CROSS-CURRENTS
EAST ASIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE REVIEW

Japanese Scholarship on the Sino-Japanese War: Principle Trends and Achievements, 2007–2012

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Introduction

The year 2012 marked the fortieth anniversary of diplomatic relations between Japan and the People's Republic of China. However, as a result of the Japanese government's September 11, 2012, announcement of its intention to "nationalize" the Diaoyu (Senkaku) Islands, protests broke out across many Chinese cities, leading to a serious deterioration of Sino-Japanese relations. A September 2012 public opinion poll conducted by Japan's Cabinet Office indicated that 80.6 percent of Japanese citizens surveyed did not have favorable feelings toward China and 92.8 percent considered the state of Sino-Japanese relations to be poor.[1] Relations between the two countries had worsened not only because of concrete factors (like the Diaoyu Islands dispute) but also as a result of historical influences.

When speaking of historical influences in this context, one cannot avoid the topic of the Sino-Japanese War. Therefore, for the benefit of the reader, I will examine in detail the last five years of Japanese scholarship related to the Sino-Japanese War, highlighting its principle trends and achievements. Within the broad range and large volume of scholarship on the subject, I will focus foremost on the 2007–2012 period, although by necessity this article will also touch on pre-2007 scholarship. Additionally, this overview will introduce primarily Japanese-language, single-authored and coauthored books (monographs), collections of papers, and other single-issue publications; only when necessary will it refer to pertinent journal articles.

In Japan, there are two main groups of scholars who deal with Sino-Japanese War research. One group consists of scholars of contemporary Japanese history; the other group includes scholars who research contemporary Chinese history. In the past, exchange between these two groups of scholars was quite limited. But in recent years, some Japanese historians

have begun to work with Chinese historians to conduct and publish joint research. I believe that this type of scholarly exchange not only advances the development of Sino-Japanese War scholarship and deepens the public's understanding of the objective facts related to the war itself, but also may help improve Sino-Japanese relations.

Two different terms are used in Japan to refer to the Sino-Japanese War, namely, the "Eight-Year War" and the "Fifteen-Year War." One group of scholars maintains that the war began on July 7, 1937, with the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, while the other group of scholars contends that it began with the Mukden Incident, on September 18, 1931. Both groups agree that the Sino-Japanese War ended on August 15, 1945, with the conclusion of World War II. Those scholars who hold to the term "Eight-Year War" claim that the events that led up to the outbreak of full hostilities on July 7, 1937, including the Mukden Incident, the Shanghai Incident of 1932, and the North China Incident of 1935, are not inevitably or causally linked. In particular, they assert that the military clashes between Japan and China during the period between the Tanggu Truce of 1933 and the Marco Polo Bridge Incident should not be characterized as full-scale war. By contrast, the scholar Keiichi Eguchi supports his claim of a "Fifteen-Year War" by dividing the fifteen-year period into three stages: the Mukden Incident, the Sino-Japanese War, and the Pacific War (Keiichi 1986, 3–4; 2001, 9). However, it is notable that Keiichi believes that the Mukden Incident did not inevitably lead to the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War. In other words, according to him, the Mukden Incident and the larger Sino-Japanese War did not occur successively as the result of policies set forth by the Japanese government. In this regard, the viewpoint of scholars from China is categorically different. Based on Kazutaka Kikuchi's analysis of Chinese domestic factors—including relations between the Kuomintang (KMT) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the anti-Japanese National Salvation Movement, and so on—the period between the Mukden Incident and the Marco Polo Bridge Incident should be viewed as a period of preparation for war, not as an actual stage of the war itself. With this argument, Kikuchi offers forceful grounds for the idea of an "Eight-Year War" (Kikuchi 2007).

