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Heroic Resistance and Victims of Atrocity: Negotiating the Memory of Japanese Imperialism in Chinese Museums

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Abstract

This essay explores representations of Japanese imperialism and war in museums of the People's Republic of China. With the post-Mao reforms, there has been a general trend in such representations toward an emphasis on atrocity and victimization and away from the narratives of heroic resistance that dominated in the Mao era. Yet, the museum curators in these museums must negotiate between these two representations in trying to make the war relevant to a young audience generally more attracted to the pleasures of popular culture than history museums.

Any historical narrative is founded as much on forgetting as it is on remembering, and the narrative of resistance and liberation that is central to the mythology of the Chinese communist revolution in the People's Republic of China (PRC) has forgotten much—most obviously the role of the Nationalists in resistance and, especially in light of new forms of memory that have emerged in the post-Mao liberalization, Japanese atrocities. Even before 1949, the leftist political world was uncomfortable with representations of Japanese atrocities. Ken Sekine has argued that Ah Long's *Nanjing* (completed 1939), perhaps the first novel to deal in some detail with the Nanjing Massacre, was suppressed because its narrative did not fit neatly the heroic mode of literature being promoted in Chongqing during the war.[1] After 1949, in an effort to build an image of a strong and unified nation, propaganda and party historiography emphasized the heroic victory of the war and the subsequent revolution. War and revolutionary martyrs were worshipped for their noble sacrifice to the nation, but victims of atrocities—the "rape of Nanjing" or the medical experiments led by the infamous Unit 731 of the Japanese Imperial Army—did not fit well this prevailing heroic narrative.

Historiography of the Nanjing Massacre was consciously suppressed during the Maoist period.[2] Mark Eykholt explains that in the postrevolutionary period there was an official silence about the Nanjing Massacre and other forms of Japanese atrocities because of a desire to promote national pride and, in the later years of the Cultural Revolution, of a fear of losing much needed Japanese economic assistance.[3] References to the Nanjing Massacre that appeared during the Maoist era were motivated by a desire to make the Nationalists in Taiwan look bad. Ian Buruma suggests two reasons for this Maoist silence about Japanese atrocities.[4] First, there were no Communists in the Nationalist capital when the massacre occurred; almost all the soldiers who died in Nanjing were Nationalists. Second, Buruma argues that the eventual emergence of narratives of atrocities and victimization in the post-Mao period has something to do with generations: Those who suffer real historical

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trauma tend to want to forget it; it is the next generation, removed from the actual suffering, that does the remembering and develops what he calls a "pseudoreligion of victimhood."[5] Finally, the United States government, which supported the Japanese postwar regime and allowed the emperor to maintain his position, is also implicated in the silence surrounding Japanese atrocities during the war.[6]

In the PRC, Deng Xiaoping's economic reform program and the liberalization in arts and culture undermined the very ideology with which Chinese on the mainland had identified for three decades, space was opened for new forms of remembering the past and new forms of social identification.[7] In the immediate aftermath of the Cultural Revolution, the Wounds (*shanghen*) trend in literature, film, and art initiated a general culture of victimhood in China. In the 1980s, historians and journalists such as Dai Qing critiqued elements of the revolutionary past once considered sacred and untouchable.[8]

In more recent years, the fast-paced market economy has forged a world that is radically at odds with the ideals embodied in standard revolutionary history. In a world in which entrepreneurship is glorified and trendy products define one's identity—in the urban world of "bobos" and "neo-tribes"[9]—the revolutionary values of self-sacrifice and national collective spirit ring hollow and false. And yet, in a market economy in which migrant workers are treated as second-class citizens, peasants live in abject poverty, and the division between rich and poor is gaping, the class struggle message of revolutionary history is potentially threatening to the new state ideology. Forms of memory that downplay class struggle and emphasize national unity through shared suffering serve the state well in a new consumer economy founded on class distinction. Depictions of Japanese atrocities are morally unambiguous and serve to direct divisive class resentments toward an external other; national unity and shared national sentiment grow out of this "othering" of Japan. When China's economy and culture increasingly merged with the global and its "identity" became murkier, a nationalist reaction was almost inevitable. As the state's function shifts to facilitating transnational capital, the nation-building function falls into other hands. Arif Dirlik puts it this way: "Where World War II is concerned, memories of the past serve to promote nationalism that, weakened in organization by developments in capitalism, finds in the realm of culture and past existence a means both to perpetuate and to preserve a contemporary status quo that is very much in jeopardy."[10]

Since the 1990s, the discourse surrounding the War of Resistance has shifted away from the place of Japanese imperialism in the temporal narrative of liberation and nation-state building toward an obsessive attention to China's victimization at the hands of the Japanese; tragic tales of horror are displacing, though by no means replacing, the heroic narrative of resistance. Peter Gries has detected, in popular historiography and other forms of intellectual discourse in the PRC, a shift from a "victor narrative" to a "victim narrative" that took place from the 1980s to the 1990s, though he is careful to show that the two can sometimes coexist uneasily.[11] This attention to victimization serves more than just nationalist purposes; it has ethical and economic implications. China seeks a kind of moral upper hand in Asia in its economic and political competition with Japan; it wants to offer a model for a third kind of economic development in Asia, and its history of Japanese imperialism, which it shares with many other Asian nations, helps legitimize its leadership. The Chinese government's desire to assert an economic and political leadership position in Asia emerged clearly in the spring 2005 conflict over Japan's ascension to the UN Security Council. As one commentator put it, the tensions between China and Japan over history may have "to do

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more with the future than the past."[12]

Museums and memorials have played an important role in this move toward a discourse of victimization. In this essay, I look at four important museums / memorial sites devoted to Japanese imperialism and to atrocities committed by the imperial army: Memorial Hall of the People's War of Resistance Against Japan (*Zhongguo renmin kangRi zhanzheng jinianguan*), Memorial to Victims of the Nanjing Massacre by Japanese Invaders (*QinHua Rijun Nanjing datusha yunan tongbao jinianguan*), Crime Evidence Exhibition Hall of Japanese Imperial Army Unit 731 (*QinHua Rijun di qisanyao budui zuizheng chenlieguan*), and September 18 History Museum (*Jiuyiba lishi bowuguan*).[13] All four museums were established in the 1980s and 1990s. In their emphasis on atrocity and horror, they present something that is new in the exhibitionary representation of Japanese imperialism in China and constitute an important dimension in the larger new remembering of World War II and the gradual shift away from narratives in which class struggle plays a key role. With their emphasis on atrocity, these museums fit loosely into Gries's victim narrative, and they are at least partly the product of the rise of neonationalism in the PRC and particularly of the anti-Japanese strain of nationalism.[14]

"Not forgetting" (*wu wang*) history, in particular that aspect of history that is a source of "national humiliation" (*guo chi*), is a theme found throughout these museums. The historical overview section of the War of Resistance Museum, for example, ends with Zhou Enlai's famous phrase "to not forget the past is to be master of the future" (*qian shi bu wang, hou shi zhi shi*).[15] The phrase appears again at the very beginning of the Unit 731 Museum. Admonitions to "not forget" history frame the September 18 History Museum. "Not forgetting national humiliation" is a common theme in modern Chinese culture dating back at least to the Republican era, when intellectuals urged others to recall the memories of humiliation, particularly that inflicted by Japanese imperialism.[16] In the 1990s, intellectuals and the state conspired in a similar fashion to urge average Chinese not to forget national humiliation because people were indeed forgetting.[17]

National humiliation is a powerful emotional hook with which to bring citizens back into the nationalist fold from which the experiences of their daily lives in a harsh economic climate may be leading them away. Paul Cohen writes:

> In the final decade of the twentieth century, the problem with respect to the remembering of national humiliation assumed yet another guise. For the great majority of Chinese at the century's end the humiliations of the past were no longer a matter of immediate, personal experience. Since an important source of legitimation for China's ruling Communist Party was its part in the vanquishing of imperialism in the 1940s—and the closure this brought to the country's "century of humiliation"—the challenge facing patriotic educators, in the climate of revived nationalistic feeling and weakened faith in Communism that characterized the 1990s, was to fill the minds of the young with narratives of the suffering and humiliation of the imperialist interval in China's history and entreat them to "not forget." Indeed, "do not forget"—*wuwang*—became the mantra of the *guochi* writing of this decade.[18]

In short, the obsessive attention to "not forgetting" suggests the past's fall into

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oblivion. The heroic revolutionary past is increasingly at odds with the lives of urban residents caught up in the struggles of the market economy. The emotionality of atrocities is one way the state can forge national cohesion without stressing the potentially subversive message of revolutionary class struggle that was until very recently so central to its legitimizing myths.[19]

With the decline of the narrative of revolution, which dominated many museums in Maoist and early post-Mao times, new modes of identification are taking its place. James Edward Young writes that memorials and monuments—museums could be easily added to this list—are used by the state to "create a common memory, as a foundation for a unified polis."[20] State memory and individual memory converge, and the individual is made to feel at a deeply personal level a unity with the national community. The museums I analyze here clearly participate in this emotionally charged state-sponsored nationalism. The emotional dimension is not entirely missing from other kinds of museums in earlier modes of exhibitions, but it seems clear that in their emphasis on the suffering of the Chinese body there is a shift with these museums toward affective response. These museums fuel nationalist sentiment, and the trauma of the past gets channeled toward an enemy and expressed in patriotic rage. The museums link together lost territory and the physical suffering of the Chinese body politic. This specular attention to the suffering of one's fellow Chinese is a hook the state can use to "create a common memory, as a foundation for a unified polis." As such, these museums are part of a larger move in museums of modern history in the PRC away from messages of class struggle (or the unity of class struggle and national resistance), which can potentially be turned against the state in the context of market reforms and the reemergence of class divisions, toward more nationalistic themes.[21] In recent years, the idea of a common memory of resistance to Japan has been used to forge historical links between Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the mainland and thereby draw attention to their shared identity and political destiny. In the fall of 2005, the National Museum of China put on the much-publicized Exhibition on the Anti-Japanese Resistance Struggle of Our Taiwan Compatriots (*Taiwan tongbao kangri douzheng zhanlan*) (fig. 1), and the place of Taiwan resistance is much more prominent in the 2005 renovated exhibit at the War of Resistance Memorial Hall than it was in the museum's previous exhibit.

