one hand, pointed out that the Chinese Anti-Japanese War had an optimistic future, urging fellow-countrymen not to lose confidence in defeating Japan. On the other hand, the editorials analyzed why China would win the final victory from three aspects (common aspiration of the people, favorable international circumstance and China's vast territory, and very large population). The editorials grasped the topics that people throughout China were then most concerned about and helped the people understand the situation and strengthen the resolution to win the final victory.

Second, these editorials employed typical examples to arouse the officers and men's zest for serving China with unreserved loyalty and fighting heroically. In the early stage of the War of Resistance, the Kuomintang army made comparatively great efforts to resist against Japanese

invasion, such as during the Nankou defense battle and Baoshan battle. Editorials of this stage of the war eulogized the heroes of the two battles, at the same time encouraging the fighting will of the people throughout China.

Third, Japanese war crimes in China are too many to record. The editorials exposed the Japanese air force's wanton and indiscriminate bombing of Chinese metropolises, especially the cultural agencies showing to the whole nation and the world the savageness and cruelty of the Japanese imperialists.

In short, editorials relating to the War of Resistance served as a weapon wielded by men of letters in battle to defend China against Japan. The editorials were not only permeated with strong patriotism but also a self-examined the solemn and stirring history of that time. People can come to the conclusion after reading these editorials that success in the war is sustained and backed by issues of and concern for national dignity and the people's welfare.

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