Additionally, what is called the Pacific War period in Japan is generally taken to begin with the December 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor and end with the August 15, 1945, promulgation of Emperor Hirohito's imperial edict of surrender. The research on this period gives almost exclusive priority and focus to the events and operations that occurred in the Pacific theater. As is well known, however, the Sino-Japanese War did not simply conclude after the

outbreak of the Pacific War. With these facts in mind, this article will also introduce the partial achievements of Japanese scholarship on the Pacific War.

Major Publications in the Area of Historical Materials

The Publication of Historical Material Collections

With recent advances in information technology, the work of digitizing historical materials has developed at full speed. In November 2001, the National Archives of Japan established the Japan Center for Asian Historical Records (JACAR). JACAR digitized the relevant documents stored in the National Archives of Japan, the Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, and the National Institute of Defense Studies, making them accessible online to the public. By April 2011, JACAR had made public over 1.62 million documents, becoming a veritable treasure trove of documents for research on contemporary Japan, the Sino-Japanese War, and Sino-Japanese relations. Simultaneously, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs began successively publishing primary diplomatic communiqués related to Sino-Japanese relations from the 1931 Mukden Incident to the end of World War II, documents that have become indispensable to research on the Sino-Japanese War. In addition to this, an unending stream of diaries of Japanese military and political figures from this era continues to be published, providing researchers with abundant historical data.

Memoirs, Biographies, and War Records

Among the memoirs written by figures involved in the Sino-Japanese War, the best known is Imai Takeo's 2009 *Sino-Japanese Peace Maneuvers: Recollection and Testimony, 1937–1945*. Imai's memoir had been published earlier, in 1964, under the title *Recollections of the China Incident*, and, by 1980, subsequent editions were being printed. This memoir, along with a book published in 2007 by his son, Imai Sadao—*Illusionary Sino-Japanese Peace Maneuvers: The Life of Soldier Imai Takeo*—both contributed significantly to our present understanding of the peace negotiations conducted during the war. Additionally, biographies, written notes, diaries, and memoirs of monks, antiwar activists, medical officers, nurses, and soldiers from the Sino-Japanese War era all reveal a multitude of roles and perspectives through which the war was uniquely experienced by individuals.

Other Major Research Achievements

Primers and Monographs

In Japan, few comprehensive monographs have been written on the Sino-Japanese War. Hata Ikuhiko's *History of the Sino-Japanese War* is one work that stands out from the others. After its initial publication in 1961, the book was revised, and expanded editions were being published by 1972. With numerous reprints over the last forty years, this book has been praised as "the classic work in Sino-Japanese War scholarship."

Aside from Hata's classic text, Katō Yōko's *From the Mukden Incident to the Sino-Japanese War,* Yoshida Yutaka's *The Asia-Pacific War*, Ikō Toshiya's *From the Mukden Incident to the Full-Scale Sino-Japanese War*, and Yoshida Yutaka and Mori Shigeki's *The Asia-Pacific War* are all examples of primers on the Sino-Japanese War and the Pacific War.

Kobayashi Hideo's *The Sino-Japanese War: From a War of Annihilation to a War of Attrition* uses the key terms "annihilation" and "attrition" to analyze the differing wartime strategies adopted by Japan and China. Ōsugi Kazuo's *The Road to the Sino-Japanese War: The Problem of Manchuria, Mongolia, and North China, and the Turning Point toward Conflict* analyzes the period from the Mukden Incident to the 1937 outbreak of full-scale war by examining trends and perspectives at the level of Japan's foreign policy and military headquarters. In *A Historical Inquiry into the Sino-Japanese War*, Akashi Iwao holds that the principle cause for the Sino-Japanese War was Japan's contestation with England and America over who would play the leading role in economic development within the Yangtze River basin. Interpreting the Sino-Japanese War from an economic development perspective is a relatively new concept. It most likely does not, however, provide an adequate explanation for the background of the Mukden and North China Incidents. Nagai Kazu's *From the Sino-Japanese War to World War II* is a collection of papers written on Sino-Japanese War topics, including the Japanese Army's plans to occupy North China, antagonism between Japan and England in their attempts to encircle North China, Japan's wartime Imperial Parliament, Japanese Army "comfort stations," and other issues. Matsuura Masataka's *Why the "Greater East Asia War" Happened: A Political and Economic History of Pan-Asianism* offers a relatively creative use of the term "Pan-Asianism" in its exploration of the origins of the Pacific War. However, using this term

alone to explain the background to the Pacific War's outbreak cannot avoid running into serious limitations.