Sign at the entranceway of the Anti-Japanese Resistance Struggle of Our Taiwan Compatriots exhibit, held at the National Museum of China in 2005

But victimization, emphasis on "not forgetting," and national cohesion through sentiment are perhaps inadequate as framing devices through which to fully account for the emergence of these museums and this exhibitionary mode of visualizing horror and atrocities. The memory of Japanese imperialism and atrocities presented in these museums is more complex and the influences on it more multiple. Caught as they are between official (state), popular, and global museum forces, it is not surprising that these museums sometimes present conflicted views. To emphasize atrocity and victimization is a way to gain more legitimacy for the nation in its continued struggle with

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Japan over the past, as Gries argues, as well as over present economic might in Asia. Yet the discourse of victimization suggests a view of the Chinese people as passive and powerless, a view that does not sit well with present Chinese pretensions to national greatness. Moreover, overemphasizing victimization can serve to undermine CCP narratives of national resistance, which continue to be important parts of mainstream representations of the revolutionary past. The heroic resistance model, conversely, ties in with a view of Chinese national character as strong, but it also suggests an outmoded ideology irrelevant to China's globalizing present and future. Museums devoted to Japanese imperialism must find ways to negotiate between these discourses.

Museum curators also struggle to balance the integrity of their exhibitions with new technologies that are also vehicles for the vibrant popular culture in the world outside the museum walls and that bring with them new modes of spectatorship and relationships with history. From the perspective of museum curators, the emphasis on atrocities and horror in these museums is perhaps motivated as much by a need to accommodate popular culture as by victim narratives and anti-Japanese nationalism. Atrocities make for good visual copy, allowing museums to compete with popular culture for the minds—and yuan—of the people. Atrocities offer a kind of voyeuristic pleasure to visitors that may not be unlike that of watching horror films. In these museums, the archival and documentary impulse, exhibited through "authentic artifacts" and photographs, competes with newer technologies designed to popularize the message. Drawing from Susan Sontag, we might suggest that museums of Japanese atrocities serve ultimately to numb the senses to horror, creating a need for even greater visual stimulation.[22] The modern Chinese writer Lu Xun (1881–1936) would no doubt concur; like the morally indifferent spectators of the execution in the slide that changed his career, visitors to museums of horror might derive pleasure from the viewing of suffering. Popular and visual culture would seem to have led museums inevitably toward emphasizing visual depictions of horror and its pleasures.

The remembering and re-remembering of World War II are, of course, not something peculiar to the PRC; it is a vast international enterprise. Ken Burns's recently broadcast film documentary, *The War*, is but the tip of the iceberg of a mammoth industry of recollecting the war in the West. Museums and memorial sites are an important part of this remembering. There are, for instances, hundreds of museums worldwide devoted to the Holocaust.[23] Many more offer overviews of the war (e.g., the National World War II Museum, New Orleans), commemorate specific battles (e.g., Museum of the Battle of the Bulge, La Roche, Belgium), or offer alternative memories of the war (e.g., Japanese American National Museum, Los Angeles). The new memories of the war in the PRC must be seen also in the larger context of the "new remembering" of the war throughout Asia, where political changes have opened up space for new forms of representing the war.[24] In Hong Kong, for example, perhaps both influenced by trends on the mainland and motivated by a new-found sense of local pride, museums and memorial sites, such as the Museum of Coastal Defence, have recently emphasized in their exhibits Hong Kong's heroic resistance against the Japanese, particularly that of the Hong Kong-Kowloon Independent Company (aka Dongjiang Guerilla Force) and the Hong Kong Volunteers. In Taiwan, the question of resistance during the war is closely intertwined with identity politics. Exhibitions that take a KMT Sino-centric approach (e.g., National Military Museum in Taipei) tend to emphasize resistance activities; those that lean toward the DPP and its notions of Taiwanese identity (e.g., February 28 Museum in Taipei) tend to have a much more

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favorable view of Japanese occupation and therefore place less stress on resistance.

Chinese atrocity museums and their exhibitions are influenced by global trends in memorializing the past,[25] and in particular by Holocaust museums and the global rise of victimization narratives, as well as by changes in how World War II is being remembered globally. Buruma points out that at least some of the impetus behind recent PRC remembering of Japanese atrocities has been spurred by efforts in the Chinese diaspora community, especially in the United States.[26] There is certainly evidence to suggest that Chinese museum and memorial designers and curators were highly conscious of the precedent of Holocaust museums and thought of their projects in terms of global remembering of human tragedies. Qi Kang, for instance, compares his design of the Nanjing Massacre Museum to Holocaust museums in the West.[27] The editor of a book about the Unit 731 Crimes Evidence Exhibition Hall links the Nanjing Massacre, Auschwitz, and the activities of Unit 731.[28] This linking of atrocities on Chinese soil with those committed in Nazi Germany suggests a way out of the bind that has characterized Chinese views of Japanese atrocities.[29] That horror has occurred elsewhere and that this horror is memorialized in museums around the world somehow makes it all right for Chinese to make public this shameful chapter in their past. It also gives legitimacy to their historical claims vis-à-vis Japanese denials: If it is not acceptable to deny the Holocaust, it is also not acceptable for people to deny the Nanjing Massacre or the experiments at Unit 731.

Victimization narratives are thus not unique to China. "In a curious way," writes Ian Buruma, "the Jewish Holocaust has been an inspiration for others. For almost every community, be it a nation or a religious or ethnic or sexual minority, has a bone to pick with history. All have suffered wrongs, and to an increasing and in my view alarming extent, all want these wrongs to be recognized, publicly, ritually, and sometimes financially."[30] In short, the emergence of atrocity museums and the memory of suffering must be looked at not solely in terms of the emergence of neonationalism and victim narratives; equally significant in shaping the memory of this past are global trends in museology and the changing technology of museum display and its relation to popular culture.

Mao Era Museums and Their Treatment of the War of Resistance Against Japan

To set the context for appreciating the post-Mao changes in how the War of Resistance Against Japan is represented, it might be helpful to first see how the war was depicted in the Mao-era in general and Mao-era museums in particular. The war played a key role in the narrative of the communist revolution propagated in the PRC. The war years have been portrayed as the pivotal period in the revolutionary movement that allowed the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to emerge from the shadows and become a legitimate claimant to political hegemony in China. And because Mao Zedong wrote most of his theoretical works during the war, the period (as well as the place where the party spent most of it—Yan'an) has also been presented as the sacred origins of Mao Zedong Thought, which dominated the ideological realm of the PRC from its founding in 1949 to Mao's death in 1976. During the war itself, rhetoric of resistance to Japan gave the CCP legitimacy in its struggle for political control with the Nationalist Party. In the postrevolutionary period, the war occupied a critical place in CCP narratives of modern Chinese history—as the denouement, if you like, in the transformation from feudal darkness and imperialist humiliation to enlightenment and national sovereignty, the war was central to shaping the party's role in the liberational tale that was key to its legitimizing mythology.[31]

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The centrality of the war period is apparent in a variety of cultural forms, perhaps most obviously films.[32] But one need go no further than the Chinese national anthem to find the importance of the war to CCP legitimizing narratives.[33] Although written in 1935 before the outbreak of the war, the song was something of a rallying cry for national resistance during the war. As the national anthem in the postrevolutionary period, it expresses both "liberation" rhetoric ("you who refuse to be slaves") and the theme of "unity" in the struggle for national sovereignty ("millions of hearts with one mind"). The war becomes, in these and other examples, the pivotal period in the narrative of liberation and the establishment of a national polity.[34]

In the Military Museum and the Museum of the Chinese Revolution (both developed in the late 1950s and opened to the public in 1961), the war constitutes an important stage in the larger story of the victory of the revolution. In these representations, the war is a pivotal period in the history of the revolutionary movement because it led to the emergence of the CCP as the legitimate political force on the national scene. Atrocities are displayed, but they occupy a very minor part in the larger narrative, which is centered on the role of the CCP, battles in which its armies engaged, and the CCP-led popular resistance.

Typical of Maoist museum and memorial representations of the war is the Northeast Martyrs Memorial Hall.

Front façade of the Northeast Martyrs Memorial Hall

Founded in 1948, it is perhaps the oldest such memorial hall in the PRC. It celebrates the sacrifices of those who lost their lives in the Northeast theater of the struggle against the Japanese. Until its recent closing for renovation, the museum comprised two main sections, one devoted to the War of Resistance and the other to the War of Liberation (i.e., civil war with the Nationalists). To my knowledge, it did not touch on atrocities such as the medical experiments committed by Unit 731 or biological warfare. Rather, it emphasized the struggle of heroic martyrs such as Yang Jingyu, Zhao Yiman, and Li Zhaolin. When I visited in the summer of 2004, the museum's basic exhibit (*jiben chenlie*) was closed because of a planned renovation.[35] In its place was a temporary exhibit that gives a brief overview of the Northeast theater during the War of Resistance. This temporary exhibit offers a sense of what the former basic exhibit must have looked like. It strongly emphasizes the resistance narrative and the heroic sacrifices of revolutionary and patriotic martyrs. It ends on a celebratory note, with paintings and bronze reliefs devoted to liberation and "turning over" (*fanshen*).

In the basement of the museum, however, was a new temporary exhibit called Crimes in the Light of Day: The Chemical Warfare Crimes of

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the Invading Japanese Army. The special exhibit was filled with gruesome photographs of piles of dead children, severed heads, and bodies disfigured by gas attacks.

One of many photographs depicting the horrific consequences of Japanese chemical weapons in a special exhibit in the Northeast Martyrs Memorial Hall, Harbin

The language of the placards is emotional. For example, the title of the second part of the exhibit is Diabolical Evil, Madness Enacted (*qiongxiong ji'e, fengkuang shishi*). The exhibit ends with the exhortation: "Don't forget national humiliation, revitalize China" (*wuwang guochi, zhenxing Zhonghua*), set on a collage of images of a strong industrial and military China.[36] The example of the Northeast Martyrs Memorial Hall shows us two modes of narrating Japanese imperialism: an older narrative that stresses the glorious memory of resistance and heroic sacrifice; and a new narrative of horror, atrocity, and victimization that is explicitly connected to China's future as a strong nation.

Memorial Hall of the People's War of Resistance Against the Japanese

The Memorial Hall of the Chinese People's Resistance Against Japan (hence, War of Resistance Museum) shows perhaps most prominently this same tension between the heroic resistance and horror and victimization narratives. The museum is situated in Wanping near the famous Lugou Bridge (referred to in English as the Marco Polo Bridge).[37] The museum was constructed in three stages (first stage completed in 1987, second stage in 1997). A third transformation, in honor of the sixtieth anniversary of the victory of the war, took place over the summer of 2005. Contrary to what I expected, the new exhibit, entitled Great Victory, downplays atrocity and places a new emphasis on the war as a key part of the larger global anti-fascist struggle; the war thus becomes a pivotal period in China's emergence as a global power.[38] I focus here are on the exhibitions during the museum's second stage. Because it is directly under the auspices of the Central Committee and the City of Beijing, the museum has solid financial backing and has become something of a national center for remembering the War of Resistance as well as for the promotion, somewhat ironically, of Sino-Japanese friendship.

In its second phase, the museum consisted of five principal exhibits. First are comprehensive exhibits, which present a chronological history of Japanese imperialism in China and Chinese resistance to it; these exhibits constitute the largest part of the museum and are displayed in several halls divided into multiple exhibition spaces. The style of display here is conventional, with photographs, texts, and artifacts used to tell a chronological narrative of imperialism and resistance. Second is the Japanese Army Atrocities exhibit, which includes displays on the Nanjing Massacre, use of poisonous gas, and medical experiments. Here the mode of exhibition emphasizes dioramas and recreated scenes. Third are the People's War exhibits, showing the heroic resistance of the Chinese people, with an actual tunnel simulating "tunnel warfare." Fourth is the Battle for Lugou Bridge diorama hall. And fifth is the Anti-Japanese Martyrs exhibit. The

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spectator is generally expected to view the exhibits in this prescribed order.

The museum shows elements of both the victor and victim narratives, but they are generally treated separately, suggesting the difficulty the curators faced in integrating them into a coherent whole. The Japanese Army Atrocities exhibit is primarily in the victim mode, whereas the victor narrative dominates the comprehensive exhibits and the People's War exhibit. The museum is thus fundamentally divided between a conventional emphasis on the CCP's heroic resistance to Japanese imperialism and an attention to atrocities and to suffering of the physical body. The comprehensive exhibits present a rather conventional view of the history of Japanese imperialism and Chinese resistance. To be sure, as Mitter discusses in detail, these exhibits differ from previous representations of the war in drawing attention to the Nationalist role and the role of overseas Chinese, emphasizing in the process patriotism above political ideology; but the CCP's role still dominates this representation.[39] The exhibit opens with a prefatory text set between ceiling-to-floor size photographs, one of the raging Yellow River, the other of a misty mountain scene—signifiers, clearly, of Chinese national territory. In the exhibits proper, the main narrative thread is that of CCP resistance, with large photos of Mao in his cave in Yan'an, oil paintings glorifying the CCP-led Hundred Regiments Campaign, and exhibits on the "people's resistance."

The People's War exhibit resonates strongly with the Maoist narrative, exemplified in Lin Biao's tract referred to at the beginning of this chapter. It emphasizes the primary role of the CCP in establishing bases of resistance, as well as the unity of the party with the people. There is a large, nearly life-size diorama of a northern village, presented as a typical setting for the "tunnel warfare" played up so much in Mao-era films and fiction. There are life-size figures digging tunnels as well as a model of a peasant home that leads to a secret tunnel spectators can walk through. Another exhibit glorifies the resistance of the CCP troops in the Baiyangdian area of Hebei. As a whole, the exhibit symbolizes the cooperation between the party and the people in resistance to the Japanese—a standard CCP representation of the war period. What is different from earlier Maoist representations, of course, is that the museum lacks an emphasis on the foundational influence of Mao Zedong Thought, the third of the characteristics of the war outlined by Lin Biao in 1965. The exhibit ends, predictably, with a collage of photos showing celebrations of "the great victory of the people's war."

By contrast, the Japanese Army Atrocities Exhibit is dominated by several life-size dioramas of atrocities. One presents a three-dimensional scene of the bloodied bodies of women and children set before a large mural depicting a battlefield strewn with bodies extending far into the distance.

Exhibition space in the Japanese Army Atrocities Hall

In the foreground, the diorama highlights a live child sitting up on the body of his dead mother. A commonplace in Chinese museum representations of horror, the severing of the most basic human bond between mother and child becomes the emotional hook to draw the spectator in. The exhibit also has a gruesome life-size diorama of white-coated Japanese doctors performing medical experiments on

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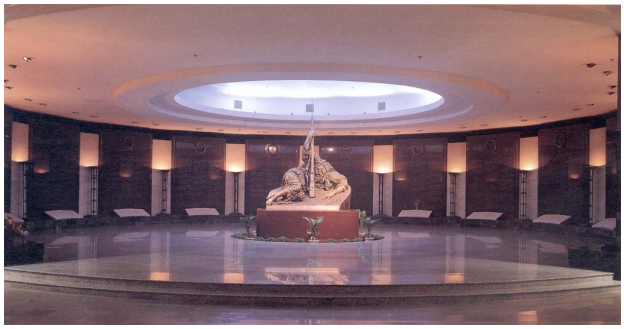
Chinese bodies that twitch mechanically. Apart from these eye-catching and dramatic scenes, the exhibit is composed primarily of huge, blown-up photographs giving testimony to Japanese atrocities. The displays draw attention to physical suffering and are meant to provoke emotional responses, including pity and a sense of outrage.

The Battle for Lugou Bridge diorama hall is a small theater with stadium seating. On the curved "screen" in the background is a huge painting of the Lugou Bridge area. In the foreground is a three-dimensional battlefield scene. This is the setting for a twenty-minute show that makes use of recorded narration, lights, and sound effects to bring the battle to life. These sorts of multimedia scenes are increasingly popular in Chinese museums, but this was, to my knowledge, the first. The museum curators developed it quite self-consciously as a response to the popularity, liveliness, and emotive power of other media, particularly television and film. It should be said that this incursion of popular cultural modes into the exhibitionary practice of this museum is rather limited in comparison with other museums, such as the Shanghai Municipal History Museum or even the September 18 History Museum. Moreover, the curators have limited this mode of exhibition to the diorama hall, the Japanese Army Atrocities Exhibit, and the People's War Exhibit; the comprehensive exhibits, which one could argue are the museum's basic exhibits, are far more conventional and academic, and the Martyrs Exhibit is vastly more solemn.

The Martyrs Exhibit, which is visually distinct from the rest of the museum, has a religious aura about it. It consists of one large circular room, which one enters through an open vestibule. The vestibule presents four carved reliefs of battle scenes, two on the left and two on the right. As Mitter notes, among the reliefs are a depiction of the five heroes of Langya Mountain, a standard object of worship in CCP historiography, and the heroic Nationalist defense of Haibaoshan. This acknowledgement of Nationalist patriotism in resistance to Japan marks, argues Mitter, a "radical departure from pre-1985 PRC interpretations of the war" and reflects an official state policy of reconciliation toward Taiwan.[40] Yet the ideological use of martyrs for nationalism and national unity is consistent with Maoist myth making. The circular memorial hall has at its center a bronze statue of an unknown soldier, whose fallen body is at once pulled to the great earth and struggling to prop itself up with a gun.[41]



Unknown soldier in the center of the Martyrs Memorial Hall in the War of Resistance Museum outside Beijing

This centerpiece coveys something of the ambiguity of the martyr image in Chinese revolutionary iconography: at once a victim of oppression and a heroic resister who struggles against that oppression, drawn toward death, the past, and the earth, but lifting himself toward life, the sublime, and the future. Martyrs are tied to the past, a memory of that past, but they are also guiding spirits for the future. The statue of the unknown soldier thus embodies the larger tension in the museum's exhibitions between the victory and victim narratives.

Surrounding this statue are fourteen red marble memorial steles (representing the fourteen years, from 1931 to 1945, of resistance to Japan). Below a wreath in relief at the top of the stele are written the names of

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martyrs—mostly soldiers who died during the war, including such CCP-canonized figures as Zhao Yiman, but also including Nationalist soldiers—along with a brief biography. At the base of each stele is a carving in white marble of an open book containing more names of martyrs. Its circular structure and polished marble floor, and the earthy tones of the steles and the central statue, give the hall a warm yet dignified feel. The carving of the names of martyrs on the polished marble steles recalls the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial in Washington, but the circular windowless room creates an enclosed aesthetic that is very different from the open-ended, open-air aesthetic of Maya Lin's memorial. As spectators enter the hall they are enveloped by the names of the martyrs and the memory of their heroic sacrifice. Despite the earthy color of the marble, the overall effect of the hall is colder than the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial, lacking the personal dimension that has given that memorial its power. But the memorial hall creates a very serious and somber mood that reflects the kinds of memories the curators no doubt seek to instill in spectators. Whereas the exhibits proper present "documentation" of the past, the Martyrs Memorial Hall asks for a kind of religious reverence and remembrance of those who have sacrificed their lives.