Primary Achievements in Joint Scholarship

Following the acceleration of globalization in recent years, international exchange between scholars has become increasingly common. In 2000, Professor Ezra F. Vogel of Harvard University, Professor Yamada Tatsuo of Japan's Keio University, Yang Tianshi, a research fellow at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Institute of Modern History, and others organized joint international research conferences on the Sino-Japanese War, leading to the successive publication of four collections of papers over the last ten years (Himeta and Yamada 2006; Hatano and Tobe 2006; Vogel and Hirano 2010; Nishimura, Ishijima, and Tajima 2011). This joint research has involved comprehensive analyses of the Sino-Japanese War from political, military, international relations, social, and cultural perspectives with each of China's regions treated separately.

Within Japan itself, joint research on the Sino-Japanese War and the Pacific War has also made gains in the past few years. Among the results of this collaboration is the *Iwanami Lecture Series: A Comprehensive History of Modern and Contemporary East Asia*, edited by Wada Haruki, Gotō Ken'ichi, Kibata Yōichi, Yamamuro Shin'ichi, Cho Kyeungdal, Nakano Satoshi, and Kawashima Shin, which includes *Volume 5: The 1930s: The Search for a New Order* and *Volume 6: Asia, the Pacific War, and "the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere."* These volumes analyze the Sino-Japanese War and Pacific War eras from the multifaceted perspectives of East Asia's various regions.

Saito Michihiko of Tokyo's Chuo University and others have also organized joint research, which has led to several achievements, including the Sino-Japanese War research of Lu Xijun (J: Shakushun Roku), Akio Tsuchida, and Hideo Fukamachi, among others.

Okumura Satoshi, Yuji Sasagawa, and others have focused on the grassroots level, publishing two collections of papers that have generated much interest in scholarly circles. The latter is a joint research project with Japanese historians that analyzes the actual conditions of both Chinese and Japanese grassroots movements regarding warfare and society. This type of comparative research undoubtedly widens the scope of Sino-Japanese research.

Takahashi Nobuo's compiled and edited work, *National Salvation, Mobilization, and Order: The Politics and Society of Revolutionary China*, includes eleven articles that trace the main threads of society and revolution from the late Qing era to 1949. The collection includes an article by Duan Ruicong titled "Resistance, State Building, and Mobilization" that discusses the KMT's system of mobilization during the war.

The Coevolution of Modern China Studies: A New Platform for Area Studies, edited by Tanaka Hitoshi and Miyoshi Emako, contains an article by Maruta Takashi—"The Anniversary and Period of the Japanese Puppet Government and the Chinese Communist Bases"—that analyzes the relationship between political symbolism and mobilization, as well as an article by Tanaka Hitoshi—"A Historical Narrative of the Post-Revolutionary Era"—that expounds the significance of post-1949 historical narratives regarding war and revolution.

Military, Economics, Cultural Exchange, and Art and Literature

Concerning military affairs, Kikuchi Kazutaka's *A Military History of China's War Against Japan, 1937–1945,* is a comprehensive military history of the war, a genre seldom seen in recent years. It analyzes the battlefronts of the KMT and the CCP, respectively, along with the relationship of overseas Chinese to the War of Resistance. The Military History Society of Japan's *A Reevaluation of the Sino-Japanese War* (2008), offers a thorough analysis of the war focusing on the military, economic, (KMT-held) "white areas," intelligence, and other issues.