Significantly, the memorial hall commemorates not the victims of the Nanjing Massacre or other atrocities but the heroic fighters against Japanese imperialism. The museum concludes not with the victims of atrocities but with a conventional reverence for the heroes of national resistance. It opens with a similarly heroic and threatening image: a massive bronze relief of soldiers and others who resisted Japanese aggression tellingly titled Build Our New Great Wall with Our Flesh and Blood (*Ba women de xue rou zhucheng women xinde changcheng*), a line from the Chinese national anthem.

Bas relief in the entrance hall of the War of Resistance Museum

Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall: Remembering Horror

The appearance of the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall should be understood in the larger context of post-Mao liberalization and the emergence of new narratives of national identity and nationalism. The idea for a museum dedicated to the Nanjing Massacre dates back to 1983 and was clearly the result of interest in the topic at the highest levels of state government.[42] Qi Kang, a Nanjing-based architect who has made a name for himself designing museums and memorials, was the principal designer of the memorial site. The first part of the museum was completed in 1985 and included the main exhibition hall and the "graveyard grounds." In 1997, the site was expanded to include a new L-shaped entranceway that created a southern-facing gate and added several impressive sculptures to the memorial site. The site will soon undergo a $59 million expansion, to be completed in 2007.

Qi Kang sought to create what he calls a "holistic environmental design" (*zhengti huanjing sheji*) rather than a conventional museum building filled with historical artifacts. His goal was to use a "solemn language"

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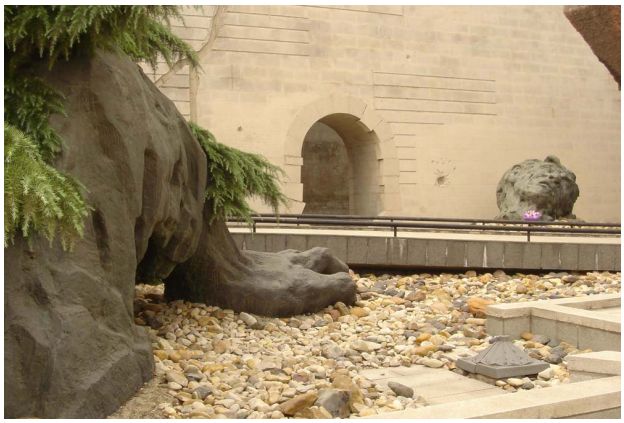
(*shenchen de yuyan*) to elicit emotion, and he states that the design was meant to create an "emotional space" (*you ganjue de kongjian*).[43] At the same time as he was working on the Nanjing Massacre Memorial, Qi Kang was designing the Yuhuatai Memorial, also in Nanjing. Whereas the latter memorializes heroic fighters for a noble cause, the former remembers helpless victims of atrocity and therefore required, says Qi, a very different aesthetic.[44] The symmetry and grand design of the Yuhuatai site convey a strong tenor of the heroic and sublime, and in that sense is similar in kind, though not in design, to conventional Maoist memorial sites for martyrs, for which the national model is the Monument to the People's Heroes in Beijing.

Main hall at Yuhuatai Martyrs Park in Nanjing

By contrast, the Nanjing Massacre site is asymmetrical and earthbound: There are no towering steles that soar heroically to the sky; it has a more minimalist design that self-consciously seeks to avoid grand architectural gestures of the sublime.

The memorial's aesthetic is somber and purposefully bleak and lifeless.[45] Nearly the entire memorial—walls, ground, steps, and the like—is done in cinderblock, presenting a uniformly drab color. Qi says he sought to give the feeling of "entering a tomb." Tragedy and horror are not represented directly but suggested subtly through the stark aesthetic. The memorial is radically different from anything done before it in the PRC. This may of course have something to do with the topic; heroic resistance or grand sacrifice, so commonly heralded in revolutionary history museums and memorials to martyrs, are just not appropriate for a memorial devoted to atrocity, and Qi Kang's strove to find an appropriate aesthetic to capture the horror.[46] There is little that is grand or heroic in the design of the outdoor memorial space; instead, perhaps influenced by Holocaust museums in the West, it conveys a bleak and desolate look that is powerful and moving.

The memorial is constructed on the site of a mass grave of victims that was unearthed in the early 1980s. It consists of three main sections: the L-shaped entranceway, the graveyard grounds, and the history exhibit. As you enter the square, a long courtyard leads to the site's most impressive work of art, "Disaster in the Ancient City" (*Gucheng de zainan*). In the background is an ancient city wall riddled with holes (as if from bullets and bombs). In the foreground is the half-buried body of a victim, his head severed from the rest of his body, of which only an arm and hand are visible.



"Disaster in the Ancient City," a sculpture at the end of the entrance courtyard in the Nanjing Massacre memorial

Above his head looms a Japanese knife, red with the blood of the victim below. Though the

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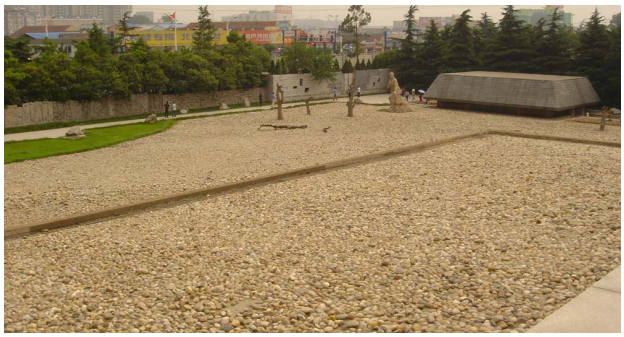
figure recalls similar sculptures at other memorial sites—for instance, the unknown soldier at the Longhua Martrys Park—it is a more despairing aesthetic. Cutting across the buried body of the statue is the "bridge of history," suggesting the horrors inflicted on China by history, but also passage out from beneath the burden of history. The bridge suggests that remembering the past will lead to a better future, a constant theme in PRC history museums and memorial sites. The bridge leads to a courtyard with a sculpture titled "The Footprints of Witnesses to History" (*Lishi zhengren de jiaoyin*), which consists of bronze footprints of survivors of the massacre. To the right is a wall on which is inscribed in bronze a long narrative poem about the massacre titled "Crazy Snow" (*Kuang xue*), written by Wang Jiuxing. The sculpture and poem were added to the memorial site in 2002 and 2003, respectively.

Unknown soldier statue, Longhua Martyrs Park, Shanghai

The most powerful part of the site is the graveyard grounds. Although the entire site has a gray and bleak look, the graveyard ground is especially so. There is no color and little in the way of greenery, except along the edges of the grounds (which Qi says was intended to offer hope within despair). There is something of a Zen garden aesthetic to the graveyard. One cannot see the graveyard from the entrance square; it must be entered by first mounting some stairs, above which is a sign that reads "300,000 Victims," and walking through an elbow-shaped passageway formed by cinderblock walls to each side. At the end of the enclosed passageway, a vista slowly opens up to reveal a landscape of scorched pebbles interrupted only by a few leafless trees and the statue of a mother who appears to be searching for her child.[47] Along the edge of the field of stones, the visitor follows a long stone relief, which forms a barrier between the graveyard and the outside world, depicting moments of horror suffered by Nanjing residents during the massacre. After passing by a memorial wall (labeled "The Crying Wall") inscribed with the names of victims, the path then leads through two separate "bones" rooms—exhibits of actual bones of massacred victims found at the site.



Graveyard grounds at the Nanjing Massacre memorial

The third and final section of the memorial site is the historical exhibition, which is housed in a half-underground building and gives an overview of Japanese imperialism in China and of the massacre itself. The exhibit opens with a statue titled "Mother and Child" (*Mu yu zi*), which shows a mother holding the limp body of her dead child, a sacrificial victim of the slaughter, and harkens back to the Mother figure in the graveyard grounds. The mother-child union is a powerful one, commonly used in socialist iconography. Behind the figure is a

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large photographic mural of dead bodies, above which looms the number "300,000." Clearly, the use of mother and child as the opening image of the exhibits is meant to suggest the innocence of the victims as a whole and to reinforce the barbarity of the Japanese for severing the most fundamental of all human relations.

The exhibition proper is presented, as are the vast majority of museum exhibitions in the PRC, in chronological order. It is framed quite clearly with the nationalist message of Chinese struggles against imperialism, which creates an interesting tension with the aesthetic of the more humanist graveyard outside. The historical exhibition sets the massacre in the larger context of Japanese imperialism and Chinese resistance to it, whereas the graveyard focuses on human suffering and on instilling remembrance of that suffering. This schizophrenic quality of the memorial as a whole is expressed in the site's name. The term *yu'nanzhe* (victim) gives a humanist sense of universal victimization and suffering, but the use of *tongbao* suggests at the same time that the memorial is still firmly within a nationalist paradigm. And although Buruma criticizes it for demanding "piety of the Japanese and patriotism from the Chinese" and for not offering an "atmosphere in which dispassionate historical inquiry can thrive," the memorial marks a step away from the kind of heroic glorification of martyrs that dominated the Maoist period and continues to be an important form of memorialization in the PRC.[48] Clearly, the state in China is not willing to give up its control over memory of the past; the kind of postmodern memorial Buruma seems to want—one that questions the very notion of representation—would threaten that control and is unthinkable in the present political context.

Museums in China are often used as active sites for memorialization. This is especially true of the Nanjing Massacre memorial. The day of my visit to the museum was July 7, 2004; needless to say, special ceremonies were held, including personal oral narrations by living witnesses. Museums freeze time and suggest ultimately the irretrievability of the past or that the past is an inert artifact; clearly, the active use to which museums are put in China attempts to overcome these perhaps inherent weaknesses of the museum project. Although this active use of memorial sites might suggest, like the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial in Washington, a kind of popular appropriation of a state-sponsored memorial, the state maintains control over how and when the site is used for public commemorations.[49]

The Unit 731 Museum: Authenticity

The Crime Evidence Exhibition Hall of the Japanese Imperial Army Unit 731 in Pingfang, Heilongjiang, was established in the early 1980s in a building that is part of a much larger site used by the infamous Japanese Army Unit 731 to commit medical experiments on thousands of Chinese (as well as some Russians, Koreans, and others) from 1939 to the end of the War of Resistance Against Japan.[50] In 1995, a new building to house the exhibits was constructed down the road from this site. In 2001, however, the exhibit was brought back to the original site, now renovated.

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Entranceway, courtyard, and exhibition hall of the Unit 731 Museum

Why did museum officials, after expending financial capital and great effort in the construction of a new museum, decide to return the exhibit to the original site? The new museum, I contend, lacked the power and authenticity of a site where the atrocities described in the exhibits actually took place. As a "site museum" (*yizhi bowuguan*), the present museum gives the past an "aura" it never could gain in a less charged setting.[51]

Much of the power of the museum comes even before you enter the exhibition building. From the main gate, you walk through a large expanse of greenless, empty space. The emptiness seems to offer mental space for the imagination of the horrors to be displayed in the museum exhibits. Its emptiness and sterility recall the memorial site at Auschwitz and are an example of James Young's "memorialized ruins": "As houses come to be 'haunted' by the ghosts (memory, really) of their former occupants, the sites of destruction are haunted by the phantoms of past events, no longer visible, only remembered."[52] Before even entering the building, the site creates a "mood of memory," a somber mood that prepares one for the horror exhibited in the museum proper.[53]

Inside the exhibition building, which housed the administrative offices of Unit 731, this mood is maintained by dark hallways and exposed-bricked rooms. As you enter the building, there is a prefatory hallway that sets the theme for the entire museum and memorial site. On either side of the hallway are bronze reliefs, in which are carved large characters: to the left, *qian shi bu wang*; and to the right, *hou shi zhi shi* (to not forget the past is to be master of the future). As discussed previously, the recurring emphasis on recalling the past in Chinese museum is all about moving beyond the past so as to make China a "master" in the future; recalling the horrors of the past is a step toward leaving behind the "century of humiliation" and marching toward a more glorious future when that remembering will longer be necessary. Implicitly, then, remembering humiliation is connected to the emergence of China as a global economic and political power.

The "Preface" to the exhibits proper says that the experiments carried out by members of Unit 731 make them "the cruelest fascist war criminals in the history of humankind." It gives the figure of 3,000 killed by Unit 731 experiments, and another 300,000 killed as a result of germ warfare technology developed at the site. "Our purpose," says the preface, "in exposing the evil history of Unit 731 is to use facts to warn later people, to allow history to call for human peace, civilization, and progress, and not let historical tragedies repeat themselves."

The exhibits themselves are presented with a dark aesthetic that creates a somber and serious mood. The thrust of the exhibits is to present authentic artifacts so as to "let history give testimony." The museum generally makes less use of dioramas and multimedia than, say, the Museum of the War of Resistance or the September 18 History Museum. Instead, it favors photographs and material objects—things that authenticate what happened at the site—such as hangers for human viscera, laboratory test tubes, saws, scalpels, and clamps, as well as prisoner identity cards. Much attention is paid to the testimony of former members of Unit 731. One room is devoted to "Confessions" (*qianhui*) of various Japanese military figures, who in the 1980s began to reveal the truth of Unit 731's activities in China.

There are graphic photographs in the museum to be sure, but for the most part the horror has to be imagined from the artifacts. This may be a conscious choice on the part of the curators,

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but it may also be because photographs and film footage do not exist. As the exhibits recount repeatedly, the Japanese destroyed much of the Pingfang site at the end of the war in order to eliminate evidence of their crimes. The ruins, we are told in one museum catalogue, are "evidence of the Japanese army's germ warfare crimes, and evidence of the Japanese army's destruction of evidence." Graphic dioramas are few in the museum. One shows Japanese doctors performing medical experiments; another, called the Erdaogou Plague Scene, depicts a bubonic plague attack on the village of Erdaogou. The nearly life-size diorama is in two parts, with the spectator walkway running between them: To the left is a dead figure with two mourners by its side, an older woman mourns from the door of their hovel of a home; to the right a corpse is being carried away on a stretcher. The horror is rather muted. The diorama ends with a list of the names of those known to have died in the attack.

In comparison with many other new museums in China, multimedia is also used sparingly. There is, however, a small film auditorium, which continuously projects a documentary about Unit 731. On the wall of the auditorium is written "Do not forget national humiliation." The film uses fictionalized scenes as well as documentary photos and is not easy viewing. When I visited the museum in the summer of 2004, a young woman, a Korean I believe, suddenly ran out of the viewing room and vomited in the hallway.

Like some of the other museums discussed here, the Unit 731 Museum has several exhibits devoted to memorialization. One room is called "Remember Us," a kind of memorial hall consisting of a plaster structure made to look like stone with a flame cutting through it; below is a wreath and a plaque, which tells us that the victims are mostly nameless. To the left and right of the room are the names of four known victims. The final exhibit is a long hallway, on the left side of which is the "List of the Victims." There are plaques (in stone, with black characters) for those nameable victims, extending down the length of the hall, some one hundred in total. The exhibit ends with text that echoes the preface, saying that some 3,000 died as a result of Unit 731 experiments and another 300,000 were injured in germ warfare produced from these experiments. The museum not only serves to help the spectator remember the past but also emphasizes the need to remember and the remembering itself.

Behind the exhibition building are "ruins"—the foundations of buildings that were part of the larger Unit 731 complex.

Ruins of one of the structures on the Unit 731 complex

There are, for example, the ruins of the building used for germ research. The museum has plans to develop these ruins into a more integral part of the site. At present, some of the ruins surrounding the exhibition hall have plaques informing the spectator about the site, but many still do not. As suggested above, this museum derives its power from the site and its ruins. Because of the power of the site, the museum does not have to recreate an atmosphere, like the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, which seeks to recreate the feel of experiencing life in the concentration camps.[54] This museum seems

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to self-consciously avoid a Disneyfication of horror and play up the authentic aura of its site. The exhibits are simple, the lighting is dim, and the display is mundane, and all lack the technological sophistication now often found in Chinese museums. Although these aspects may also be partly due to a lack of funds or of curatorial training, I think the curators are self-consciously avoiding the aestheticization of objects that were used to inflict unimaginable suffering.

The September 18 History Museum: Specularity and Memory

The September 18 History Museum in Shenyang was established in 1991 on the sixtieth anniversary of September 18, 1931, when the Japanese Kwantung Army blew up a railway bridge, accused the Chinese of doing it, and then used the incident as pretext for occupying Shenyang and southern Manchuria. The date is conventionally seen in the PRC as the beginning of the Japanese occupation of China and of resistance to it. In its early phase, the museum consisted of a single monument: the broken calendar monument, which I discuss below. In 1997, the city of Shenyang approved funding for an expanded museum, and the present museum was completed two years later and opened on September 18, 1999. As the catalogue puts it, the museum seeks to be a place for "patriotic and national defense education" and to teach people "not to forget national humiliation and to invigorate China" (*wu wang guochi, zhenxing Zhonghua*). Like other museums in China, this museum is active in educational outreach, organizing, for instance, a mobile exhibition that travels around to schools.[55]

The museum building is among the more interesting architectural designs of new museums in the PRC.

Main exhibition hall of the September 18 History Museum

It is situated outside the central core of the city on the site of the explosion that was used by the Japanese as a pretext for attacking Shenyang and eventually occupying all of Manchuria. Unlike the Unit 731 Museum, however, the museum's symbolic power does not derive particularly from the historical site. Instead, the building's design and the use of external space immediately around the museum give it power. What first catches one's eye as one enters the main gate is the giant stone calendar, riddled with bullet and bomb holes and opened to the date September 18, 1931.

Stone calendar statue in the courtyard of the September 18 History Museum

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The text on the calendar reads: "Around ten o'clock at night, the Japanese army blew up the Liutiao Lake section of the Southern Manchurian Railway. Under the pretext of blaming the Chinese army for committing this act, they attacked and occupied the army's north headquarters. Under orders not to resist, our northeast army retreated in pain, disaster befell the nation, and the people rose up angrily in resistance." Although it is intended to stress the historical importance of this date in Chinese history, the calendar also suggests that time has stopped and that China is somehow stuck in the memory of this national insult. However, by commemorating this tragic event, the museum will help China to flip the pages of history forward and leave the humiliation of that event behind.

Various pieces of sculpture appear around the plaza in front of the museum building. As at the Nanjing Massacre memorial, there is large bell called the Awaken the World Bell (*Jingshi zhong*); on one side of the bell are the words "do not forget national humiliation," and a description of the September 18 Incident appears on the other.[56] A bomb stele (*zhadan bei*) shows what looks like a cement support, an original piece of the Liaotiao Lake Bridge. On the facade of the museum building itself is a huge relief in bronze called "National Disaster" (*Guo nan*), created by the sculpture Department of the Shenyang Lu Xun Fine Arts Academy. The placard informs one that the relief, which stretches along the white facade of the wall of the museum, is inspired by traditional Chinese calligraphy.

Indeed, from a distance, the movement of the relief along the wall does suggest sweeping dark brush strokes on white paper. Only close to the relief can one notice figures of suffering victims of the Japanese attack embedded in the bronze.

Close-up of relief on the front exterior walls of the September 18 History Museum

The relief thus suggests, perhaps recalling Mao's phrase about the people being a blank slate, that the "people" emerge from writing itself; the people are the object/subject of history/historiography. As in many such representations in history museums in China, bronze represents the earth and the people are shown to be part of the earth, tied to the motherland; territory and the body politic are inextricably joined. On the facade of the street side of the building is another similar bronze relief called "Anger Rising" (*Fen qi*), meant to represent the spirit of resistance. It depicts soldiers heroically fighting the enemy.