A book edited by the War and Aerial Bombing Studies Association (Arai Shin'ichi, Maeda Tetsuo, Ikō Toshiya, Ishijima Noriyuki, Nie Lili, and Ichinose Keiichirō), titled *What Was the Bombing of Chongqing? A Different Side of the Sino-Japanese War*, reveals the circumstances of the six-year-long bombing campaign against Chongqing by using information gathered from actual victims. Kasahara Tokushi's *The Japanese Military's War of Pacification: The Reality of the Sino-Japanese War* offers an analysis of the "Three Alls Policy" ("kill all, loot all, destroy all") that the Japanese military conducted in Northern China. Tobe Ryoichi's *The Japanese Army and China: The Dreams and Setbacks of Their "China Experts"* provides an analysis of the thoughts and actions of Sasaki Toichi and other Japanese Army "China experts" in order to probe into why Japan's China policies failed. Yoshida Yutaka's *Modern Historiography and Military History Research: New Possibilities* examines the Nanjing

Massacre and issues including war responsibility from the perspective of contemporary Japanese military history.

On the topic of economics, Kubo Tōru's *An Introduction to China's Economic History* gives a detailed overview of the trends and achievements of Chinese economic history from the end of the Qing dynasty to the 1960s and is an indispensable guide for research in economic history. Hanzawa Junta's *Finances and Military Affairs during the Sino-Japanese War: Research into Political, Economic, and Foreign Policy History of Early Shōwa-era Japan, Part II* uses the topic of currency to analyze the background of and processes leading to Japan's war with England and America for "financial hegemony" over China. Hayashi Kōji's *Modern China and the Birth of Banking: Financial Panic, the Sino-Japanese War, and the Road to Socialism* investigates the history of the development of banking in modern China.

Shibata Yoshimasa's *The Activities of Japanese Companies in Occupied Territories of China* and a book edited by Tomizawa Yoshia, Kubo Tōru, and Hagiwara Mitsuru—*Japanese Companies That Operated in Modern China*—each provide an analysis of Japanese firms that operated in China. Shibata Yoshimasa's *The Japanese Tobacco Industry in China: 1905–1945* narrates the business activities of Japan's tobacco firms in China in the first half of the twentieth century.

Much research has been conducted on the topic of cultural exchange, focusing primarily on the influence exerted by Chinese exchange students on Sino-Japanese relations in the modern era, the history of the exchange of motion pictures between China and Japan during the war, and other aspects of wartime cultural exchange.

Manchuria, the Mukden (Manchurian) Incident, Manchukuo, and Manchuria-Mongolia

In recent years, Manchuria has received particular interest as an area of research. Kawada Minoru's *The Mukden Incident and Party Politics: Fighting between the Military and Political Parties*, Kobayashi Michihiko's *The Collapse of the Party Government and the Mukden Incident: 1918–1932,* and Mori Yasuo's *The Japanese Army and the Road to the Sino-Japanese War: The Battle over the Military Control System* each analyze the background and events leading up to the Mukden Incident from the perspective of Japanese domestic political-military relations and its political-military system.

In 2003, *A Study of Empire: Principles, Types, and Relations*, edited by Yamamoto Yūzō, was the first to use the term "theory of empire" (帝國論). After this publication, research on the Japanese empire gradually became a field of its own. With the founding of the Colonial Cultures Institute (殖民地文化學會) in 2007, research into Manchuria, Korea, and Taiwan made great advances. According to my incomplete statistics, there have been over twenty monographs published about Manchuria in the last five years alone. The scope of this research is tremendously wide, touching on Manchurian history, society, culture, religion, literature, and other spheres.

The Khalkhyn Gol Incident, which took place from May to September 1939, has also received much attention from Japanese scholars. In addition to the work edited by the Military History Department of the Japanese Ministry of Defense's National Institute for Defense Studies, *Collected Historical Materials Concerning the Khalkhyn Gol Incident*, five other monographs on the subject have been published.

Kishi Toshihiko, Matsushige Mitsuhiro, and Matsumura Fuminori have edited the *Encyclopedia of Twentieth-Century Manchurian History,* which covers Manchurian politics, economics, environment, ethnic issues, and culture from the end of the nineteenth century up to the establishment of CCP political power in 1949. Containing over eight hundred entries, it is an extremely useful reference work.

North China and the Marco Polo Bridge Incident

In recent years, little research has been done on the North China Incident. After the publication of Uchida Naotaka's *Study of the North China Incident: Sino-Japanese Relations under the Tanggu Truce and the Crisis in North China, 1932–1935*, Mitsuta Tsuyoshi wrote *North China Politics During the KMT Government Era, 1928–1937,* which analyzes the political situation of North China during this era in the context of Sino-Japanese relations. Mori Hisao's *The Japanese Army and Operations in Inner Mongolia: Why Did the Kwantung Army Act Alone?,* along with Uchida Tomoyuki and Shibata Yoshimasa's *Japan's Occupation of the Mongolian Border, 1937–1945,* explores the policies that the Japanese carried out in Inner Mongolia to extend control over the region. Kobayashi Motohiro's *Opium and the Japanese Residents of Modern China* investigates the activities of Tianjin's resident Japanese population from the 1920s to 1945.

In recent years, no new research has emerged on the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, primarily because of the lack of new historical records pertaining to the subject. In Japan, the event itself is always called the "Marco Polo Bridge Event." While the words for "incident" (*shi bian*) and "event" (*shi jian*) differ only by one written character, their implicit meanings are totally different. Most Japanese scholars regard the Marco Polo Bridge Incident as an accidental "event." This conception differs completely from the position taken by Chinese scholars. Aside from this, there is always much debate between Chinese and Japanese scholars, and among Japanese scholars themselves, over who fired the first shot at the Marco Polo Bridge. Chinese scholars almost unanimously conclude that it was the Japanese military who fired the first shot. By contrast, a group of Japanese scholars holds that the first shot was fired by the Chinese Communists. Japanese scholars Hata Ikuhiko, Keiichi Eguchi, and Yasui Sankichi have each critiqued this "Chinese Communist conspiracy theory." Because more than seventy years have transpired since the actual event, the question over who fired the first shot will perhaps always remain a mystery. Now, with the Chiang Kai-shek diaries being made public and the publication of the diplomatic papers of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I believe it is essential to take advantage of these new historical materials to dissect anew the background and process by which the Marco Polo Bridge Incident led to the full-scale Sino-Japanese War.

The Nanjing Massacre

In Japan, the most controversial aspect of Sino-Japanese studies is the Nanjing Massacre. Japanese scholars almost all call it the "Nanjing Event" and do not use the term "massacre" (C. *da tusha*; J. *daigyakusatsu*), despite the fact that the International Military Tribunal for the Far East announced its verdict on the Nanjing Massacre long ago. Although the Japanese government disputes the number of people murdered during the occupation of Nanjing, it has acknowledged that the murder of civilians and other acts of plundering occurred. Despite this, even to this day, some scholars and politicians in Japan still deny that the Nanjing Massacre happened. These people maintain that China's claim that there were three hundred thousand victims is incorrect; by denying the accuracy of this number they seek to overturn the ruling of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East. Their studies of the Nanjing Massacre have already overstepped the bounds of historical research and gained an ideological quality mixed with heavy political agendas.