Taken together, the two reliefs that cover the museum's outer walls represent the victim and victory narratives discussed at the beginning of this chapter. The last important artwork outside the museum is the "Memorial Stele of the Victory of the War of Resistance," which in

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its shape hearkens back to the "bomb stele" near the entrance to the site; it restores to an upright position the bridge support blown down by Japanese bombs on September 18, 1931. Like the two reliefs, these two steles (*bei*) convey the intertwined narratives of victimization and victory.

The major tropes of the external design of the museum and its outdoor memorials and sculptures are presented in more narrative form in the museum exhibitions. First, the Prefatory Hall (*Xu Ting*) echoes the two modes of representing the war and sets the context for appreciating the chronological exhibits that follow.

Prefatory Hall of the September 18 History Museum

The not-quite-rectangular hall is subtly lit with ceiling floodlights; it has a polished black marble floor and white plaster reliefs cover the four walls. There is a strong contrast between the dark floor and lighted white reliefs. The reliefs, we are told in a museum catalogue, represent the mountains of China, while the black marble floor represents its rivers, visually referring to the phrase *baishan heishui* (white mountains, black rivers), a surrogate term for Dongbei (i.e., the Changbai Mountains and Heilong River). Although the room thus has a local flavor, mountains and rivers are commonly used to stand for China as a whole.[57] On the floor near the middle of the hall is a four-foot-high black marble pyramid capped by a red "eternal flame" (not real fire, but some sort of electric light), representing the martyrs of the Northeast, "with their spirit of unyielding resistance and their eternal national heroic spirit." On the four sides of the pyramid is text in Chinese, Japanese, English, and Russian. We are told in the text that September 18 is "etched" in the hearts of the Chinese people and that it marks the beginning of fourteen years of Japanese occupation during which many people sacrificed their lives. Above the pyramid are fourteen blue lights (one for each year of occupation), which cast a blue pall on the red "flame" below. The visual contrast between the somber blue of occupation and the heroic red of resistance embodies the tension between victimization and heroic resistance narratives.

After the memorial hall, the spectator proceeds down a long walkway to the beginning of the exhibition proper. The exhibition opens with an overtly internationalist perspective: Japanese imperialism is portrayed as part of a larger global fascism and China's resistance as part of global resistance to it.[58] This internationalizing of the struggle can perhaps be seen as part of China's present efforts to "join with the world," but it also serves to link Japan's evil with the globally recognized evil of the Nazis. However, it strikes me that this is a rather token internationalism and that both the thrust and the details of the exhibition are solidly within the nationalist paradigm.

The exhibition is structured in six display halls: (1) Historical Background; (2) Outbreak of the Incident and the Loss of the Northeast; (3) Japan's Bloody Rule in the Northeast; (4) The Resistance Struggle of the Northeast Army and People; (5) The Whole Nation Resists, the Northeast is Restored, and the Final Chapter of Japanese Imperialism; and (6) Let History Be a Mirror, Hope for Peace, and Be on Guard Against the Return of Japanese Militarism. As is almost universal in Chinese history museums, the material is presented chronologically. The

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exhibits make conventional use of photographs, texts, and maps; but more than the other museums discussed in this chapter, they employ innovative exhibitionary techniques that reveal the influences of popular and visual culture. What stand out in the museum are its numerous models, dioramas, and multimedia displays. History and atrocity are offered as visual and dramatic spectacles for the visitor. For example, through cracks in a wall, the spectator can peer, rather voyeuristically, into a life-size scene recreating a gruesome, though somewhat campy, Unit 731 operating room. By hiding the display behind a partial wall, the curators may be shielding it from younger visitors, but it also draws attention to the very notion of spectatorship. A "demonstration scene" (*yanshi changing*), a framed scene with lights and recorded narration that consists of the bones of corpses murdered by the Japanese in the infamous Pingdingshan Massacre of 1932, is also typical of the specular and visual quality of exhibits in this museum.

Music often combines with three-dimensional visuality to give many displays a highly theatrical quality. For instance, in the second exhibit hall there is a display of bronze statues of refugees titled "Sorrow of Exile" (*Liuwang hen*), which shows an array of citizens fleeing the Japanese occupation of the Northeast. The "citizens" include peasants, but also students, who appear to be doing anti-Japanese propaganda work.

"Sorrow of Exile" sculpture depicting refugees

The sculpture is clearly drawing on conventional historical memories of the Japanese occupation in which the image of refugees from the Northeast figured prominently. On the wall behind the bronze sculptures are the music and lyrics to "On the Songhua River" (*Songhua jiang shang*), a morose song about September 18 and the loss of homeland. References to songs—generally standard revolutionary songs—appear throughout the museum's exhibits.

In the section on national resistance to Japanese occupation, there is an impressive large-scale diorama called "Camp Song" (*Luying ge*).

"Camp Song," a large-scale diorama at the September 18 History Museum

The song referred to in the title of the diorama was written by Li Zhaolin, a general who wrote it during a particularly difficult period in his troop's struggle against the enemy. The song played an important role in Maoist narratives and earlier museum representations of the war (e.g., Northeast Martyrs Memorial Hall). The diorama, designed by Wang Jihou of the Shenyang HuaXia Exhibition Arts Engineering Company, recreates the scene described in the

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lyrics of the song.[59] The three-dimensional scene brings a highly theatrical element into the exhibitionary space. Musical and theatrical spectacle combine to form an impressive display, one that serves little to propel the chronological narrative of the exhibition but that seeks to evoke emotional resonances of the lost homeland and the heroic struggle to recover it. As a museum brochure puts it: "With the 'Camp Song' . . . as its theme and the vast expanse of white snow and dense white birch forest as its background, the scene describes the unyielding struggling spirit and high revolutionary optimism of soldiers of the United Army."

Among the more powerful dioramas in the museum is one of life-size wax figures of Japanese war criminals being tried in a Shenyang court in 1956. The twenty-eight wax figures are dressed in black, and their heads are bowed in recognition of their guilt; behind them is a collage of photographic images of Chinese victims of the war with soaring planes, exploding bombs, and huge plumes of smoke in the background. The diorama captures guilt and contrition in a highly emotional visual language. Coming near the end of the exhibition, it offers powerful testimony to the Chinese nationalist take on the fair judgment of history. The exhibition ends with the bronze sculpture "The Monument to the Chinese Foster Parents," a memorial donated by Japanese to the Chinese parents who raised Japanese children orphaned by the war.

"The Monument to the Chinese Foster Parents," a sculpture near the end of the basic exhibition in the September 18 History Museum

It shows a Chinese peasant couple with a Japanese child standing between them and looking up lovingly at his "mother." Obviously, the sculpture echoes the many images of Chinese mothers torn from their own children that are to be found in the museums discussed above. The sculpture portrays the Chinese in an unmistakably positive moral light; even after being horribly victimized by brutal occupiers, the sculpture suggests, the Chinese still had compassion for the children of their oppressors and raised them, with presumably superior Chinese moral standards.

The Concluding Remarks to the exhibition are rather revealing. The text reads:

> As we are about to leave the exhibition room, everyone's heart is dripping blood, and every drop of blood seems to congeal into a

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> question mark: How could Japanese imperialism dare to lift a butcher's knife against our great and vast China? Every photo here forms a chain of ironclad facts, but how can there be people who still refuse to confront them, or who even distort those facts, or rewrite them? [It is said that] "if you're backward, you will be beaten," but why are we backward? The faces of the deceased presented here are all crying out [*nahan*]. What do their cries tell us? Do they tell us: "A people/nation that forgets its heroes is a degenerate one"? Do they also tell us: "If you forget suffering, suffering may once again knock on the nation's doors"? Do they tell us: "It begins with me, with the present"? Or do they tell us: "To revive China, everyone bears responsibility"?

The interrogative mode here seems a rather empty nod to a more postmodern sensibility, and the museum concludes with a bald assertion of the facts of Japanese aggression in China. Of all the museums discussed here, the September 18 History Museum bends the most to the demands of popular nationalism, popular culture, and the spectacle.

Conclusion

Threatened as they are by popular culture and caught between official rhetoric and the demands of the cultural marketplace, museums try desperately to be relevant in contemporary Chinese society. One way they can do this is through the nationalist representation of horror and atrocity. In their attention to victimization, atrocity, and suffering, these museums are primarily motivated by a desire to evoke nationalist sentiments; they both appeal to a latent nationalism and help to shape it. In this chapter, I have looked at four museums devoted to Japanese imperialism and atrocities committed during Japan's fourteen-year occupation of China. They differ in their modes of representation: the conventionality of the War of Resistance Memorial Hall, the minimalist humanism of the Nanjing Massacre Memorial, the "authenticity" of the Unit 731 Museum, and the spectacle of the September 18 History Museum. Despite their differences, they share a tension between emphasis on suffering and victimization, on the one hand, and heroic resistance and victory, on the other.

Together, these two principal modes of representing the War of Resistance Against Japan are at odds, but they also work hand in hand and need each other. Although there is plenty of attention in these museums to the role of the CCP in leading resistance to Japan, this is not their primary message. Rather, they seek to involve the visitor in a shared history of national suffering and, perhaps most important, of overcoming that suffering. It goes without saying that museums are not the only forms of remembering this national suffering (the popular histories discussed by Gries and historical Web sites are two other important modes), but they are, with their imposing architecture, "authentic" physical artifacts, and close association with the state, a particularly important and powerful one.

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[1] See Ken Sekine, "Verbose Silence in 1939 Chongqing: Why Ah Long's *Nanjing* Could Not Be Published." MCLC Resource Center, 2004. The novel was first published as *Nanjing xueji* (The bloody sacrifice of Nanjing) (Beijing: Renmin wenxue, 1987).