Other Japanese scholars have made use of the data from the International Military Tribunal for the Far East in addition to other materials, such as the diaries of Japanese military personnel who participated in the war at Nanjing, interviews with victims, and textual research into the number of victims during the Japanese occupation of Nanjing. Hence, since the 1970s, a debate has been under way between two camps of scholars—those who deny the Nanjing Massacre and those who acknowledge it. Hata Ikuhiko's *The Nanjing Incident: Construction of a "Massacre"* and Kasahara Tokushi's *History of the Nanjing Incident Controversy: How Have the Japanese Understood the Historical Facts?* are both extremely helpful in elucidating the viewpoints of the two camps, along with the development of the controversy between them. Hata Ikuhiko, who defines himself as a moderate in the debate, believes that the current Japanese "acknowledgment camp" is in a gradual decline, with no apparent successor for its representative leader, Kasahara Tokushi. By comparison, the "repudiation camp" has been gaining momentum, with the succession of leadership having already passed from Tanaka Masaaki to Higashinakano Osamichi. From this it is quite evident that more time is necessary for studies on the Nanjing Massacre to enter the realm of objective historical scholarship.

Biographical Research, the CCP, and Overseas Chinese

Biographical research related to the Sino-Japanese War concentrates mainly on three figures: Chiang Kai-shek, Wang Jingwei, and Dai Jitao. All three spent time as students in Japan. However, it was Wang Jingwei who parted ways with Chiang and Dai and established another collaboration government, ultimately dying in Japan without returning to his homeland.

On the subject of Chiang Kai-shek, Huang Zijin's *Chiang Kai-shek and Japan: Between Friend and Enemy* is a quintessential work, of which there is a Chinese translation.[2] Another work, *Chiang Kai-shek's Foreign Policy Strategy and the Sino-Japanese War,* is actually Iechika Ryōko's second book on Chiang Kai-shek.[3] Yamada Tatsuo and Matsushige Mitsuhiro's *Chiang Kai-shek Studies: Politics, War, and Japan* was produced by Japan's Chiang Kai-shek Research Society and is a compilation of articles written by seventeen scholars from Japan, China, and Taiwan. The three books mentioned above each make use of the Chiang Kai-shek Diaries, the Chiang Kai-shek Presidential Papers, and other newly available historical materials. Still, the number of books on Chiang Kai-shek produced in Japan, as compared to China and Taiwan, is very small.

From 2009 to 2011, three books on Wang Jingwei were published in succession. Shibata Tetsuo's *Cooperation, Resistance, and Silence: A Comparative Historical Approach to the Ideology of Wang Jingwei's Nanjing Government* and Tsuchiya Mitsuyoshi's *The "Wang Jingwei Regime": A Comparative Study of Collaboration* both make use of J. H. Boyle's and T. Brook's definitions of "collaborator" (Boyle 1972; Brook 2005) to compare Wang Jingwei's regime and the government of Vichy France, in an attempt to move beyond the former research paradigms that used terms like "puppet" and "traitor" to label Wang's regime. Horii Kōichirō's *Mobilizing the People: The Wang Jingwei Regime and the New Citizens' Movement* takes the New Citizens' Movement as its central point of analysis for examining the structural organization for population mobilization by the Wang Jingwei government.

Aside from the three books mentioned above, Masui Yasuichi's *Chinese Traitors' Trials, 1946–1948*, first published in 1977 and reprinted in 2009, records the process used by the KMT and CCP authorities to bring key members of the Wang Jingwei government to trial.

Monographs about Dai Jitao include Zhang Yuping's *Dai Jitao and Modern Japan* and an earlier work by Saga Takashi called *The Chinese Revolution and Da Jitao's Views toward Japan*.

Books about the Chinese Communists are especially scarce. One of the few books written on the subject is Zhao Xinli's *The Chinese Communist Party's Propaganda Tactics and Strategies regarding the Japanese during the Sino-Japanese War: Decoding the "Dichotomy" Seen in the Treatment of Japanese Prisoners of War.* This work uses CCP policies toward Japanese prisoners of war, along with activities of Japanese antiwar organizations, to shed light on one aspect of Chinese Communism during the war.

Regarding overseas Chinese during the Sino-Japanese War, Kikuchi Kazutaka's *The Asia-Pacific War and Overseas Chinese, 1937–1945: The Political Dynamics among Japan, Nationalist China, Puppet Regimes, and Overseas Chinese* analyzes the wartime activities of overseas Chinese living in Japan, Taiwan, Korea, and across Southeast Asia. Matsuura Masataka's *Shōwa-era Japan and the Reality of Pan-Asianism: Imperial Japan and Taiwan, the "South Seas," and "South China"* also builds its thesis around how the Nationalist government in Chongqing contended with the Wang Jingwei regime to win over overseas Chinese from Southeast Asia.

War Responsibility, Handling Postwar Issues, Historical Cognizance, and Reconciliation

Although the Sino-Japanese War and the Pacific War have been over for almost seventy years, questions related to war responsibility and the handling of postwar issues have still not been thoroughly resolved. The related issue of historical cognizance, furthermore, impacts the health and development of Sino-Japanese studies in the present day.

In 2006, the Japanese newspaper *Yomiuri Shimbun*, in order to summarize the spirit of the Hirohito era and the war, published one year's worth of articles related to the Mukden Incident, the Sino-Japanese War, and the Pacific War that not only described the process of events in great detail but also made unequivocal reference to the name of each person responsible for the war. Compared to studies in the past, this was a major step forward. However, regarding the question of whether or not Emperor Hirohito was responsible for the war, *Yomiuri Shimbun* pointed to stipulations in the Meiji Constitution that said the emperor held no responsibility whatsoever for national politics. Moreover, the newspaper expressed that Emperor Hirohito had from the very beginning done everything he could to avoid the expansion of the scope of the war. Based on this, the paper maintained that Emperor Hirohito held no responsibility for the war. On this point, there is certainly much debate. However, the fact that a Japanese media organization was able to conduct such a comprehensive analysis of the war, and was able to clearly name those chiefly responsible, deserves to be seen in a positive light.

Aside from this, some scholars are involved in analyzing the wartime responsibility of the Japanese media, recounting the historical facts of the Hanaoka Incident of 1944 and other instances in which Japanese businesses used forced Chinese labor, criticizing the Japanese attitude toward the use of "comfort women," and hoping to use legal means to resolve these issues. Other scholars have examined the postwar resurgence of Kishi Nobusuke (prime minister, 1957–1960) to political power, Koizumi Junichiro (prime minister, 2001–2006) paying homage at the Yasukini Shrine, the U.S.-Japan alliance, and Japanese historical revisionism to point out that the postwar generation of Japan should also share some responsibility for the war. There are also scholars who argue that Emperor Hirohito was responsible for the origins of the war.

Regarding the issue of historical cognizance, Hattori Ryūji's *Sino-Japanese Historical Understanding: Conflicts over the "Tanaka Memorial," 1927–2010,* deserves close attention. The author believes that the so-called "Tanaka Memorial," a document allegedly given to Hirohito by his prime minister in 1927 as a road map for conquering the world, was actually

forged by Chinese organizations in the anti-Japanese movement of the 1920s and 1930s. Many scholars in Japan believe that the publication of this book put a final period on the "Tanaka Memorial" debate. Just how Chinese scholars will appraise such a conclusion remains to be seen.

In his October 2006 visit to China, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzō Abe reached an agreement with the Chinese government in the form of a Japan-China Joint Press Statement, which stipulated, among other things, that joint historical research be conducted by Chinese and Japanese scholars. In December of that year, scholars from the two countries officially began their joint research work. Several years later, the group of scholars published research papers on interrelated subjects in their respective languages, which were then translated into either Chinese or Japanese. The Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs has already published the Chinese- and Japanese-language papers online, along with English-language papers related to modern Japanese history. However, I have regrettably been unable to find these research papers publicly disseminated in China.