[2] The online China News Digest Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall has published an English translation of a 1962 work called Japanese Imperialism and the Massacre in Nanjing. The translator, Robert Gray, writes in the introduction that "In 1962, scholars at Nanjing University's Department of History (Japanese history section) wrote the book *Japanese Imperialism and the Massacre in Nanjing* (*Riben diguozhuyi zai Nanjing de datusha*) based on extensive materials they uncovered during a two-year investigation into the Nanjing Massacre. After it was written, the book was labeled a classified document (*neibu ziliao*) and could not be published openly."

[3] Mark Eykholt, "Aggression, Victimization, and Chinese Historiography of the Nanjing Massacre," in *The Nanjing Massacre in History and Historiography*, ed. Joshua Fogel (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 11–69.

[4] Ian Buruma, "The Joys and Perils of Victimhood," *New York Review of Books* (April 8, 1999), 4–9.

[5] The fact that the *hibakusha*, the victims of the atomic bombing, are at the forefront of remembering the war and of the peace movement in Japan, would suggest that Buruma's remarks are not universally true.

[6] E.g., see Sheldon H. Harris, *Factories of Death: Japanese Biological Warfare, 1932–1945, and the American Cover-Up* (New York: Routledge, 2002).

[7] Mitter suggests that as the Maoist ideology and its pivotal historical moments lost resonance for the Chinese people in the post-Mao era: "In looking for a theme to inspire unity, the leadership was forced to turn to the cataclysmic event of the century, War of Resistance to Japan." See Mitter, "Behind the Scenes at the Museum," 280. To highlight the point, Mitter compares the War of Resistance museum representation with that of the older Chinese Military Museum (*Zhongguo Junshi Bowuguan*), which stresses in its treatment of the war the struggle between "Communist virtue and Nationalist evil" (p. 282). Mitter implies that prior to the Deng era, the War of Resistance did not play an important role in myth making and political legitimization, which is not the case. However, there certainly was a renewed attention to the war and new forms of remembering it in the post-Mao era, which I take to be Mitter's principal point.

[8] I have in mind Dai Qing's work on the Wang Shiwei and Chu Anping incidents in Yan'an. See Dai Qing, *Wang Shiwei and "Wild Lilies": Rectification and Purges in the Chinese Communist Party, 1942–1944* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1994).

[9] For a discussion of the culture of "bobos" (bourgeois bohemians) and "neo-tribes" in China, see Jing Wang, "Bourgeois Bohemians in China? Neo-Tribes and the Urban Imaginary," *China Quarterly* 183 (September 2005): 532–48.

[10] Arif Dirlik, "'Trapped in History' on the Way to Utopia: East Asia's Great War Fifty Years Later," in Perilous Memories, in *Perilous*

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Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s), ed. T. Fujitana, Geoffrey White, and Lisa Yoneyama (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2001), 311.

[11] Peter Gries, *China's New Nationalism: Pride, Politics, and Diplomacy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 43–52.

[12 Eric Johnston, "Political, Economic Rivalries Blamed: History Not Key Issue," *Japan Times*, April 19, 2005.

[13] There are other museums in China that deal with Japanese atrocities, e.g., the Pingdingshan Massacre Museum (in Fushun, Liaoning), the Northeast Occupation Hall at the Manchukuo Palace (Changchun, Jilin), and the Northeast Martyrs Memorial Hall (Harbin). The former, established in 1972, promotes itself as the museum that represents the history of Japan's "first" massacre on Chinese soil. In September 1932, Japanese soldiers slaughtered 3,000 villagers at the foot of Pingding Mountain. More recently, a private War of Resistance Museum opened outside Chengdu. Initiated and financed by a local entrepreneur, Fan Jianchuan, the museum, which is part of a complex of museums that includes exhibition halls devote to the Cultural Revolution, is billed as the largest private museum in China. Interestingly, this private museum does not construct clear historical narratives in the same explicit way that most state museums do.

[14] A slew of scholarly books published in recent years focuses on the topic of neonationalism in the PRC. In addition to Gries, *China's New Nationalism*, see Lowell Dittmer and Samuel S. Kim, eds., *China's Quest for National Identity* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University, 1993); Yingjie Guo, *Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary China: The Search for National Identity under Reform* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004); and Jonathan Unger, ed., *Chinese Nationalism* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1996).

[15] From "*ZhongRi liangguo renmin yinggai shishi daidai youhao xiaqu*" (The people of China and Japan should be friends generation after generation), a speech given on September 15, 1972, during the visit of the Japanese prime minister to China. The phrase originates from the *Zhanguo ce* (Chronicle of the Warring States).

[16] See Paul A. Cohen, "Remembering and Forgetting: National Humiliation in Twentieth-Century China," *Twentieth-Century China* 27, no. 2 (April 2002): 1–39. Karl Gerth's study of the relative failure of the "national products" movement in Republican China would suggest that average urban Chinese were indeed forgetting about national humiliation and were more concerned with daily survival or with enjoying foreign consumer products. See Karl Gerth, *China Made: Consumer Culture and the Creation of the Nation* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003).

[17] Citing a 1990s survey of a group of fourth graders, Waldron points out that only 30 percent could identify Mao Zedong and only one could sing the entire national anthem, but all knew the Hong Kong pop singer Liu Dehua (Andy Lau). See Waldron, "China's New Remembering," 976. I should add that the state in the PRC has aggressively developed Web sites promoting patriotic education, many with a recurring theme of not forgetting. One such site is called Wuwangguochi.

[18] Cohen, "Remembering and Forgetting," 2.

[19] Haiyan Lee has suggested that "sentiment" is a key element in forging a sense of shared history and national community. See Haiyan Lee, "Sympathy, Hypocrisy, and the Trauma of Chineseness," *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture* 16, no. 2 (Fall 2004): 76–122.

[20] James Edward Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning*

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(New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1993), 6. For a discussion of memory sites, see also Pierre Nora, ed., *The Realms of Memory: The Construction of the French Past*, 3 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

[21] For a discussion of this downplaying of class in Chinese museums, see Kirk A. Denton, "Museums, Memorial Sites and Exhibitionary Culture in the People's Republic of China," *China Quarterly* 183 (2005): 565–86.

[22] Susan Sontag makes this argument in *On Photography* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 1977). In her more recent *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2003), she questions her original argument and asks skeptically: "What is the evidence that photographs have a diminishing impact, that our culture of spectatorship neutralizes the moral force of photographs of atrocities?" p. 105).

[23] In the United States alone, there are at least four major Holocaust museums (in New York City, Washington, Los Angeles, and Houston). For a general discussion of memorialization with regard to Holocaust museums, see Young, *Texture of Memory*, the opening sentence of which reads: "The further events of World War II recede in time, the more prominent its memorials become" (p. 1).

[24] For discussions of the new remembering of the World War II in Asia, see Arthur Waldron, "China's New Remembering of World War II: The Case of Zhang Zizhong," *Modern Asian Studies* 30, no. 4 (1996): 869–99; Sheila M. Jager, *Narratives of Nation-Building in Korea: A Genealogy of Patriotism* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 2003); the special "Asia-Pacific War: History and Memory" issue of the I*IAS Newsletter* (September 2005); and Jui-te Chang, 2001. "The Politics of Commemoration: A Comparative Analysis of the Fiftieth-Anniversary Commemoration in Mainland China and Taiwan of the Victory in the Anti-Japanese War," in T*he Scars of War: The Impact of Warfare on Modern China*, ed., Diana Lary and Stephen MacKinnon (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2001), pp. 136–61. In terms of museum representations, see Laura Hein and Akiko Takenaka, "Exhibiting World War II in Japan and the United States," in *Japan Focus*.

[25] For a discussion of globalization and its effects on Chinese museums, see Li Wenru, ed., *Quanqiuhua xia de Zhongguo bowuguan* (Chinese museums under the condition of globalization) (Beijing: Wenbo, 2002).

[26] Iris Chang's *Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), translated into Chinese in 1998, is but one example. The real impetus for remembering the Nanjing Massacre occurred in 1982, with the Chinese response to the textbook controversy in Japan. See Daqing Yang, "The Malleable and the Contested: The Nanjing Massacre in Postwar China and Japan," in *Perilous Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s)*, ed. T. Fujitana, Geoffrey White, and Lisa Yoneyama (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2001), 50–86. For an overview of new research on the Nanjing Massacre, see David Askew, "New Research on the Nanjing Incident," *Japan Focus* (2004). General studies of the Nanjing Massacre include: Joshua Fogel, ed, *The Nanjing Massacre in History and Historiography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); and Feifei Li, Robert Sabella, and David Liu, eds., *Nanjing 1937: Memory and Healing* (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 2002).

[27] Qi Kang, *Qin Hua Ri jun Nanjing datusha yunan tongbao jinianguan* (Memorial to the victims of the massacre by Japanese invaders of China) (Shenyang: Liaoning Kexue Jishu, 1999).

[28] Wang Yiting, *Baiyi e'mo* (Evil in white coats) (Pingfang: Hua Ri Jun Di Qisanyi Budui Zuizheng Chenlieguan, n.d.), 2.

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[29] Iris Chang famously made this link in the subtitle to her book (*The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II*) on the Nanjing Massacre, but Buruma suggests that this linking goes all the way back to the 1946 Tokyo Trials. See Ian Buruma, "The Nanjing Massacre as a Historical Symbol," in *Nanking 1937: Memory and Healing*, ed. Feifei Li, Robert Sabella, and David Liu (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 2002), 1–9; the citation here is on 7. In the United States, a group of Chinese Americans has formed a museum devoted to Japanese imperialism in China and is calling it the Chinese Holocaust Museum. See Buruma, "Joys and Perils of Victimhood" .