The Japanese response to joint Chinese-Japanese research has been mixed. I believe that, because the joint historical research was initiated under the guidance of the two countries' governments, there might be some imperceptible inhibition felt by scholars to conform their views to their own countries' particular positions. Therefore, it is not easy for the two sides to reach a common understanding on issues of historical cognizance. However, I do not deny the significance of the joint research conducted by China and Japan. Because of this joint research, it has at least become possible for the two sides to understand exactly where their viewpoints differ. In furthering the mutual understanding of citizens of the two countries, this has far-reaching significance.

Of course, problems of historical cognizance exist not only between China and Japan but also between Japan and South Korea and between China and South Korea. In recent years some scholars have attempted to achieve reconciliation through dialogues between East Asian scholars, and even between European and American scholars; some of their achievements are published.

Sino-Japanese Relations

In recent years, Sino-Japanese relations have steadily deteriorated. And yet the governments of the two countries, along with the overwhelming majority of their citizens,

believe that the other country is very important for them. From 2007 to today, many monographs on Sino-Japanese relations have been published, touching on the interaction between China and Japan in the spheres of history, politics, foreign policy, economics, culture, and other areas, from modern through contemporary times. Aside from this, many recently published oral histories and memoirs of Japanese politicians and diplomats have opened the inner curtain to events that had been kept secret, also greatly benefiting research into postwar Sino-Japanese relations.

Some of the most helpful reference books on this subject are: *Chronological History of Modern Sino-Japanese Relations, 1799–1949,* by the Editorial Committee for the Chronological History of Modern Sino-Japanese Relations, *Chronological History of Contemporary Sino-Japanese Relations: 1950–1978,* by the Editorial Committee for the Chronological History of Contemporary Sino-Japanese Relations, and *A Biographical Dictionary of the History of Modern Sino-Japanese Relations*, edited by Nakamura Tadashi, Fujii Shōzō, Kubota Bunji, Tao Demin (J: Tō Tokumin), Machi Senjurō, and Kawabe Yūtai.

Conclusion

This article has introduced the past five years of Japanese scholarly publications on the Sino-Japanese War, the Pacific War, and Sino-Japanese relations. In closing, I would like to briefly discuss future prospects for Japanese research on the Sino-Japanese War. So far, Japan's research on China has maintained a relatively high level, in terms of both quantity and quality. However, following the first postwar generation in Japan, "China studies" scholars have progressively faded from the arena of historical studies. This, I believe, has adversely impacted Japan's research on China, especially on the Sino-Japanese War. When looking at the research discussed in this article, we see that the number of Japanese scholars specializing in the Sino-Japanese War is decreasing. There are two reasons for this trend. First, with the war's end almost seventy years in the past, the unearthing of new historical materials has become increasingly rare. Second, conservative influences are exerting pressure (both visible and invisible) on scholars. The politicization of research on the Nanjing Massacre is just one example of this fact.

If we speak from the perspective of the larger context of Sino-Japanese relations, I believe that postwar scholars in Japan have somewhat inadequately researched the history of Sino-Japanese relations. Comprehensive histories dealing with Sino-Japanese relations are still very few. In Japanese universities, courses that focus exclusively on the history of Sino-Japanese

relations are rare, and courses offered on modern and contemporary Chinese history are increasingly scarce. We cannot understand the present deterioration of Sino-Japanese relations separate from these facts about history education and scholarship. Of course, the impact of political factors is more immediate. A "slip of the tongue" or indiscreet remark by a Japanese prime minister or certain politicians, more often than not, can greatly overpower the influence that scholars have spent years of hard work in achieving through their research. How to extricate oneself from the influence of political factors and conduct rational, objective research on the Sino-Japanese War and the history of Sino-Japanese relations is a question that every scholar should earnestly consider.

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Notes

1 See http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2012/11/25/national/record-81-of-japanese-feel-no-friendship-toward-china-government-survey-shows/#.Uw0xUij6820.

2 *Jiang Jieshi yu Riben* 蔣介石與日本. Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo, 2012.

3 For another monograph on Chiang Kai-shek, see Duan (2006).

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