[31] Lin Biao's 1965 tract on the War of Resistance is typical of Maoist representations of the war period. Lin tells the story of the heroic victory of a weaker nation against a much more powerful foe. Lin explains this "miraculous" victory with three main points: (1) The war was a "genuinely people's war" and had the support of the people, (2) Mao's military strategy of "guerrilla warfare" was effective, and (3) the war effort was guided by Mao Zedong Thought. See Lin Biao, *Long Live the Victory of the People's War* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1965).

[32] War films were numerous in the Maoist era. Two obvious examples are *Didao zhan* (Tunnel warfare; directed by Ren Xudong, 1965;) and *Xiao Bing Zhang Ga* (Little soldier, Zhang Ga; directed by Cui Wei and Ouyang Hongying, 1963), the latter of which is currently being remade.

[33] "The March of the Volunteers" (*Yiyongjun jinxingqu*), with lyrics by the playwright Tian Han and music by Nie Er, became the "official" national anthem only in 1982, before which it was used unofficially in that capacity. During the Cultural Revolution, of course, because Tian Han was denounced, "The March of the Volunteers" was replaced by "The East Is Red" (*Dong fang hong*). For a discussion of "The March" and other songs from the war period, see Robert Chi, '"The March of the Volunteers': From Movie Theme Song to National Anthem," in Ching Kwan Le and Guobin Yang, eds., *Re-envisioning the Chinese Revolution: The Politics and Poetics of Collective Memories in Reform China* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Press, 2007), 217-44; and Chang-Tai Hung, "The Politics of Songs: Myths and Symbols in the Chinese Communist War Music, 1937–1949," *Modern Asian Studies* 30, no. 4 (October 1996): 901–29.

[34] Although my concern here is the discursive use of the war in postrevolutionary political rhetoric, I should point out that some Western scholars also see the war period as critical. As David Apter and Tony Saich argue, the war period made possible Mao's "Republic" and the "revolutionary discourse" upon which it was founded. See David E. Apter and Tony Saich, *Revolutionary Discourse in Mao's Republic* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994). Of course, the war was always only a chapter in the larger narrative of liberation. However, I take issue with Rana Mitter and Arthur Waldron, who argue that the war was not an important part of Maoist constructions of the past. Waldron cites as evidence the absence of a central war memorial in the Beijing cityscape, and Mitter suggests that before the 1980s the war occupied only a minor place in historical narratives, such as that found in the Military Museum. Although their intention is to shed light on the new significance of memory of the war in the post-Mao era, Mitter and Waldron give the false impression that memory of the war was a blank in the Maoist era. See Rana Mitter, "Behind the Scenes at the Museum: Nationalism, History and Memory in the Beijing War of Resistance Museum, 1987–1997," *China Quarterly* 161 (2000): 278–93; and Andrew Waldron, "China's New Remembering."

[35] Museums officials told me that funding was scarce, and they did not know when the

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renovation would begin, let alone be completed.

[36] More recently, in the summer of 2005, the museum put on an exhibit in commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of the victory of the Anti-Japanese War called "The Ruins and Crimes of the Harbin Police Headquarters of the Manchukuo Puppet Regime."

[37] For a discussion of this museum, see Mitter, "Behind the Scenes at the Museum." For an excellent discussion of the historical resonances of the site of the Lugou Bridge, see James A. Flath, "Setting Moon and Rising Nationalism: Lugou Bridge as Monument and Memory," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 10, no. 2 (2004): 175–92. I also used the following museum publication: *Zhongguo renmin kangri zhanzheng jinianguan* (Memorial of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against the Japanese) (Beijing: Zhongguo Heping, 1998).

[38] The 2005 renovation substantially transformed the museum's exhibitions. Three special exhibits—the Japanese Army Atrocities exhibit, People's War exhibit, and Martyrs Hall—have been eliminated, though elements of each have been integrated into a single comprehensive exhibit, now titled Great Victory (*Weida shengli*). Great Victory is characterized by a new emphasis on the war as a key part of the larger global anti-fascist struggle. The war is still represented as a critical period in Chinese history, but rather than a chapter in the larger narrative of revolution and liberation, it is now a pivotal period in China's emergence as a global power. As exhibition placards put it, the war marks "the great renaissance of the Chinese people," in its transition from "weakness" (*shuaibai*) to "flourishing" (*zhenxing*). Clearly, the ideological impetus behind the exhibition's representation of the war is connected to China's new status in the global economy and its pretensions to global greatness. That the emotionality of the second stage exhibition has been muted marks perhaps a more rational approach to the war that is consistent with China's maturation as a member of the community of nations.

[39] See Mitter, "Behind the Scenes in the Museum." In a September 2005 speech commemorating the sixteith anniversary of the victory of the war, Hu Jintao made this recognition of Nationalist war efforts part of official party rhetoric. Moreover, the war is now commonly framed as a dimension of the larger antifascist struggle in World War II, which I believe is connected to the larger discursive project in the contemporary PRC of connecting China with the world (*zou xiang shijie* or *yu shijie tong gui*).

[40] Mitter, "Behind the Scenes at the Museum," 286.

[41] Mitter, ibid., also notes the innovate use, perhaps influenced by Western memorials, of an "unknown" soldier for the central statue in the hall. Although it may be true that "unknown" soldiers are not generally used in Chinese war memorials, they do appear frequently in revolutionary oil painting. For a discussion of images of martyrs in Chinese revolutionary mythology, see Kirk A. Denton, "Visual Memory and the Construction of a Revolutionary Past: Paintings from the Museum of the Chinese Revolution," *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture* 12, no. 2 (Fall): 203–235.

[42] Buruma suggests that the idea for the memorial was Deng Xiaoping's. See Buruma, "Nanjing Massacre as Historical Symbol," 8. Daqing Yang asserts that the memorial was a direct response to the textbook debates of 1982 in Japan. See his "Mirror for the Future or the History Card? Understanding the 'History Problem.'" In *Chinese-Japanese Relations in the Twentieth-First Century: Complementarity and Conflict*, ed. Marie Soderberg (London:

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Routledge, 2002), 15–16.

[43] Qi Kang, *Qin Hua Ri jun Nanjing datusha*, 7.

[44] Ibid., 7–8.

[45] Ibid., 8. The memorial won the Liang Sicheng prize for design in 2000. This was the first year of the prize, and it was presented to several architects for work done as far back as 1960.

[46] Qi Kang shows awareness of the difference of doing a memorial for Yuhuatai and the Nanjing Massacre memorial. See ibid.

[47] The sculpture is apparently based on a shot in the American missionary John Magee's documentary film footage of the atrocities.

[48] Buruma, "Nanjing Massacre as Historical Symbol," 9.

[49] Ido not mean to suggest here that this and other memorial sites are not sometimes used by people for the expression of local and personal concerns that are sometimes at odds with official state policy, only that these uses are ultimately circumscribed by the state.

[50] Although not exclusively responsible by any means, Ishii Shiro is considered the father of Japanese medical and germ warfare experiments in Manchuria. In 1932, shortly after arriving in Manchuria, Major Ishii established a factory for immune experiments in the warehouse district of Harbin, but for human experimentation he needed a more remote spot that could not be seen by the foreign community. He soon came upon the town of Beiyinhe, about 100 kilometers south of Harbin, where he established the Zhong Ma Camp (*Zhongma cheng*). This was used as a base for experimentation until 1937, when the camp was disbanded and destroyed after a prisoner insurrection. In 1936, Ishii was appointed head of the Water Purification Bureau, in reality a front for his experiments. In 1936, Pingfang was selected as the new location for Unit 731. It was completed in 1939, having some seventy-two structures. Until the end of the war, experiments in germ warfare were conducted on thousands of Chinese. For general information of Unit 731, see Hal Gold, ed. *Unit 731 Testimony* (Tokyo: Yen Books, 1996).

[51] Although Benjamin's notion of "aura" concerns works of art, I think it can apply to a memorial site as well. See Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections* (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 222–23. Holding an exhibition about horror at the site where the horror took place gives it an "authenticity" it would lose in a different setting. And although museums would generally be considered a form through which aura is lost, the "site museum" is an exception. "Site museums" are one classification of museums in China, and there are even volumes devoted to their study. See, e.g., *Yizhi bowuguan xue gailun* (General discussions of the study of site museums) (Xian: Shanxi Renmin, 1999).

[52] Young, Texture of Memory, 119.

[53] The term "mood of memory" comes from Edward T. Linenthal, *Preserving Memory: The Struggle to Create America's Holocaust Museum* (New York: Penguin Books, 1995), 168.

[54] Upon entering the museum, the spectator is given an identification card upon which is the name and life story of a real Holocaust victim. The exhibits, especially those on the second level of the building, give a sensation of the Holocaust. Philip Gourevitch has written that "violence and the grotesque are central to the American aesthetic, and the Holocaust Museum provides both amply. It is impossible to take in the exhibition without becoming somewhat inured to the sheer graphic horror on display;

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indeed, it would be unbearable to be defenseless in such a place. A flat response, however, is less unsettling than is the potential for excitement, for titillation, and even seduction by the overwhelmingly powerful imagery. The museum courts the viewer's fascination, encouraging familiarity with the incomprehensible and the unacceptable; one is repeatedly forced into the role of a voyeur of the prurient." See Philip Gourevitch, "Behold Now Behemoth: The Holocaust Memorial Museum—One More American Theme Park," Harper's Magazine (July 1993).

[55] See the website.

[56] Bells in Chinese culture represent atonement of sins and enlightenment. Both significances are at play here.

[57] E.g., two large photographs, one of mountains, one of a river, begin the Comprehensive Exhibit of the War of Resistance Museum discussed above.

[58] This position on the international nature of the War of Resistance was made "official" in September 2005 in statements by Hu Jintao commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the victory of the war.

[59] Wang's work has been primarily in stage design, but his company has also been involved in wax displays for Beijing's China Wax Figures Museum and Dalian's Gold Wax Figures Museum. The former is a temporary exhibit in the National Museum of China.

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